

**Director of Social Services:**  
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23<sup>rd</sup> August 2006

Mr Pat Newe  
Assistant Chief Inspector  
Social Services Inspectorate  
Room C3.28  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3SQ

Dear Mr Newe

**Re: Inspection of Social Care Support Services for Carers of  
Older People – Eastern Health and Social Services Board**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the incorporation of the Inspection Report's findings into the Board's planning, commissioning and monitoring functions.

To date, the following actions have been planned or implemented:

- i) The Report has been shared with the full Commissioning Team;
- ii) The Commissioning Team facilitated a board-wide workshop in conjunction with Down Lisburn Trust to facilitate the dissemination of the Report's findings and recommendations;
- iii) One of the Board's Key Quality Indicators for 2006-2007 focuses on the uptake of carers' assessments within the Trusts. This will be monitored through written reports and site visits; and
- iv) The Board, through its Local Health and Social Care Groups, has funded a number of health promotion activities aimed specifically at Carers. This has been on a non-recurrent basis.

You will be aware that the Board has devolved the commissioning of services for older people and their carers to the Local Health and Social Care Groups (LHSCGs).

Arrangements under the Reform of Public Administration are that LHSCG's will shortly cease to exist as committees of the Board.

Each LHSCG had made effective arrangements to meet and consult with local carers of older people at a time and location most suitable to them. The Board will make every effort to ensure that these communication channels are maintained within the new structures.

In a period of immense organisational change, the production of these standards should assist in ensuring that the needs of carers of older people remain a priority for service providers. It is, however, vital that support for carers is adequately resourced. The current situation of inadequate funding leads to raised expectations and disappointment when those expectations cannot be met. Carers and staff become disillusioned, disheartened and demotivated.

It is to be hoped that this Report, along with the Overview Report when available, will be used to influence the overall resource provision for this group of people.

I trust these comments are helpful. If you require any further assistance please contact Joyce McKee, Principal Social Worker on 028 9055 3966.

Yours sincerely

**Dr M Paula J Kilbane**  
**Chief Executive**