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POLICY BRIEFINGS

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BETTER CARE, HIGHER STANDARDS

National Charter for Long Term Care

The national charter tells anyone who needs care or support over the long term what they can expect from local housing, health & social services & what to do if things go wrong.

The national charter expects local authorities & health services to agree & publish local standards in six main areas:

- ✓ Helping users & carers to find out about services
- ✓ Understanding & responding to the needs of users & carers
- ✓ Finding a suitable place to live
- ✓ Helping people to stay independent
- ✓ Getting the right health care
- ✓ Helping people to care

These local standards will be published in **Local Charters** that will also contain:

- ✓ Information about local services that are available & how to get them
- ✓ Standards that people can expect when they get services, information & advice
- ✓ Targets for improvement & when these will be achieved
- ✓ The rules that decide if people can get help
- ✓ How to get information about Social Security benefits
- ✓ Information about how to complain if things go wrong
- ✓ Information about how people can say what they think about the services they are getting & how they can suggest ways of improving the services
- ✓ Information about the charges people will be asked to pay
- ✓ Local telephone helpline numbers & contact names, including local advocacy services

**Deadline:
End of
June 2000**



Local Charters must be agreed between Housing, Health & Social Services. Users & carers will be encouraged to contribute either directly or through advocacy organisations. Many local representative organisations will also be invited to comment.

The National Charter sets guidelines for Local Charters so that:

- ✓ there should be consistency across the country
- ✓ users & carers will be more involved in making decisions about the care or support they receive
- ✓ services should be provided in a co-ordinated way & users & carers should be able to give information to one person who should be able to advise them or find the right person who can
- ✓ there will be clear statements about local housing, health & social services & the standards that people can expect

Publication & versions available	English	Ethnic Languages Gujurati, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Greek, Turkish, Chinese & Polish	Braille	Audio Tape	Learning Disability
Better Care, Higher Standards <i>A Charter for Long Term Care</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Better Care, Higher Standards <i>A summary for Users & Carers</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Better Care, Higher Standards <i>Guidance for Local Housing, Health & Social Services</i>	✓				

Dept-of Health circulars and publications are available:

via their website **www.doh.gov.uk** or
order by **fax 01623 724524** or
PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH or
e-mail doh@prologistics.co.uk

Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) Reports are also available from the above source.
The SSI have a website **www.doh.gov.uk/longtermcare/** **CHECK**