

the 1990s, the number of people with a diagnosis of schizophrenia has increased in the United Kingdom (Meltzer 1997). The prevalence of schizophrenia in the United Kingdom is estimated to be 1.2% (Meltzer 1997).

There is a growing awareness of the need to improve the lives of people with schizophrenia. The United Kingdom has a number of national strategies for mental health care, including the 1998 *Mental Health Act* (MHA) and the 1999 *Mental Health Review Board* (MHRB) (MHA 1998, MHRB 1999). The MHA and MHRB are designed to ensure that people with mental health problems are treated in a way that is consistent with their rights and needs. The MHA and MHRB also aim to ensure that people with mental health problems are treated in a way that is consistent with the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Handicapped* (United Nations 1975).

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