institute of
public care

Institute of Public Care
Website: http://ipc.brookes.ac.uk
Email: ipc@brookes.ac.uk

8 Palace Yard Mews
Bath BA1 2NH
Tel: 01225 484088
Fax: 01225 330313

First Floor Midland House
West Way, Botley
Oxford OX2 0PL
Tel: 01865 790312
Fax: 01865 248470

Registered in England 2299189
VAT Registered 490 9430 29GB

Maritime Charities Funding Group

Accommodation, Care and Support Strategy for Older Seafarers and their Dependants

Executive Summary

April 2010

OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

Maritime Charities Funding Group

Accommodation, Care and Support Strategy for Older Seafarers and their Dependants

Executive Summary

1 Demand

1.1 As most people are aware, Britain is a rapidly aging society. As the Office for National Statistics reports, over the last twenty five years the number of people aged 65 and over increased by 18 per cent to 9.9 million whilst the number of people aged 85 and over doubled to 1.3 million. This trend is due to continue for at least the next two decades. By 2033 the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to have reached 3.2 million whilst the population aged 65 and over will account for 22 per cent of the total population in 2033.

1.2 Given that older people occupy the majority of bed days in hospital and the over 65's constitute over 60% of all health service expenditure, the importance of developing effective health and social care within the community is essential. Nationally, there is an enormous need to reduce the period of ill health that most older people suffer from prior to death, and where this does not occur, find cheaper interventions that lessen the need for acute care and care home admissions.

1.3 Demographic change amongst the seafarer population is neither uniform nor does it follow the national increase. Over the next ten years it is estimated that for the over 60's population the number of ex Royal Navy personnel will fall by 31 % and former fishermen by 15% although the number of ex merchant seamen aged over 60 is projected to rise by 12%. Overall, this will produce a decline in the number of former seafarers aged over 60 from 569,000 to 439,000, a diminution of some 23%.

1.4 However, although the overall numbers of former seafarers will decline, of those who remain, like the rest of the population, they are also likely to live longer with increasing physical and mental frailty.

1.5 In terms of the characteristics of the seafaring population again there are a range of similarities and differences between sectors. In general, older seafarers suffer worse health problems than the wider population of older people, particularly amongst the fishing community. There is a higher incidence of people living alone, particularly amongst the fishing and merchant navy populations. Older seafarers are also less likely to own their own homes although this masks differences between the sectors. Fishermen have very low home ownership compared with older Royal Navy seafarers, who as a group are more likely to own their own homes than the general older people's population.

1.6 A number of issues emerge from the demographic analysis. In terms of future health, housing and social care provision, given the considerably smaller proportion of the overall over 80 population they occupy, seafarers are likely to have less influence than at present. This is further compounded by the increasing number of seafarers who, on retirement, do not remain within traditional sea faring communities. Therefore, even in their 'nautical heartland' they are likely to command less influence.

1.7 Within the seafaring community it is clear that those most in need are likely to be amongst the fishing community although on some indicators their disadvantage is also experienced by merchant seamen. The group that has probably most radically changed are those from the Royal Navy, not only in terms of their diminishing numbers, but also in terms of their comparative affluence given their high degree of home ownership.

2 Supply

2.1 In recent years housing and social care policy across the four countries of the UK has considerably changed.

2.2 There has been a move, in terms of public sector provision, away from residential care and traditional sheltered housing. The former has been rejected by most older people as not meeting their needs, the latter has been seen as too small, not accessible and increasingly stigmatising as an approach.

2.3 In its place there has been an increased emphasis on support for older people in their own homes, such as through Intermediate Care, the use of assistive technology and enhanced home care. Recent years has also seen the development of extra care housing (ECH) as a sort of residential care/sheltered housing hybrid (although an increasing number of people may move into ECH when they have no care needs).

2.4 Other changes in policy currently underway include; a move away from care and support defined by professionals to one where individuals receive funding to purchase their own services, a move to focus more on the outcomes that a service might achieve rather than measuring success through cost and volume and finally, an increased emphasis on seamless services through organisations working in partnership wherever possible.

2.5 In terms of seafarers, the largest group of providers cater for mixed groups of Merchant Navy, Royal Navy and fishing fleets. Some have historically had a broader cross-service, cross sector focus; others have made pragmatic changes to reflect the changing nature of the seafaring communities, and now accommodate non-service, non-seafarers where space permits.

2.6 Specialist providers face a number of different issues. There are very few providers who offer a service solely to older ex-Royal Navy seafarers with more providing for all service veterans. For fishermen given the decline in numbers and the move away from traditional centres of fishing, there is a need for more partnership with generic providers of accommodation for older people, as well as better links with other service providers to enable ex-fishermen to receive the care and support they need. Like the fishing industry, the Merchant Navy has also undergone great change. Providers offering older models of provision focused on single room, catered accommodation are likely to face challenges as demand for such accommodation from the seafaring community declines and as national standards emphasise different forms of accommodation.

2.7 Therefore, the sector faces a number of challenges in the future:

- **Changing demand:** Some providers may find existing services unsustainable without reconfiguration given a diminution in demand for the services they offer. A number of providers have commented that there is a noticeable change in the expectations of service users, reflecting higher expectations of housing and related services, and of more demanding behaviours that are associated with a broader, consumer-driven, service-orientated culture. This is placing demands on housing providers, who have to deal with occasional tensions between older service users, who are often less demanding, and "younger" ones, who are more so.
- **Complexity of need:** Older seafarers, as for all older people, will have an increasingly complex range of support needs. There is recognition that there is going to be an increasing demand for specialist dementia care facilities. In addition a number of providers are working with service users to support problems associated with depression, alcohol and (to a lesser extent) drug misuse, and post traumatic stress disorder, as well as general nursing care needed by older seafarers.
- **Quality of housing:** Some current stock clearly does not meet standards encouraged by national land local government, eg, Lifetimes Homes standards, and cannot support independent living. Some providers are struggling to provide long term housing in buildings designed for short term use only.
- **Workforce:** Providers employ staff with a wide range of expertise, in nursing, domiciliary care, housing management, catering, grants and finance, and maintenance, for instance. In general, the

increasing expectations of service users will place additional demands on staff, and there will be a need to ensure that the workforce is trained to meet changing needs arising from this.

- **Funding:** MCFG charities currently provide sizeable financial support to accommodation, care and support providers. However, this level of funding can never be sufficient to cover all capital and revenues commitments, and there is widespread concern about the challenges of securing funding in future.

3 The Way Ahead

3.1 It is suggested that MCFG adopts as its vision the following four outcomes in order to prioritise and determine future funding:

- Older seafarers are helped to be independent, healthy and happy.
- Older seafarers are able to live in the community and accommodation they want.
- Older seafarers are able to make informed choices about where and how they live.
- Older seafarers with complex needs are able to receive high quality specialist care.

3.2 To achieve this vision for older seafarer housing, care and support services, MCFG needs to encourage providers to consider their role in local communities, their relationship with the local care and support market for older people, and how they can best achieve the four outcomes for older seafarers. Given the diminishing potential to influence MCFG will need to stimulate partnership working with other providers of services for older people both within the sector, and in the wider community, with an approach which considers the overall pathway for the individual through the range of services they need.

3.3 It is proposed to deliver this vision MCFG should consider the following elements:

- A review of funding: there should be clear priorities about how funding should be directed, with clear information, guidance and support for providers to enable them to plan their services and access available funding.
- A review of the role of MCFG: this should consider what role the maritime charities should collectively perform in helping to acquire influence over policy at a national and a local level.
- The delivery of support for providers: if the MCFG is to encourage the modernisation and improvement of services to seafarers through its funding mechanism it will need to recognise and respond to the considerable challenge that this will pose to some organisations.