

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased from 4.5 million to 6.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people in the UK. The Department of Health (2000) has published a strategy for older people, which sets out a vision for the future of health care for older people. The strategy is based on the following principles: (1) older people should be able to live independently in their own homes; (2) older people should be able to access the services they need; (3) older people should be able to participate in decisions about their care; and (4) older people should be able to live in a safe and secure environment.

The strategy also sets out a number of key objectives for the future of health care for older people. These include: (1) to improve the quality of care for older people; (2) to reduce the need for hospital care; (3) to increase the number of people who are able to live independently in their own homes; (4) to increase the number of people who are able to access the services they need; and (5) to increase the number of people who are able to participate in decisions about their care.

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