

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Another week another article found in The Times “Cash-strapped councils leave families to care for the elderly” which increases growing concern for the elderly and their families. See Attached Article.

It is increasingly important for everyone to ensure that they as individuals have given legal authority to make decisions on their behalf simply being a husband, wife, partner or good friend will not satisfy the requirements of the law.

Make sure you are protected by making a Lasting Power of Attorney.

**If you would like a free initial consultation then contact me Chris Berry at:**

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## Cash-strapped councils leave families to care for the elderly

**Chris Smyth, Health Editor**

January 31 2017, 12:01am, The Times



NHS leaders say hospitals are filling up with elderly patients who have been allowed to fall ill and cannot go home

Families will have to step in as more older patients are denied help with washing and dressing, councils have warned. A cash crisis will leave local authorities unable to meet their legal duties to older people under reforms introduced three years ago, they said.

Ministers need to admit that older people will be given only limited help as there is no more money available, according to the Local Government Association (LGA). It fears legal challenges from people who say councils are not meeting an obligation to ensure their dignity and wellbeing.

Cuts to council budgets have meant hundreds of thousands of older people lacking help with everyday tasks and NHS leaders have complained that hospitals are filling up with elderly patients who have been allowed to fall ill and cannot go home safely.

Izzi Seccombe, of the LGA, said that pledges to the elderly were “in grave danger of falling apart and failing, unless new funding is announced by government for adult social care”.

She said councils would increasingly have to prioritise the least mobile people who could not cope without carers at the expense of those whose lives are improved by extra help.

“We are worried about undermining the basic needs of people getting dressed, washed, helped out of bed and so on,” she said. “People who need to be bathed and have meals delivered, those will continue but at the expense of people who have lesser needs.”

She warned that as cuts continued “there will be more demands on carers and families to support people . . . Concerns about people being stranded in hospital will become more frequent”.

The LGA estimates that an extra £2.6 billion is needed to keep pace with a growing elderly population and says that without the money there is little hope councils can meet their responsibilities under the Care Act 2014. These include providing a care and support plan for all eligible people and a personal budget to help buy the care needed.

“If no new money is urgently announced, then [the] government needs to be honest and upfront with the public about the limitations of the care and support we can provide, and the fact that as a society we will no longer be able to meet the ambitions and objectives of the Care Act,” Ms Seccombe said.

Simon Bottery, of the charity Independent Age, said: “Councils will also admit in private that they are now effectively ‘rationing’ care services because they do not have the resources to provide them to all those eligible. While there may still be scope for more council efficiency, without extra cash the fear is that more elderly and disabled people will be left without help to carry out even the basic tasks required by the Care Act like washing, eating and getting dressed.”

Caroline Abrahams, of Age UK, said: “Already, only people with very high levels of need receive care services and it would be deeply worrying if access to care is further reduced.”

A government spokeswoman said: “Local authorities have a duty to implement new rights introduced in the Care Act and, while many are already providing high-quality social care services, we will continue to challenge and support those not currently doing so. We have provided councils with up to £7.6 billion of dedicated funding for social care over the course of this parliament.”