

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million (19.5% of the population).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people, and the Government has set out a strategy for doing so in the *White Paper on Ageing* (Department of Health, 1999). This paper sets out the authors' views on the implications of the White Paper for the development of a new generation of health professionals.

Background

The *White Paper on Ageing* (Department of Health, 1999) sets out the Government's strategy for addressing the needs of older people. It is based on the following principles:

- Older people should be able to live independently for as long as possible.
- Older people should be able to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Older people should be able to live in their own communities for as long as possible.
- Older people should be able to live with dignity and respect.

The *White Paper on Ageing* (Department of Health, 1999) also sets out a number of key objectives for the health service:

- To improve the health and well-being of older people.
- To reduce the number of older people who are dependent on the health service.
- To improve the quality of care for older people.
- To ensure that older people are able to live independently for as long as possible.

The *White Paper on Ageing* (Department of Health, 1999) also sets out a number of key actions for the health service:

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