

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased by 1.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased by 1.1 million (Office for National Statistics 2000). The number of people aged 85 and over has increased by 0.5 million.

There is a growing awareness of the need to develop services to meet the needs of the ageing population. The Department of Health (1999) has set out a strategy for the future of health care for older people. The strategy is based on the following principles: (1) to ensure that older people have access to the services they need; (2) to ensure that services are of high quality; (3) to ensure that services are cost-effective; and (4) to ensure that services are sustainable.

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