

Self Care Forum welcomes call for ‘honest and realistic’ debate.

Calling for a debate on meeting future demand and tackling the funding gap of £30b to 2020 must now be the right way forward. The Self Care Forum is also calling for the recognition of people’s own ability to care for their health as a key component of addressing the sustainability of our NHS funded through general taxation.

Helping people to live longer with more complex conditions, preventing ill health and building confidence to look after themselves and their families at home is a long held view of members of the Self Care Forum.

GP and SCF Board member, Dr Gill Jenkins said, “GPs are overworked as a result of unrealistic expectations and patient demand on the NHS and we must do more to help them help themselves. The SCF has produced tools such as fact sheets and an online learning course to support primary care. The hope is to educate and encourage patients to look after their own minor ill health and provide them with the confidence and knowledge also to self manage long term conditions as they strike.”

The population has changed in a way that in Bevan’s day would have been unforeseeable. Back then, just 350 people each year reached the age of 100 - in 2010 the number was 12,000. But the Service has not evolved to cope with this. For too many people, they are living longer but not living longer healthily.

“Increased self care brings many benefits, not only for the individual”, continues Dr Jenkins “but for clinicians, the NHS, government and society as a whole. Over the years, support for self care has grown. It is essential for sustainability in the NHS, managing expectations and targeting resources. By helping people to be more capable in their self care options must be one major step forward in our joint goals.”

- Ends -

Notes to Editors:

1. The Self Care Forum was inaugurated in May 2011 by Paul Burstow MP, Minister of State for Care at the time, its aims is to further the reach of self care and to embed it into everyday life so as to establish it as a lifelong habit and culture.
2. The fact sheets referred to by Dr Jenkins can be seen on the SCF website selfcareforum.org.uk
3. Dr Gill Jenkins is also a LTC Clinical Lead at NHS Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group
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