

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

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James Cleverly AM

Chair, Health and Public Services Committee
City Hall
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Our ref: MGLA120510-0201

Date:

14 JUN 2010

Dear James

Thank you for your letter of 10 May about the Assembly scrutiny into home care services for older people in London. I agree with you about the importance of home care services for older people and I am determined to do all that I can to make London a better place for older people to live. Good, reliable and affordable home care services are a key part of this and I will do all I can to help older people get the services they deserve.

Your letter mentions several of the report's recommendations and I am pleased to update you on how I will be taking these forward.

Recommendation 2

The Mayor should work with London Councils to assess the feasibility of setting up a pan-London signposting and frontline information line for older Londoners, where callers can get general information and advice on issues such as home care services, or be put through to local information and advice services for more specific local queries. This feasibility study should be completed by March 2011.

This will be taken forward, in part, through Action 9.2 in the London Health Inequality Strategy which is a specific action to improve provision of information on how to access health and social care in London. Under this action I will be exploring how we can make better use of locations such as libraries, boroughs' one-stop-shops, PCTs and services for groups such as homeless people to improve the provision of information. However, no resources have been identified at present, so a completion date of March 2011 is at present an uncertainty.

Recommendation 3

The Mayor should work with the Joint Improvement Partnership to hold an event during 2010 for borough and NHS staff to share and develop good practice in preventative care.

This is not thought to be necessary as work on improving social care in London, based around sharing best practice, is being taken forward through the Joint Improvement Partnership.

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Recommendation 4

The Mayor should include in his Health Inequalities Strategy Delivery Plan an initiative to lobby London Funders to support preventative initiatives such as Time Banks that can provide an informal support service as well as potentially reducing demands on statutory services.

This will be taken forward in the Health Inequality Strategy through several actions.

Action 4.1 seeks to influence longer term investment of resources to create and sustain action to build social capital and engage communities. This includes a supporting action to host a meeting of Time Bank leaders and funders to identify opportunities to promote increased commitment across London. I will also be supporting other volunteering initiatives across London.

Under Action 7.2, I will also lobby for a fair share of resources for London's health and social care services and increase investment in public health, prevention and early years intervention.

Recommendation 5

The Mayor should include in his Older People's Action Plan in 2010/11 an initiative to work with local authorities, care providers, older people's organisations and other partners to share and develop good practice in encouraging informal feedback about social care services and dealing with complaints.

This is being taken forward through the Community Voices initiative.

I found your report to be extremely valuable in highlighting the key issues that face home care services in London. For too long these services have failed to fully meet the needs of older Londoners and I am determined to do all that I can to change this state of affairs.

I hope this reply addresses the issues that you raise. Should you wish to discuss any of these actions further please contact Helen Davies, Health Policy Manager, on 020 7983 4326.

Thank you for the diligence of your work.

Yours ever,



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London