

## Access to Social Care

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**Social Care is poorly defined** – social care tends to act as a branch of health care only meeting what are really health care needs because health agencies will not or cannot deliver such services. The result is that social care only meets needs such as help with going to the toilet or help with feeding which are arguably health needs. Needs that should fall within the remit of social care such as alleviating isolation and personal assistance to become an active citizen.

**Access to advocacy is essential** – There is real fear amongst those using social care services. Not only are complaints systems complicated but there is a sense that if you complain then even the usually inadequate social care provision you have will be taken away. It is difficult to say to someone who is relying on social care just to be able to get up in the morning you should fight for your rights.

**Inspection and regulation** – Whilst it is good to know that finally there is a debate about standards and regulation is now with CSCI there is still the suspicion that the wool can be pulled over the eyes of the inspectors and impression management is becoming a well practised art.

**Charging for Social Care** – What are charges for? Basically charges are for the right to get up in the morning, the right to be fed, the right to go to the toilet, the right to go to bed – all things that those who do not have to use social care services take for granted. Why is it that we all pay in our taxes for education yet when it comes to social care the individual is being penalised for having a particular need. The poorest people have to pay and many cannot afford it so they go without care.

**Carers** – If informal carers are undervalued then this will have a negative impact on those being cared for. Carers themselves may prevent people receiving adequate social care. This can be the result of a lack of training and carers feeling under too much pressure. The views of those using social care and carers do not necessarily coincide.

**Diversity** – In spite of all the debate about person centred services there is still a philosophy of fitting in to the services available. This can prevent access especially by people from black and minority ethnic groups.