

NEWS RELEASE FROM
THE REGISTERED NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

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**DIGNITY FOR OLDER PEOPLE STARTS WITH
ADEQUATE FUNDING OF CARE:
RNHA RESPONSE TO NEW GOVERNMENT POLICY**

Proposals from the Department of Health's national director for older people, Professor Ian Philp, to tackle age discrimination wherever it occurs have been backed by the Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA).

Responding to Professor Philp's document, *A New Ambition for Old Age*, the RNHA said today (5th May) that it positively welcomes any concerted attempt at government level to safeguard the rights and dignity of older people.

The RNHA, which represents over 1,200 nursing homes across the UK, endorses Professor Philp's seven-point plan for strengthening the support available to older people both within and outside the NHS, including measures to promote good nutrition, improve care workers' skills and champion the needs of older people.

Commented RNHA chief executive officer Frank Ursell: "To hear this powerful commitment to older people from a senior government official is encouraging. What we need to see now is these very laudable ambitions being backed up by the necessary resources."

He added: "Many older people feel there is nothing more undignified than having to sell their home in order to pay for their own care. Many of them feel that they have been abandoned by the State, which provides minimal levels of funding for those who need long-term care.

"So let Professor Philp's lofty words be matched by government decisions to comply with the Appeal Court judgement and Ombudsman's rulings on the responsibilities of the NHS to meet all the costs of those older people whose needs are primarily health-based. Let older people who need 24-hour care no longer have to worry about whether they meet or don't pass this or that means test.

"If, and only if, the government puts its money where its mouth is will older people feel that their dignity and human rights are being taken seriously."

END

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