

# **Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Londonderry** **Tionól Spioradalta Bhahá'ithe Dhoire**

To **WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

Comment on Discussion Document

**“PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE DAY CARE SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE”**

This submission is made on behalf of the followers of the Bahá'í Faith in the Derry City Council district by the Spiritual Assembly as their elected administrative body.

1. We are glad to have had the opportunity to make this submission, for whose content we have consulted with and drawn upon the experiences of members of our community.
2. It is often stated that the measure of a society's civilisation is the care it gives to its most vulnerable members, and the elderly fall into this latter group, especially with the decline in the sort of family closeness that previously provided much of this.
3. We recognise that there is a growing aging population whose demands on services are theoretically infinite and a degree of prioritisation is necessary.
4. This prioritisation should be based on procedures that have been consulted upon and organised to ensure equitable delivery of services; the division into three levels of needs/care in the consultation document addresses this well.
5. If such a system is to work, however, the resources not only need to be there “in the system”, they need to be there when and where required. If not, then someone whose needs are not met can suffer a decline in their condition (sometimes quite rapidly) while waiting and can shift into a category of higher need. This is not good for the person or for the use of resources. Sadly, it does occur already and it is important that service changes address this in order to avoid such circumstances.
6. *With regard to the specific query about equality impact:*  
It seems that Waterside residents may face increased difficulties. Of course not all Waterside residents are Protestants, but most Protestants here are Waterside residents, therefore difficulties in that area will impact upon them more. It could be seen (or represented) as an unequal provision of services.

April 2015 CE.