

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE
REGISTERED NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

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**NEED TO GET RID OF 'THEM AND US' ATTITUDE
IN INSPECTION OF NURSING HOMES:
RNHA RESPONSE TO TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF
CHANGES IN REGULATION OF CARE SERVICES**

The Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA) has given a qualified welcome to changes announced this morning (2nd March) by the Commission for Social Care Inspection in the way that adult care services will be regulated and inspected from April 2006.

The RNHA says that, in principle, it supports CSCI's plan to increase the number of checks carried out on nursing homes and other care services that are not performing well, and correspondingly to reduce visits to those considered to be providing good or satisfactory care.

But, the association claims, CSCI inspectors still need to become more consistent in their judgements and to foster a genuine spirit of partnership working with nursing home managers and staff.

Commented RNHA chief executive officer, Frank Ursell: "An underlying problem with the inspection of nursing homes in the UK has been the 'them and us' attitude it inculcates. In many cases, the 'wagging finger' mentality still prevails. Yet what is really in the best interests of older people in nursing homes is for those providing the care and those inspecting it to work positively together to raise standards."

He added: "If we are now supposedly entering a brave new era of regulation and inspection, I hope that CSCI will work with us to bring about a cultural shift. Regulators, providers and, most of all, older people in care all have a common interest in ensuring high quality services. But they must work as partners, not adversaries, to achieve this"

The RNHA said it plans to monitor the way in which the new arrangements announced by CSCI are put into effect over the next year.

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“We think it is important that those who inspect others should themselves be subject to performance appraisal,” said Mr Ursell. “On the face of it, focusing more on under-performing services should pay dividends. We therefore hope the new system is successful. It is rather ironic, though, that just as satisfactorily performing nursing homes are about to see a reduction in the number of visits made to their premises by inspectors, they are going to have to pay a 15 per cent increase in the fees they pay to CSCI for the privilege.”

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For further information and comment, please contact:

Frank Ursell, Chief Executive Officer, Registered Nursing Home Association

Tel: 0121-454 2511 or 07785 227000