

Foreword



We are seeing an enormous demographic shift in our society. For the first time ever, there are more people of retirement age in our country than there are children.

These changes are a cause for great celebration. We are living longer and we have the advantage of a wealth of opportunities not afforded to any previous generation. But, they also present us a challenge. How do we ensure that our longer lives are also healthy and active ones?

The Prevention Package for Older People is the Department of Health's response to this challenge. It sets out how preventing health problems before they occur can significantly increase the chances of living a healthy and satisfying later life. It also forms the DH contribution to the government's ageing strategy *Building a Society for All Ages*.

The theme of the prevention package is 'keeping well in later life'. It focuses on those issues that older people tell us are most important in helping to keep them well and active, such as footcare and help to get well again after a fall or serious illness.

The prevention package encourages local health and social care commissioners to give priority to services that maximise health, well-being and independence in later life. It encourages people over 50 to take up services such as hearing and sight tests, 'flu vaccinations and screening for serious conditions such as cancer, as well as helping them to be better informed of available options should they become ill or have an accident.

We believe the resources included in the prevention package, now and in the future, are a key contribution towards ensuring that our later years are a time of productivity, fulfillment and enjoyment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Hope".

Phil Hope MP

Minister of State for Care Services
Department of Health