

“Crisis in Fair Deal Scheme shows the need for alternative models in Older People’s Care”

ALONE reiterate need for more resources into home help and community living

17th July 2014 ALONE, the charity that supports older people in need, has today criticised the 12 week waiting time facing applicants to the Fair Deal scheme. The programme was put in place to provide monetary aid for older people in need of long term nursing home care who would struggle to afford the nursing home fees.

Sean Moynihan, CEO of ALONE said, “Today’s announcement of a twelve week waiting list for funding through the Fair Deal scheme just furthers our belief that other solutions are needed. The Fair Deal scheme, in theory, is a fantastic resource for older people who genuinely want and need to be in a nursing home. But the fact remains that given the choice, many older people would choose to remain in their own homes, where they can retain some independence.”

He continued, “This is not a pipedream, providing the resources for older people to remain living in their homes for as long as possible, is substantially more cost effective than accommodating older people in a nursing home for an indefinite period of time. Nursing homes should be the very last rung on the ladder, not the first”.

Earlier this year the government expressed the aim that they wish to ensure “that older people, who have contributed so much to Irish society, can continue to live in their own homes and communities as is their wish”.

Moynihan continued, “The government has reduced home help hours by 1.6million over the last 3 years, as well as significantly reducing community based supports and front line services for older people.”

ALONE is calling on the government not to be short-sighted and to reinstate these core services to ensure that older people can maintain a standard of living in their own homes without being forced, through lack of options, into a nursing home.

Former Minister for Health, James Reilly previously said “Delivering better outcomes for older people will require joined-up thinking between Government departments, agencies of all kinds, the voluntary and the commercial sectors, and older people themselves.”

Moynihan concluded, “ALONE is ready and willing to discuss solutions with the Government to ‘deliver better outcomes for older people’”.

ALONE strive to keep older people living within the community by providing suitable accommodation, home supports and social outlets. For many, nursing homes are not a plausible long term solution due to the vast expense associated with this kind of care; the costs of supporting an older person who is remaining within the community are far more viable.

ALONE can be contacted on (01) 679 1032 for those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in the community or visit www.alone.ie