

A hindrance or a help? The contribution of inspection to the quality of care in homes for older people.

Substantial reforms of the regulatory system of care homes for older people in England were embodied in the Care Standards Act (CSA) 2000 and the Health and Social Care Act 2008. These were part of a wider Government agenda to modernize and integrate health and social care services. The Acts established new regulatory bodies for care services and workers and along with the regulations and mandatory National Minimum Standards (NMS) created a framework to ensure greater consistency of quality and to better protect vulnerable children and adults (Engelman and Spencer, 2003; DoH, 2008). The impact of these changes for both inspectors and providers of care services has been significant. Regulators have had to adjust and adopt new ways of working whilst carrying out their statutory responsibilities. Care providers have had to respond to the revised changes in standards and requirements of registration. This presentation examines inspection as a mechanism for improving the quality of care standards. It reports on a study conducted in 2004 that sought the views of managers of care homes for older people about the NMS and the inspection process at that time. The role of inspectors will be considered in light of the findings and published literature.

References

Department of Health, Health and Social Care Act 2008

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/Actsandbills/HealthandSocialCareBill/DH_080426 (accessed 1 April 2010).

Engelman, P. and Spencer, P. (2003) *Blackstone's Guide to the Care Standards Act 2000*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.