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PRESS RELEASE

NICE Citizens Council publishes discussion document on age and how treatments should be used in the NHS

A discussion document on age and how treatments should be used in the NHS is published today by the Citizens Council of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE). The Council is undertaking a public consultation exercise to engage children and young people and to invite the views of the wider public and interested organisations.

The Council produced its discussion document after considering at its May meeting in Cardiff the question: **'Are there circumstances in which the age of a person should be taken into account when NICE is making a decision about how treatments should be used in the NHS?'**

The discussion document can be found via the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk. A final report will be published after the next Council meeting on 20-22 November 2003. The Council is composed of 30 socially and geographically representative members of the public in England and Wales aged from 19 to 76. NICE is the independent organisation responsible for developing national guidance on treatments and care for the NHS in England and Wales.

Citizens Council members would be interested to hear the views of the wider public and interested organisations about the question that the Citizens Council has been asked to consider. The Citizens Council meeting has been facilitated and the interim report drafted on behalf of the Citizens Council members by Vision 21. A process for collecting these views will be published on the Vision 21 website at <http://www.visiontwentyone.co.uk/nicecc/agehealth.htm>. These views – or a summary of them – will be available for the Citizens Council to consider along with other evidence at their next meeting in November.

Between now and November the National Children's Bureau will be consulting on behalf of the Council with children and young people. The findings will be presented to Council members at their meeting in November. This will enable the Council to consider the views of children and young people alongside other evidence before reaching their final conclusions.

Council member Jennifer Brown said: "It's been exciting to play a part in developing our ideas on the subject of age. Many different viewpoints were put forward and there was a frank and open debate. Importantly, we all agree our first concerns are the people who use the NHS and we must work together to help NICE achieve the best possible outcomes for them. I'm looking forward to the next meeting in November when we'll draw our final conclusions, taking into account all the evidence, including the views of children and young people collected over the summer."

NICE Chairman, Sir Michael Rawlins, said, "We are delighted to receive the Council's discussion document. Age is a complex issue in healthcare and as such we believe it's appropriate to ask the Council to consider it at two meetings. This provides the Citizens Council with an opportunity to consult the public more widely in the interim and to acquire a real feel for what children and young people think about this issue. Vision 21, who facilitate the Citizens Council at arms length from NICE, are opening a website to encourage people to send the Citizens Council their views on the issue of age and how it relates to healthcare."

He added, "The Citizens Council will provide an invaluable insight into how ordinary people view this complex issue and we look forward to their final report in the autumn."

The third meeting of the Citizens Council will be held between 20-22 November 2003, venue to be confirmed, after which the Citizens Council will produce a final report with its conclusions on the subject. More details about the event, including the venue, will be published on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk nearer the time.

Ends

Council members and others involved in the consultation process are available for comment. All media requests to speak to members of the Citizens Council should be directed to Geoffrey Bowden at Nexus Structured Communications on 020 7255 8642 or 07958 682 683 or Simon Williams on 020 7255 8643 or 07989 392 810.

Notes for editors

1. Who are the Citizens Council members?

The members of the Citizens Council are: • John Baldwin, an electrician who lives in Widnes, Cheshire. • Auriol Britton, presently an unemployed aspiring writer who lives in Bristol, Avon. • Brian Brown, an electrical engineer, from Chester-le-Street, County Durham. • Jennifer Brown, a clerical officer who lives in Derby, Derbyshire. • Sylvia Brown, a retired local government officer who lives in London. • Scott Chapman, a printer who lives in Corby, Northamptonshire. • Tracey Christmas, an accountant who lives in Hull, East Yorkshire. • Rod Crowshaw, a store assistant who lives in Castle Bromwich, West Midlands. • Trevor Davison, a supervisor scaffolder, who lives in Lincoln, Lincolnshire. • Marie Goorun, a dressmaker and part-time French tutor who lives in Gillingham, Dorset. • Mark Handley, a project manager who lives in Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. • Susan Jones, a retail clerk who lives in Cardiff, Glamorgan. • Rashad Khan, an administrator who lives in Keighley, West Yorkshire. • Deborah Lee, a part-time advertisement make-up artist and housewife who lives in Bournemouth, Dorset. • Raymond Longstaffe, a former builder who lives in Brecon, Powys. • John MacGlashan, Retired security officer, Liverpool, Merseyside. • Melanie McClure, a mother of one who lives in Hebburn, Tyne and Wear. • Susan McNeill, a secretary who lives in Market Harborough, Leicestershire. • Anthony Messenger, an insurance broker who lives in Windsor, Berkshire. • Sharon Morgan, a milliner who lives in Birmingham, West Midlands. • Sunita Nanda, a local government officer, who lives in Middlesex. • Bob Osborne, a retired former pilot who lives in Horsham, West Sussex. • Paul Pendlebury, an assembly worker, who lives in Preston, Lancashire. • Audrey Pestell, a retired head teacher, who lives in Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire. • Marie Raynor, a housewife, who lives in Sale,

Greater Manchester. • Ian Simons, a taxi driver, who lives in London. • Colin Stewart, a self-employed IT systems advisor who lives in London. • Fiona Taylor, a wine marketing assistant, who lives in Sidbury, Devon. • Peter Thomas, a teacher, who lives in Rhondda, Cynon Taff. • Judith Ward, a wood turner, who lives near Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire.

2. Statistics on make up of council

Population (England & Wales)	& Criteria	Panel required match population statistics	No's to Actual Members meeting criteria	Panel the
10%	under 25 years	3	4	
20%	over 60 years	6	6	
12%	disability	3	3	
5% (10%)	ethnic minority	3	4	
13%	home, student, unemployed	4	5	
19%	partly skilled/unskilled	6	4	
25%	skilled manual	7	8	
26%	skilled non-manual	8	7	
14%	managerial & technical	4	4	
3%	professional	1	3	
49%	male	15	15	
51%	female	15	15	
95%	live in England	28	27	
5%	live in Wales	2	3	

Population (England)	Region	Panel required match population statistics	No's to Actual Members meeting criteria	Panel the
7.9%	East Midlands	2	2	
10.2%	East	3	3	
4.8%	North East	1	2	
13.0%	North West	4	4	
15.2%	South East	5	4	
9.3%	South West	3	4	
10.0%	West Midlands	3	3	
9.5%	Yorks & Humber	3	2	
15.0%	London	4	3	

Population statistics from the ONS (Office for National Statistics).