

Care Inspectorate urges discussion about care services

INVOLVING PEOPLE IN CARE SERVICES “ESSENTIAL”, WARNS CARE INSPECTORATE

Involving old and vulnerable people in key decisions about the care they receive is “essential”, the Care Inspectorate will warn today.

The call comes in a joint speech at a conference in Edinburgh called Caring for the Rising Population of Older People in Scotland: Care, Protection and Partnerships from Chief Executive Annette Bruton and David Tares, who volunteers as a lay assessor for the care standards watchdog. They will call for a much greater emphasis on an approach known widely as “involvement”, where people who use care homes and other care services are properly engaged in the way their care is delivered.

The speech comes as the Care Inspectorate released new figures showing that the standards of involvement in Scotland are rising – but are graded as “excellent” or “very good” in only a half of all care services. They will argue that measuring involvement is a key indicator of quality – and that involving people properly in decisions about their care is cost efficient as the right choices are likely to be made first time round.

✘ Annette Bruton, Chief Executive, is expected to say: -
“Scotland, like many countries, faces a growing population of older people. More people will need support to live out their older days in dignity. That poses a challenge for families, government, charities and the many professionals who care for people but one thing is essential: people who receive

care must help plan how it is delivered.

“Social care cannot be something that happens to you when you grow old or if you are vulnerable. The best care is something people plan, design and deliver together. There are examples of great practice for all to see. Our inspections show that over half of the care services in Scotland scored our top grades for involving people, and the numbers are rising.

“In the coming decades, my sense is that we will see many more care-at-home services. That poses new challenges for involving people – and new challenges for delivery partners and regulators to ensure quality – which will be unmet unless involvement is at the heart of the agenda.

“Our inspectors will continue to measure how well services involve people in the delivery of their own care. It’s not just the right thing to do – it is essential to deliver high-quality care that reflects people’s needs and promotes their rights. Scotland cannot afford to get it wrong.”

David Tares, a lay assessor with the Care Inspectorate and a member of its involving people group, is expected to say: “If we want to improve the care people receive, there is one sure-fire way to do. It’s to involve people in decisions about their lives. In too many care services, people are not consulted about what happens to them.

“It is really important because often the views of people running care services are radically different from the views of the people who use them. I think it is great that the Care Inspectorate genuinely looks at this when they are out on inspection and reports on what they find. At the end of the day, everybody knows what is best for them. We are the experts about ourselves and our lives.

“I volunteer as a lay assessor with the Care Inspectorate, meaning I join inspection teams when they go into a care home or supported housing. I think having a disabled person coming

in and talking to residents really breaks down barriers. And as the population gets older, there won't be money to waste on getting care services wrong. Most services are really good, but the biggest reason for something going wrong is that somebody somewhere didn't ask."