

NEWS RELEASE FROM
THE REGISTERED NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION
The English Community Care Association
The National Care Association and
The National Care Forum

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CARE ASSOCIATIONS WARN LOCAL AUTHORITIES
ON FEE FREEZE

The four major national care associations have jointly issued a warning to local authorities that the proposals in many areas for no increase in fees for 2006/07 is 'totally unacceptable' and will undermine the sector's ability to meet the Government's modernising agenda, as outlined in the recent White Paper, *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*.

The warning follows a meeting between the English Community Care Association (ECCA), the National Care Association (NCA), the National Care Forum (NCF) and the Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA) to agree a strategy for identifying the key issues affecting the long-term care sector in the UK.

This joint approach builds on the four associations' collaboration in responding to consultation on the future frequency of inspection of care services provided by their members.

The associations have agreed to advise their respective members (who cover the full spectrum from children's services to the care of older people) to check their contracts with local authorities to ensure that the terms and conditions are not being contravened.

They say that the reluctance on the part of local authorities to raise the fees they pay for care has to be seen against the background of unprecedented increases in gas, electricity and water charges, as well as a 15% increase in registration fees announced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection on 13th February, higher fees for Criminal Records Bureau checks from 1st April, and the introduction of a new charge for first POVA checks.

Frank Ursell, chief executive officer of the Registered Nursing Home Association, said the joint action by the four associations highlighted the scale of their concern about the financial pressures on independent and voluntary sector providers of long-term care to the country's most vulnerable people.

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He added: “We cannot understand the mentality of local authorities who on the one hand say they want higher standards of care to be delivered but on the other hand refuse to provide the necessary resources to enable the care providers to do so.”

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For further information and comment, please contact:

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