

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased by 1.5 million (1990–2000) and is projected to increase by a further 1.5 million by 2020 (Office for National Statistics 2001). The ageing population is a major public health issue, and the need to understand the health and social care needs of older people is a high priority for the UK government. The ageing population is also a major public health issue in other developed countries, and the need to understand the health and social care needs of older people is a high priority for many governments. The ageing population is a major public health issue, and the need to understand the health and social care needs of older people is a high priority for many governments.

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