



Commissioner for **Older People**
for Northern Ireland

The Commissioner for Older People
for Northern Ireland

Hope | Confidence | Certainty

CORPORATE PLAN
2013-2015




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The Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland

This Corporate Plan sets out the way that the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (The Commissioner) proposes to use her legal powers and duties to safeguard and promote the interests of older people. It is focused on issues that older people say matter most to them.



Hope, Confidence and Certainty for Older People

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1 Commissioner's Foreword



Older people, organisations that work with them and others with an interest in improving the quality of life experienced by them, campaigned hard for a Commissioner who will act clearly and decisively in the interests of older people¹ .

I was appointed and took up post as the first Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland in November 2011 and I'm now delighted to be able to progress the strategic priorities set out in this Corporate Plan.

I have unique legal powers and duties that are set out in the Commissioner for Older People Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. I will use these legal powers and duties to celebrate ageing and increased life expectancy; to recognise the diversity of experience of older people; to find out what matters to them, and to make recommendations to Government for changes to the law and practice. I will challenge discrimination, promote positive attitudes towards older people and safeguard and protect their interests.

I will work in partnership and cooperatively with organisations that work with and on behalf of older people where this is the most appropriate and effective way to work. Where necessary, I will challenge weaknesses in the system that create confusion or put older people at risk. I will act as a champion for the rights of older people.

It is also important that I maintain the clear independence that is necessary for me to be able to review, scrutinise, investigate and challenge the work of public bodies in Northern Ireland as it affects the lives of older people.

¹ Older people are defined in the Commissioner for Older People Act (NI) 2011 as meaning people aged 60 or over and in exceptional cases as being aged 50 or over.

My work will be underpinned by the UN Principles for Older Persons (1991). These international standards will be important as I assess how well public bodies and other organisations deliver for older people here in Northern Ireland.

I have heard from and learned a great deal about what matters to older people. This has greatly influenced my priorities for action. The experiences of older people are at the heart of my work.

Most of us are living longer and for most people, healthier lives.

The very positive contribution that is made by older people to our public, family, employment, volunteering, community and faith lives must be better recognised, appreciated and valued. The way in which public services are developed and delivered must be “age friendly” so that older people can be full, equal and active participants in our society. Older people’s rights must be developed and protected.

In all aspects of my work I will focus on finding out what life is really like for older people. I will place particular importance on finding out what matters to older people who are frail, live with dementia, are isolated, live in poverty, experience discrimination or are otherwise disadvantaged.

I have given careful consideration to the evidence about what matters to older people. I have had to make difficult decisions about how we use the resources that are available, but I believe that focusing on the issues in this Corporate Plan will bring about real and positive change for older people. The issues in this plan are all of equal importance to me.

The work will be delivered through annual operational plans and regular reviews.

This Corporate Plan sets out clear steps to build the hope, confidence and certainty that older people and organisations that work with older people have told me is so important.



Claire Keatinge
Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland

2 Head of Operations Report

As an official of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (The Department), I was asked to assist the Commissioner for Older People in her inaugural term, to set up and develop an organisation that will support her future work. This Commissioner for Older People is the first one we've ever had. The foundations built in the first months of her term have established a sound corporate governance structure. This will enable her to meet all her responsibilities to The Department and wider government and develop an organisational culture of integrity, transparency and efficiency to carry out the duties and powers set out in the Commissioner for Older People Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. The legislation places all powers and responsibilities on the Commissioner, although it anticipates that she will require staff to drive forward the detail of her work.

Those of us working in the Office of the Commissioner have been inspired by her vision of a future where ageing is positively embraced and valued. We have been encouraged at all times to consider the value of the work we are undertaking and its impact on the lives of older people.

The Office of the Commissioner is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by The Department. The following work streams were completed up to March 2013:

- Development and proposal of a permanent staffing structure for the organisation which has been given approval by The Department.
- Preparation for the recruitment of full time staff within a multi-disciplinary team (commencing Summer 2013).
- Development of detailed work plans for 2012/13 and 2013/14.

- Implementation of governance regimes to manage:

- Finance
- Procurement
- Risk
- Internal Audit Services
- HR Management and Recruitment
- Staff Policies
- Operational Procedures
- Equality Scheme
- Information Security
- Corporate Planning

- Management of temporary staff complement.

Working in an organisation when it is just coming into being is exciting, dynamic, rewarding and frustrating in turn. However, the Commissioner has had the support of a small team of committed and talented temporary staff. I should like to thank those who volunteered for secondments from their “home” organisations, such as those from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). Other staff have been employed through agencies and have worked diligently to deliver a high level of courteous, informed and compassionate assistance to all the older people, carers, and other organisations who have contacted the Commissioner.

The Commissioner has now advertised for a Chief Executive to take over and develop the role of Head of Operations during 2013. I am satisfied that the efforts of the operations team in the last year has built a strong and steady foundation from which that person can move forward, build the permanent team and progress the Commissioner’s work in support of her ambitious and challenging agenda to improve the lives of older people.

Evelyn Hoy
Head of Operations

Vision

The Commissioner's vision is that
“Northern Ireland is a great place to age.”

Purpose

To be an authoritative and independent
champion who safeguards and promotes
the interests of older people.

3 Values

The Values that underpin the Commissioner's work are to:

- **focus** on older people – the work of the Commissioner will have older people and their views and experiences at its heart.
- **include** – the Commissioner will carry out her work in ways that are inclusive and will be relevant and accessible to older people.
- **champion** diversity of all older people – the Commissioner will reflect the voice, experience and concerns of a diverse range, from older people to policy and decision makers. She will challenge discrimination where it exists.
- **recognise** the positive contribution made by older people – the Commissioner will challenge negative stereotypes and promote a positive view of ageing.
- be **independent** – the Commissioner will undertake her work in ways that make it clear that she is independent of Government and other public bodies.
- act with **integrity and trust** – the Commissioner will be authoritative, clear about her evidence base for action and intervention, and focused on the experience of older people.
- be **open and honest** – the Commissioner will communicate effectively and courteously with older people and other stakeholders about issues affecting older people and the progress of work in her office.
- **partner and collaborate** – the Commissioner will work with others where it is effective, avoids duplication and maximises the use of public resources. The Commissioner's integrity will always be maintained.
- **promote** the UN Principles for Older Persons (1991) – the Commissioner's work will be underpinned by these principles. For further information please see Appendix 1.

4 Focus

Hope, Confidence and Certainty - the Commissioner's focus for action

Hope

Hope that our society celebrates the good news that more of us are living longer and healthier lives.

Hope that the Government invests in the health and wellbeing of the current and future generations of older people.

Hope that future generations of older people will see lower levels of chronic illness and disability, reduced pensioner poverty, better protection from abuse, improved health and social care services, and equal and fair treatment.

Confidence

Confidence that older people will be recognised first and foremost as individuals who have rights, have made and continue to make a contribution to our society, and who make choices and decisions about their own lives, preferences, activities and opinions.

Confidence that older people will receive equal treatment, will be enabled to live safe and healthy lives with their views and ideas listened to and considered and have their contribution to society recognised and valued.

Certainty

Certainty that if older people become vulnerable, the support, services, respect and care they need will be available in ways that help them to live dignified and fulfilled lives through to the end of life.

Certainty that protection and support for vulnerable older people is an absolute priority for our society.

5 Difficult Choices

Making difficult choices about strategic priorities for action

During 2012 the Commissioner listened extensively to the views of older people and the organisations that work with them. She reviewed a wide range of other sources of information to develop her priorities for action.

In the last quarter of 2012 the Commissioner carried out an engagement programme with older people and organisations that work with them, to discuss priority areas for the remainder of the Commissioner's term.

Over 800 older people participated in 20 events, and further engagements were held with organisations whose work impacts older people including diversity representative organisations. Their views have been carefully considered in the production of this Corporate Plan.

Feedback was also received about the importance of the Commissioner setting achievable goals so that older people could be confident that the work programme of the Commissioner was realistic within the time and resources available.

This Corporate Plan clearly focusses on strategic issues where the Commissioner's legal powers and duties have the potential to make a positive difference to older people. The plan also reflects that throughout her work she will:

- seek better protection and support for vulnerable older people.
- seek out the views of older people who find it harder to be heard.
- challenge discrimination.
- promote inclusion and diversity.
- promote the rights and interests of older people in all aspects of life.
- hold other public bodies to account.
- respond to significant issues that emerge.
- seek better protection and support for vulnerable older people .
- promote a positive view of ageing.

During the delivery of the priorities in this Corporate Plan other important issues may emerge. The Commissioner will respond as necessary to ensure that the interests of older people are safeguarded and promoted within the resources of the office.

6 Strategic Priorities

1. Promote positive attitudes towards and about older people

Positive Ageing

More of us are living longer and healthier lives and this is very good news. It is the best public health news of the last century. Babies born today have a life expectancy of 81 years for females and 77 years for males². People who were born in 1950 had a life expectancy of 70 years for females and 68 years for males. It is among the so called “very old” that we see the biggest growth in numbers. By 2060, there will be five times as many people living beyond 100 years of age as there are now³. In 2011 there were 228 persons aged 100 years plus currently living in Northern Ireland⁴.

In Northern Ireland there is the reality of economic pressures coupled with a period in our history when we are attempting to move away from conflict. There is an increase in older age health conditions and a rising demand for the need to provide care for our older population. As our Government strives to manage demographic and social change we see developments in policy and plans for the future such as the “Transforming Your Care” programme. We are also experiencing closures and changes to health care facilities, increased private sector provision, and benefit and pension reform. It is therefore important to recognise that for many this can be a time of anxiety as we move forward and attempt to shape the future better with and for our older generations.

² Healthcare across the UK: A comparison of the NHS in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, National Audit Office, 2012

³ Northern Ireland Level Projections NISRA Census 2011

⁴ Census 2011, NISRA

There are different responses to the fact that we are an ageing society. There are those who clearly recognise the positive social and financial contribution that older people make and hope that we all have longer, healthier lives than previous generations were able to. There are decision makers who invest their ideas and resources in developing policies and services that include, value and respect older people. This vision of society regards the diversity, wisdom, experience and knowledge of older people as a significant asset to people of all ages. The Commissioner will champion this approach.

There is, however, a view that increased longevity is a burden on society, creating unaffordable costs. Rather than celebrating older people as an asset to our society, this point of view regards them as a drain on our economic and social resources.

All of us who desire a society for all ages in which the rights and interests of older people are championed and protected must challenge this negative perception. Older people greatly enrich our society through their involvement within civic life, faith, communities, family, friends, employment, lifelong learning, volunteering, arts and culture.

It is essential that there is a shift in negative attitudes to reflect the more positive reality of older people and the contribution they make to society. According to the Gold Age Pensioners Report, older people made a net positive financial contribution of over £40 billion to the UK economy in 2010⁵.

The Commissioner will:

- **Undertake and publish research that highlights the positive contribution of older people to Northern Ireland life.**
- **Raise public, professional and media awareness about this positive contribution.**
- **Challenge negative stereotypes of older people and ageing through her work.**

⁵ WRVS Gold Age Pensioners Report 2011

Valuing an ageing workforce

Employers in Northern Ireland are taking steps to retain and support an ageing workforce. Too many negative stereotypes about older workers remain. These can create barriers for employers and employees in getting the best from one another. An ageing population and workforce present opportunities for older people and employers.

Many older people have a great deal to contribute to employers and to their own financial independence and standard of living. Some businesses feel significant impacts from the retirement of very experienced and knowledgeable employees and would like to retain this capacity in flexible ways.

The ending of a default or “forced” retirement age allows many workers to stay in their jobs for longer than before. The rising age at which the state pension will be paid is an important consideration for many people as they make decisions about whether they wish to remain in or get into paid work in older age. A number of older people in our society have never had the opportunity to be in steady, pensionable, paid work.

The Commissioner wants employers to be aware of the many benefits older people could bring to their workforce. Many older people want to continue to work, including those who want new types of employment. Others would consider extending their time in employment with more flexible working conditions or in circumstances where they could retrain for new roles. This is particularly relevant to those in careers that involve heavy physical work or sustained periods of physical and mental activity.

The Commissioner will:

- **Lead debate among employers and older people about what is needed to increase support for an ageing workforce to find and remain in work.**
- **Publish and provide information to employers, older people and policy makers in Government on her findings.**

Safeguarding and promoting the interests of older people

The Commissioner will communicate regularly and effectively with older people, Government and organisations whose work impacts the lives of older people. All of the Commissioner's work will reflect real life experiences. She will place particular focus on finding out what matters to those older people who find it harder to be heard.

At events, in speeches, in the media and in the course of all other work the Commissioner will promote positive attitudes towards and advocate positive changes for older people. She will seek better protection and support for those who are frail or otherwise vulnerable.

The Commissioner will:

- **Develop and implement an effective communication strategy.**
- **Regularly attend meetings and events around Northern Ireland to be available to older people.**
- **Actively seek the views of older people who find it harder to be heard.**

2. Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people

Entitlements to social care for older people

Adult social care is vital for thousands of older people. A range of services help older people to remain independent, mobile and to live dignified and fulfilled lives⁶. The many ways in which these services can be accessed and delivered are sometimes confusing for older people and their carers.

The current legal framework for social care is fragmented, complex and open to interpretation. As a result, older people and their carers are often unclear about entitlements to social care and providers are unclear about their responsibilities. Additionally, social care will change significantly when the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's (DHSSPS) proposed change programmes take effect⁷.

The Commissioner will:

- In collaboration with Age NI and other partners, review the current legislation underpinning the social care regime and make recommendations to Government for change as required.
- Monitor the implementation of DHSSPS change programmes and their impact on social care for older people.

⁶ Includes care homes, day care, aids, equipment and adaptations, community meals and care in the home.

⁷ Transforming Your Care, A review of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland, DHSSPS.
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/tyc.htm>.

Standards of care in domiciliary care settings

Most people want to live at home for as long as possible with the care and support they need. Many of these people live with dementia. Transforming Your Care⁸ creates a shift towards care in the community. Current estimates indicate there are almost 20,000 people over the age of 65 who receive publicly funded care in their own homes. It is important to bear in mind this figure does not provide the full picture of people receiving domiciliary care as it simply relates to an intensive service (i.e. six or more visits and ten or more contact hours during a survey week. A survey week is a week that is purposely chosen, usually in September, in which all the health and social services trusts gather statistical information on domiciliary care). There is enormous appreciation by older people when they receive high quality social care⁹. However, there is considerable anxiety and distress caused when domiciliary care is either insufficient to meet needs or inadequate in quality.

It is essential that older people can be certain that they will receive the dignified, respectful care and support they need if they become frail, develop dementia or become otherwise vulnerable. Domiciliary care should meet the changing needs of older people who receive care at home.

The Commissioner will:

- **Examine current standards required for domiciliary care and compliance with those standards.**
- **Examine the adequacy of the current inspection regime.**
- **Determine if any changes are needed to increase protection of older people, and call on Government to address these changes.**

⁸ Transforming Your Care, A review of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland, DHSSPS.
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/tyc.htm>

⁹ Community Information Branch, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Domiciliary Care Services for Adults in Northern Ireland (2012). Published February 2013. Page 16, Table 7.

Review the adequacy and effectiveness of the law so that older people are better protected from abuse

There is widespread concern and anger about the abuse of older people. However, there is often a lack of understanding about the legal protection available to older people who suffer abuse.

The UK Study of Abuse and Neglect of Older People 2007¹⁰ asserts that across Northern Ireland there may be some 10,000 older people who are the victims of abuse. Abuse can take place wherever older people live and when others exploit their vulnerability.

Abuse can include neglect, sexual abuse, emotional cruelty, physical violence, financial coercion, fraud, and theft. Abuse can be carried out by anyone including families, neighbours, paid health and social care workers, volunteers, and others who have contact with older people.

The Commissioner has been made aware of confusion and poor understanding of the laws protecting older people. These need to be clear, easy to understand, and to reflect equality and human rights legislation and principles.

Whenever older people either experience or are at risk of abuse they must be confident that the law protects them.

The Commissioner will:

- **Examine existing adult protection legislation and its adequacy regarding older people.**
- **Produce a practical guide for older people and practitioners about the law on protection from abuse.**
- **Determine if any changes are needed to better protect older people and call on Government to address them.**

¹⁰ Kings College London Briefing Paper: The UK Study of Abuse and Neglect of Older People 2007

Responding to consultations relating to issues of interest and importance to older people

Public bodies issue a wide range of policy and services documentation for consultation every year. Where these policies have a particular impact on older people, the Commissioner will develop a response that safeguards and promotes their interests.

The Commissioner will:

- **Respond to consultations on policies and services as appropriate to safeguard and promote the interests of older people.**
- **Make copies of responses available to the public in a variety of formats.**

Respond to the individual needs of older people

The Commissioner's office provides information, support and assistance for older people. The Commissioner's staff will answer queries and support older people by:

- **Putting them in touch with organisations best placed to assist them to obtain the support they need.**
- **Providing information about services in their locality.**
- **Assisting them where they have been experiencing difficulties with a public service body or provider.**
- **Supporting them to make a formal complaint and then monitoring how this is handled.**
- **In certain circumstances providing direct assistance.**

At all times, care is exercised to ensure that there is no duplication when work has already been carried out by, or should be transferred to, an alternative or more appropriate body or organisation. When appropriate, the Commissioner may partner with another public body to ensure that concerns are fully addressed.

The Commissioner will:

- **Make referrals to other agencies when appropriate to do so.**
- **Provide direct support on specific issues.**
- **Identify new areas for investigation or of concern.**

3. Promote the provision of opportunities for, and the elimination of, discrimination against older people

The Government's planned strategy and legislation on ageing

At the time of publication, the Northern Ireland Executive's new proposed strategy, A better place to grow older – an Active Ageing Strategy¹¹, is not yet launched for public consultation. The Commissioner chairs an advisory group of key stakeholders which brings a positive influence to bear on the development of the strategy. The strategy will bring Government focus to a range of important issues affecting older people and an ageing population.

In addition, one of the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG) priorities is to bring forward legislation to make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of their age in relation to the provision of goods, facilities and services.

The Commissioner will:

- **Continue to advise, challenge and support Government on the development and delivery of the Active Ageing Strategy.**
- **Advise Government on the development of proposed anti-discrimination legislation (Age - Goods, Facilities and Services) in relation to the interests of older people.**

¹¹ Assumes Government position on its AAS

Pensioner Poverty – improving the uptake of pensions and benefits

Too many older people live on incomes that make it hard to get by. This causes constant worry and makes it difficult for older people to participate fully in family and community life. It can prevent them eating well, keeping warm at home and living fulfilled and dignified lives.

Pension credit guarantees a minimum income and can top up an older person's weekly income, but over a third of older people entitled to pension credit do not claim it¹². Many older people are unaware of pension credit and other entitlements. Barriers to claiming benefits include the perceived complexity of the process. The means tested rules and the stigma associated with making a claim also contribute to the under claiming of benefits. It is vital that more older people know about, claim, and receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

The Commissioner will:

- **Continue to support the Department of Social Development and the Social Security Agency to increase the take up of benefits.**
- **Raise awareness of the reality of life for older people who live on inadequate levels of income.**

¹² Access to Benefits, Benefit Calculation Uptake Report 2009

4. Encourage best practice in the treatment of Older People

Examining the reasons for low uptake of carers' assessments in Northern Ireland

Many older people provide a significant amount of care for people who have been assessed by social services as needing care and support. These carers may be looking after a spouse, partner, friend or a dependent with disabilities. Older carers make it possible for thousands of people to live dignified and fulfilled lives at home. Their caring cannot be taken for granted, nor should it be undervalued. Older carers deserve to be provided with the support they need to help them in their caring role and to support their own health and well being.

It is important that older carers know about their right to have their own needs assessed. These older carers may have health problems or disabilities themselves and sometimes struggle with the practical and emotional challenges of caring. Too often older carers do not get the practical and emotional support they deserve.

Carers are entitled to an assessment of their needs, which may include training, support, respite and information. However, in Northern Ireland only 44% of older carers have their needs assessed compared to 89% of older carers in England. The poor uptake of these assessments means that the Government cannot accurately measure the scale of the unmet need. It also means that many older carers do not receive the support they deserve and need.

The Commissioner will:

- **Seek evidence on why Northern Ireland has such a low percentage uptake of older carers' assessments.**
- **Analyse the barriers to uptake of carers' assessments and the impact on older carers in Northern Ireland.**
- **Make recommendations to Government on improving uptake of carers' assessments by older carers here.**

Crime against older people – seeking improvements to the clearance¹⁴ rates for burglary and violent assault against older people

Crime against older people is universally condemned across our society and although the level of violent crime and burglary against older people is relatively low in Northern Ireland, each incident is traumatic for the victim and causes fear among the wider population.

The clearance rate for violent assault and burglary against older people is lower than for victims in most other age groups as reported by the PSNI¹⁵. While the clearance rates have improved for this age group in the last five years, the failure to bring offenders to justice creates further fear of crime and a sense that older people are not properly protected.

Improving the clearance rate will help reduce fear of crime and create increased confidence among older people.

The Commissioner will:

- **Highlight the relatively poor detection and prosecution rates related to crimes against older people.**
- **Challenge and support the criminal justice system to significantly improve the clearance rates of crimes against older people.**
- **Raise awareness of the impact of crime against older people.**

¹⁴ Clearance in this context refers to detection and prosecution.

¹⁵ Copy of police recorded crime in Northern Ireland 1998-99 to 2011-12.

5. Corporate governance

The Commissioner is charged with the duties of Accounting Officer for the budget provided by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) annually. She is accountable for the proper and regular expenditure of that budget. All procurement of goods and services must be carried out in accordance with Government rules. The Commissioner maximises the value for money of her budget by prudent and economical sourcing of goods and services and by making sure that best value is always sought. This means that every transaction is subject to a proportionate assessment of the need to spend money at all, and where money is spent that it is not wasted.

The Commissioner is a corporation sole and as such does not have a board. To ensure that proper accountability is achieved for her organisation she has contracted an independent internal audit service, and appointed a Risk and Audit Assurance Committee. The Committee meets three-four times annually. Information relating to The Committee and its activities will be published on the Commissioner's website. The Committee advises the Commissioner on the proper management of risk and governance for her organisation.

At all times the Commissioner and by extension her staff, conduct business within the principles of public service (often referred to as the Nolan principles)¹⁶.

Recruitment of the Commissioner's team

The Commissioner has determined the size and structure of the supporting team required to deliver this plan and still represent good value for money for the taxpayer. She has sought approval from OFMdFM for the permanent employment of staff with skill sets in management, policy advice relating to older people, legal skills, public engagement, communications, human resources, finance and general administration.

¹⁶ See Appendix 2

At present, most of these posts are filled by agency staff and secondees from other organisations including OFMdFM and the Equality Commission. All of these posts will be filled through open competition, with recruitment taking place in phases during 2013/2014. The recruitment campaign commenced in May 2013.

The Commissioner will:

- **Implement a recruitment campaign to secure the best candidates available to assist her in meeting the objectives of this plan.**
- **Continue to work with her temporary team in the interim so that the targets set out in her internal business plan each year are met concurrently with the recruitment of new permanent staff.**

Appendix 1

UN Principles for Older Persons

The United Nations Principles for Older Persons were adopted by the UN General Assembly (Resolution 46/91) on 16 December 1991. Governments were encouraged to incorporate them into their national programmes whenever possible. There are 18 principles, which can be grouped under five themes: independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity.

The Principles acknowledge:

1. the tremendous diversity in the situations of older persons, not only between countries but within countries and between individuals;
2. that individuals are reaching an advanced age in greater numbers and in better health than ever before;
3. that scientific research disproves many stereotypes about inevitable and irreversible decline with age;
4. that in a world characterized by an increasing number and proportion of older persons, opportunities must be provided for willing and capable older persons to participate in and contribute to the ongoing activities of society;
5. that the strain on family life in both developed and developing countries requires support for those providing care to frail older persons.

The Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland is legally obliged to have regard to these Principles and is pleased to do so. They are Principles which should be considered by all organisations and regarded as a framework for their treatment of older people.

Independence

1. Older persons should have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help.
2. Older persons should have the opportunity to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities.
3. Older persons should be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labour force takes place.
4. Older persons should have access to appropriate educational and training programmes.
5. Older persons should be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities.
6. Older persons should be able to reside at home for as long as possible.

Participation

1. Older persons should remain integrated in society, participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being and share their knowledge and skills with younger generations.
2. Older persons should be able to seek and develop opportunities for service to the community and to serve as volunteers in positions appropriate to their interests and capabilities.
3. Older persons should be able to form movements or associations of older persons.

Care

1. Older persons should benefit from family and community care and protection in accordance with each society's system of cultural values.
2. Older persons should have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness.
3. Older persons should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care.
4. Older persons should be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection, rehabilitation, social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment.
5. Older persons should be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.

Self-Fulfillment

1. Older persons should be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential.
2. Older persons should have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.

Dignity

1. Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse.

Older persons should be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution.

Appendix 2

Principles of public service (The Nolan Principles)

- **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

- **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

- **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

- **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

- **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

- **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

- **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



Commissioner for **Older People**
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