

NEWS RELEASE FROM
THE REGISTERED NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

Issued 21st March 2006

**RNHA SUPPORTS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF CARE HOMES IN
DEVELOPING LOCAL ANTI-ABUSE PROCEDURES**

The Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA) has welcomed proposals in a report just published by Action on Elder Abuse that care homes should be directly represented on local multi-agency committees responsible for establishing procedures for investigating abuse allegations, and that care home managers should normally be involved at all stages when allegations are made about abuse in their homes.

The association also welcomed the findings of studies carried out for Action on Elder Abuse in a number of local authorities which showed that, compared with figures from a previous report, allegations of abuse of older people in care homes had fallen as a proportion of the total number of cases reported.

Commented RNHA chief executive officer Frank Ursell: "As providers of care to vulnerable older people, we are committed to stamping out abuse in all its forms and wherever it occurs. One of the problems in the past has been a tendency for some social services departments to exclude managers of nursing homes and residential care homes from the process. As a result, they have risked creating a defensive 'us and them' mentality when we really need to be working together to identify and eliminate abuse."

He added: "It is good to see, therefore, that Action on Elder Abuse has recognised the positive role that care home managers and staff can play in the campaign against abuse. We have a strong professional and personal interest in stopping abuse and we feel that our expertise can be invaluable to the regulatory agencies."

Commenting on the report's analysis of the allegations that were made and investigated in the local authorities taking part in the study, Mr Ursell said: "Contrary to some of the wild and exaggerated claims that have been made by some commentators in the past, we see from these latest, independently derived, figures that the vast majority of allegations of abuse of older people do not relate to care homes. In fact, more cases arise in people's own homes than in residential care homes or nursing homes."

The RNHA also supports proposals for more training of nursing home managers and staff in anti-abuse strategies and procedures and says it would welcome additional funding from the government and relevant agencies to help develop a long-term education and awareness programme targeted at staff, the general public and older people themselves.

END

Notes to editors:

1. This month, the independent Action on Elder Abuse organisation published a report entitled *Adult Protection Data Monitoring*, which sets out the findings of a two-year study of alleged cases of abuse in a selection of local authorities, and which makes recommendations for action based on the outcome of the study.
2. The Registered Nursing Home Association represents over 1,200 nursing homes throughout the United Kingdom.

For further information and comment, please contact:

Frank Ursell, Chief Executive Officer, Registered Nursing Home Association
Tel: 0121-454 2511 or 07785 227000