Views of old, unwell and disadvantaged people are being ignored in the debate on welfare funding, research suggests. A gap exists between the health and social care system that older adults expect and what may be provided by a reformed welfare state.

Dr Barbara Hanratty, a senior lecturer at HYMS and the University of York’s Department of Health Sciences, led the research team writing in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine which said the values underpinned by the views expressed by a group of older adults receiving health and social care for life-limiting illnesses are an important contribution to the debate on welfare funding.

The research was funded by the National Institute for Health Research Health Services and Delivery Research programme.

The participants in the study, who were diagnosed with lung cancer, heart failure or stroke and judged by health professionals to be in the last year of life, displayed a strong sense of entitlement to services that were tax funded, after working lifetimes contributing to the state. Alongside this, a sense of social responsibility emerged in views that people should contribute to the costs of their social care if they were able. However, this did not extend to selling assets or using savings to pay for residential care, which was viewed as unjust.

Dr Hanratty said: “People who are old, unwell and from disadvantaged areas are least likely to be heard in the debate on welfare funding. Indeed, the voices of older people with high support needs on what they would want and value in their social care have been described as ‘so quiet as to be practically silent’.

(Continued on page 2)
Views ignored in welfare funding debate

(Continued from page 1)

The views expressed by participants in our study suggest that some of the silent voices may be dissenting and out of line with current government thinking.”

Among the study group there was a perception that entitlement to services had been earned, not only through a lifetime of working and paying taxes, but also through a far broader sense of being a good citizen; working hard, staying in employment and minimising earlier demands on the welfare state. Those that had been in low-income occupations were most keen to emphasise their contribution to society through work and taxes.

“These older people felt that a lifetime of tax contributions should represent an obligation fulfilled,” commented Dr Hanratty. “It is clear that any changes to existing systems will be unpopular with a cohort who have paid taxes and have an expectation of comprehensive services.”

The Government gave a cautious response to the 2011 Commission on Funding of Care and Support, which recommended a cap on lifetime contributions to social care, raising the means tested threshold above which people are liable for full costs of care, national eligibility criteria and portable assessments. The White Paper anticipated later this year is not expected to accept all the Commission’s recommendations.

“The views of our participants are at odds with the direction of welfare reform in many European countries, where the balance continues to shift from public to private provision,” said Dr Hanratty. “At a time when financial stringencies may prompt interest in safety-net welfare provision, our participants affirmed support for the principle of institutional welfare, provided on a universal basis. Such strong support for taxpayer-funded social care grounded in values of mutuality and earned entitlement through long working lives is striking.”

mutuality and earned entitlement social care grounded in values of strong support for taxpayer-funded provided on a universal basis. Such principle of institutional welfare, participants affirmed support for the safety-net welfare provision, our stringencies may prompt interest in reform in many European countries, at odds with the direction of welfare Commission’s recommendations. expected to accept all the assessments. The White Paper national eligibility criteria and portable means tested threshold above which recommended a cap on lifetime Funding of Care and Support, which response to the 2011 Commission on comprehensive services.”

Honei – I shrunk the NHS spend

The University of Hull’s HONEI (Humber Obesity, Nutrition, Education and Innovation) Project has responded to a recent diabetes report.

The report issued by researchers at the York Health Economic Consortium found that diabetes accounts for 10 per cent (£9.8 billion) of NHS spending, projected to rise to £16.9 billion over the next 25 years, or 17 per cent of the health service’s funds.

Steve Atkin, Professor of Diabetes and Endocrinology at the HONEI project said: “This report recognises that the obesity epidemic and resulting complications is costing the NHS a huge amount of money. We need a two-pronged attack, first to look at ways of effective weight loss and prevention of weight gain, and second to improve diabetes control for those who already have the disease.”

HONEI has a major interest in Type 2 Diabetes. The centre uses ground-breaking approaches to develop a multidisciplinary approach aimed at improving health and reducing health inequalities, particularly with respect to obesity.

Recent parents & NHS staff to make voices heard

HYMS and University of York researchers are encouraging recent parents and NHS staff to tell them about their experience of maternity and neonatal units in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Views will be fed into the ‘Getting it Right from the Start’ project led by the Mother & Infant Research Unit in the University’s Department of Health Sciences in collaboration with HYMS Professor Bill McGuire.

The project involves training staff in maternity and neonatal units to introduce practices that have been shown to improve the health and care of mothers and babies. As part of the project, over 50 NHS staff are working as champions in units across the region, promoting best practice.

The project is being evaluated by the NHS, with the Child and Maternal Health Observatory (ChiMat) examining whether it is making a difference to the care babies, women and families receive.

To gather views and experiences, ChiMat is operating web surveys for both parents and maternity and neonatal unit staff. Researchers would like to hear from anyone who has had experience of maternity or neonatal services in Yorkshire and the Humber from October 2011 onwards. The surveys are anonymous and no information is collected which will identify respondents or the hospital.

The project aims to improve the care of low risk women at admission in labour, and the care for babies and their parents in neonatal units.

HYMS students make policy at BMA

A motion submitted from HYMS has been made BMA Medical Student Committee policy.

Proposed by HYMS representative Melody Redman (Year 4), the motion addresses student welfare and will now be adopted nationally:

“This conference recognises the importance of medical students’ mental health and well-being and calls for the BMA to: i) Provide information on identifying stress/anxiety/depression; ii) Provide information to aid medical students in identifying coping methods and also emphasise the difference between healthy and maladaptive methods; iii) Work with medical schools to ensure clear methods of medical and emotional support for all students.”

The conference was also attended by Joshua Michaels (Year 1), Natalie Barclay-Klinge (Year 2), Deirdre Walsh (Year 5) and Elizabeth Lee (Year 5). Congratulations are due to Elizabeth, who was recently elected to the BMA Council.
Tributes have been paid to Mike Hardey, HYMS Reader in Sociology, who died suddenly, on Tuesday 27th March, after a short illness.

Mike was a gentle, popular colleague who joined HYMS in 2005. He was academic co-ordinator of the Phase I Student Selected Components (SSC) programme as well as running his own SSC in 'Social Bodies and Body Perception – exploring the various ways in which social life and the life of the human body interact'.

He also contributed to HYMS as a block lead and a plenary lecturer and sat on a number of HYMS committees.

His work on social media and doctor-patient relationships was ground-breaking. He published, in 1999, the first article about medicine and the internet in the leading international journal, Sociology of Health and Illness, which later used his paper as a springboard for a special edition on the web and medicine.

Although employed by the University of Hull, Mike, who was a keen academic, had close links to both universities. He made Sociology at York his second home and joined the University of York's Science and Technology Studies Unit (SATSU) in 2008 as co-director.

He was in demand as a speaker at conferences and workshops around the world, and had ongoing research links with the Helsinki University of Technology.

Second year HYMS student Alexander Berry said: “Dr Hardey was a fantastic lecturer, and his positive attitude and warmth was infective; the class always enjoyed his discussions and presentations, and I had been delighted to hear that I had been assigned his SSC.”

John Elton, HYMS Reader in Anatomy, added: “Mike was a wonderful man. He was a creative thinker, a supportive colleague and an entertaining and generous friend. His unassuming manner belied his reputation as an academic and scholar. "He will be a great loss to his daughter, Dr Maz Hardey, with whom he lived in York, and our deepest sympathies go to her."

The Dean of HYMS, Professor Tony Kendrick, said: “Mike was a long-time colleague and friend for many at HYMS. We were grateful for all his support. He will be greatly missed.”

Mike’s funeral service was held on Saturday 14th April, 2012 at Bishopthorpe crematorium, York, followed by a main celebration of his life at Grays Court, York.

Sarah Elton
READER in Anatomy Sarah Elton is leaving HYMS at the end of July to take up the post of Reader in Anthropology at Durham University.

York Hospital tutor news
FOLLOW the link for the latest edition of the newsletter.

UKCAT more equitable
USE of the United Kingdom Clinical Aptitude Test could lead to more equitable provision of offers to those applying to medical school from under-represented sociodemographic groups, say researchers at the Universities of Durham and Dundee.

Breast cancer progress
BIOMARKERS which could help to predict resistance to chemotherapy in breast cancer patients have been identified by researchers from the University of Hull.

Funding opportunity
THE Centre for Chronic Diseases and Disorders is inviting applications for the funding of academic conferences and outreach activities on the theme of chronic diseases and disorders.

Prevention of infection
RESEARCH into the structure of ‘biofilms’ conducted at the University of York could help develop new ways to prevent the infection of cardiac devices, such as replacement heart valves or pacemakers.

Staff news
Welcome to ...
Caroline Carfrae, Alumni Development Project Coordinator, based in York.
Dr Lisa Dikomitis, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, who joins the Centre for Health and Population Sciences.
Dr Rhian Gabe, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Trials, based in York.
Dr Kamran Siddiqi, Senior Lecturer in Epidemiology and Public Health, based in York.

and welcome back to ...
Kirstie Skelton Clarke, Project Officer, HYMS Postgraduate Centre who has returned from maternity leave.

Goodbye to ...
Dr Colin Melville, who leaves HYMS at the end of May to join Warwick Medical School as head of their MBBS programme.
Dure Shaikh, Temporary Undergraduate School Support Assistant in Hull.

Congratulations to ...
Jo Needham, who has been appointed Phase II Coordinator.

Changing roles ...
Dr Aziz Asghar has taken up the role of Senior Postgraduate Tutor.
Prof Jonathan Bennett has become Chair of the Postgraduate Research Board.
Dr Guy Millman will step down as Phase II Academic Lead at the end of August.

Sponsorship plea
Olivier Trevelayan Thomas (Year 5) will cycle from Land’s End to John O’Groats this summer in aid of the Charlie Sumption Memorial Fund (www.csmf.co.uk).

If you would like to sponsor Oliver, please follow the link for further information about the charity and sponsorship details.
### Research publications

RECENT publications by staff in the HYMS area include:

- **Wright B, Richardson, G (2011)** How ‘Together We Stand’ transformed the local delivery of mental health services. Health Service Journal, (published online 31 March 2011)

### Student research success

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students on their recent successes in competition and at conferences:

- **Charles Rowland** (Year 3) won a national student competition when he attended a course in expedition and pre-hospital medicine for doctors run by Expedition and Wilderness medicine. The competition was held over four days in the Lake District and Charles’ prize will be to take part in the Defence Medical Services research expedition to Bolivia during May and June. Charles also presented a poster at the World Extreme Medicine Conference in London in April.

- **Maria Crouch** won third place in the recent St Andrew’s National Surgical Competition. Follow the link to read Maria’s conference report.

- **Sinead Millwood** (Year 4) has had her research on ‘Cerebral Oximetry using near infrared spectroscopy to assess oxygenation and cardiac output in ICU’ accepted for oral presentation at the 2012 Royal College of Anaesthetists’ Annual Congress.

Congratulations also to **Oliver Browne** (Year 5) and **Reza Mafi** (Year 4) who have had papers accepted for publication:

- **Browne OT, Bhandari S.** Interpreting and investigating proteinuria testing for and investigating proteinuria in adults with or without specific symptoms needs careful Evaluation BMJ 2012;344:e2339


### Calendar of events

#### May

- **9** Seminar
  - **Medical imaging of biological processes**
  - Dr T A D Smith
  - Hardy Building, University of Hull

- **16** Seminar
  - **Innate immune regulation of CNS inflammation in multiple sclerosis**
  - Dr Bruno Gann
  - Q014, Department of Biology, University of York

#### June

- **1** Conference
  - Inaugural HYMS Postgraduate Research Conference
  - Ron Cooke Hub,
  - University of York

- **18–19** Conference
  - University Heath and Medical Libraries Group conference
  - Hardy Building, University of Hull

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Stories with the mouse symbol have more information in the news section of the HYMS website, where you will also find breaking news, updates and images. www.hyms.ac.uk/news

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If you have any contributions for this internal bulletin, please send them to val.parker@hyms.ac.uk