EDITORIAL

Making our health and care systems fit for an ageing population: David Oliver, Catherine Foot, Richard Humphries. King’s Fund March 2014

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This paper defines what good services for older people are, judging quality on effectiveness, safety, experience, access, equity (particularly age discrimination), efficiency but also continuity and coordination (http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/making-our-health-and-care-systems-fit-ageing-population).

It is designed as a high level resource for local service leaders, which will include clinicians, policy-makers and commissioners.

The paper looks at services under nine headings—the aim is to ‘walk’ the journey for older people from healthy ageing to end of life. The final chapter describing the challenges of integration, to provide person centred coordinated care is arguably the most important.

Each chapter sets out the goal from the older persons viewpoint, discusses the current situation, what we know can work, based on the literature and clinical experience, lists the key reviews and guidance, then gives examples of case studies where services are working well.

The broad scope of the paper is refreshing, covering wider dimensions of well-being in older people, not just health and social care, but housing, social interactions and participation.

It has a person centred approach, is easy to read and is very well referenced. This useful resource will enable more evidence-based decisions to be made in local planning of services so they are indeed fit for an ageing population.

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