

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

Social Work Committee : 5th October, 1999	Subject : Management and Funding of Nursing Home and Residential Placements for Older People
From : Jim Dickie, Director of Social Work Prepared by : Jim Nisbet, Principal Officer, Community Care	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises Committee of issues concerning the management and funding of nursing home and residential care placements for older people.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Implementation of the National Health Service and Community Care Act, 1990 in 1993 charged local authorities with a wide range of new responsibilities. Amongst these changes was the requirement to assess the community care needs of people and arrange services to meet those needs for many frail older people and others with complex care needs this resulted in placement in a nursing home or residential care setting.
- 2.2 Prior to 1993, responsibility for the public funding of placements in nursing homes and residential care lay with the department of Social Security (DSS), subject to means testing but no assessment of care needs. The new legislation transferred this responsibility to the local authority social work departments and there followed a progressive transfer of resources from the DSS to local authorities, known as Care Element Transfer (CET).
- 2.3 CET is required to fund the direct care costs of people entering nursing home or independent sector residential care provision as well as the creation of alternatives to institutional care to support people who wish to remain in their own homes.
- 2.4 Critically, the sums of money received by local authorities from the DSS in Care Element Transfer was capped at 1993 levels, with no recognition of the fact that an increasingly frail and ageing population would mean significantly greater demands for access to such services.

3. THE CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 At the inception of North Lanarkshire Council in April, 1996 there were 550 funded placements in nursing home and residential care at a cost of over £5 million per annum. By April, 1999 the department had used Care Element Transfer monies to increase this to 969 placements at a cost of £9.2 million per annum. In addition, the department directly provides care for 387 people in its own residential care establishments.
- 3.2 The process of transferring monies from the DSS to local authorities is now effectively complete. In the current financial year, the Council has been able to allocate sufficient

additional funds for an additional 38 placements only. There is no further funding available to increase the number of additional placements.

4. THE MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 At present, the social work department is funding the maximum number of people possible within the allocated budget. It is therefore only possible to make new placements on the death or discharge of residents in existing nursing home and residential care placements.
- 4.2 Assessed need for nursing home and residential care continues to rise. This is the result of a number of factors: demographic changes that have resulted in increases in the numbers of very old people (35% growth in numbers of people aged over 85 years in North Lanarkshire between 1991 and 1996) with further increases projected; changes in patterns of in-patient health care with reductions in long stay provision and shorter periods of in-patient stay; and changes in family life with more frail older people living alone. The year on year increase in purchasing of nursing care and residential home places is illustrated in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Demand is such that there are now a number of people assessed as requiring nursing home and residential care placements for whom funding is not available. These include people who are currently being intensively supported at home and others who are awaiting discharge from hospital when funding becomes available.
- 4.4 The department is required to follow the Choice of Accommodation Directions issued by the Scottish Office in 1993 and, wherever possible, endeavours to meet the expressed preference of individual clients. This is proving extremely problematic. Of 932 nursing home places in North Lanarkshire, the number of vacancies at any one time is approximately 40. These vacancies are often not in the preferred area or establishment of choice for people awaiting placement.
- 4.5 In line with Scottish Office Action Plan "Modernising Community Care" - already reported to Committee, the department is working to develop alternatives to institutional care for people with complex care needs who wish to remain at home. An intensive home care project, recently implemented as a joint venture with Lanarkshire Health Board and the Primary Care NHS Trust, is expected to make a significant impact albeit on a relatively small number of complex care cases.

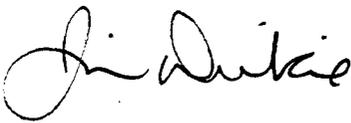
5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The number of people awaiting placement in nursing homes and independent sector residential homes has fallen compared with the same period last year. Numbers will, however, continue to grow and major issues face the Council with regard to the management of placements for vulnerable community care clients.
- 5.2 In pursuit of the aims of "Modernising Community Care" the department requires to develop alternative models of care in order to be able to offer non-institutional models of care for those with complex care needs.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Committee is asked to -

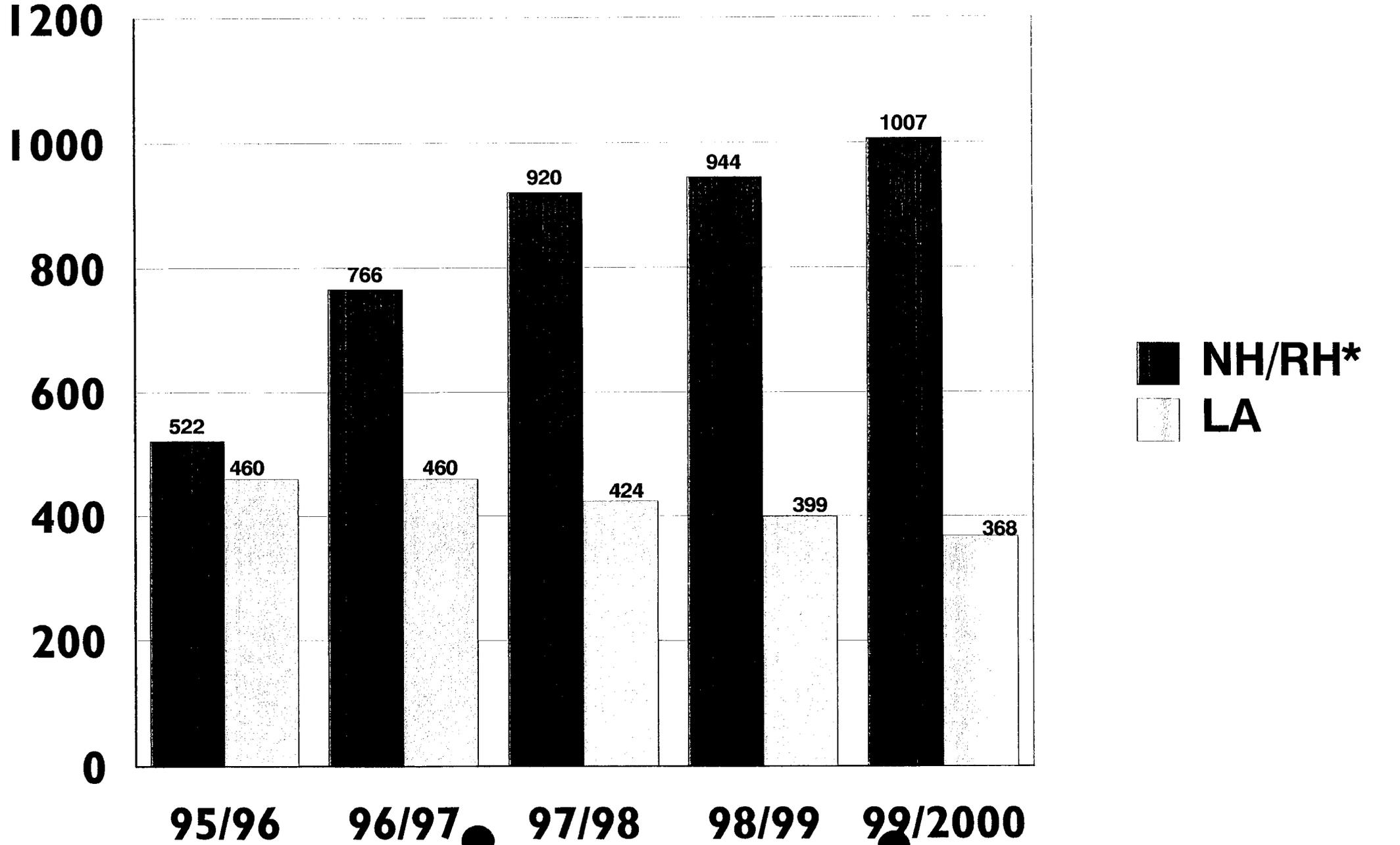
- (i) note the issues concerning nursing home and residential placements
- (ii) request the Director of Social Work to update the position to a future Committee
- (iii) note the contents of this report.



**JIM DICKIE,
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK
SEPTEMBER, 1999**

(For further information contact Jim Nisbet, Principal Officer, Community Care - Telephone 01698 332031)

Residential and Nursing Home Places Funded by Sector



*Nursing and Residential Care Homes