

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 this in the White Paper on *Ageing Better: The Government's Strategy for Older People* (Department of Health, 2000). The White Paper sets out a number of key objectives for the Government, including:

- to improve the health and well-being of older people;
- to improve the quality of life of older people;
- to improve the opportunities for older people to participate in society;
- to improve the support available to older people and their families;
- to improve the way in which services are provided to older people.

The White Paper also sets out a number of key actions for the Government, including:

- to improve the health and well-being of older people by increasing the number of GPs, nurses, and other health professionals who are trained to care for older people;
- to improve the quality of life of older people by increasing the number of care homes and other residential care facilities;
- to improve the opportunities for older people to participate in society by increasing the number of community centres and other facilities for older people;
- to improve the support available to older people and their families by increasing the number of home care services and other support services;
- to improve the way in which services are provided to older people by increasing the number of care workers and other staff who are trained to care for older people.

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