

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

TO: Social Work (Operations) Sub-Committee	Subject:
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	Social Services Inspectorate Report: Inspection of Community Care Services for Black and Ethnic Minority Older People
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 12 August 1998	
REPORT AUTHOR: Calum Mackinnon	
REF: JD/GMCI/CMACK/JMCF	

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Social Work Committee of the contents and recommendations contained in the Social Services Inspectorate Report: Inspection of Community Care Services for Black and Ethnic Minority Older People.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report inspected eight local authorities with significant ethnic minority groups. The demography of each of the eight local authorities differs substantially from that of North Lanarkshire in relation to numbers and concentrations of black and ethnic minorities.
- 2.2 It is known that due to cultural and religious differences many black and ethnic minority elders who may require Social Work services do not make application for these services. The Report examines how successfully the local authorities identified in the inspection tackled this issue.

**3 CONTENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The report covers six main headings:
- ◆ Policies, Strategies and Planning
  - ◆ Communication and Information
  - ◆ Assessment, Care Management and Review
  - ◆ Service Delivery
  - ◆ Protection from Abuse
  - ◆ Equality of Opportunity

#### **4 POLICIES STRATEGIES & PLANNING**

- 4.1 In order to overcome institutional racism Councils, and especially Social Work Departments, may require to rethink the approach of providing a common service to everyone, treating black and white older people the same. Social Work Departments should take account of cultural and religious differences when planning and providing services by, e.g. establishing inclusive consultation arrangements and other equality practices, and incorporating race issues into community care policies and strategies.
- 4.2 Elected Members and Senior Managers should develop explicit policies and strategies taking full account of the political, social and economic discrimination faced by black elders. These policies and strategies should be based on a common understanding of local ethnic minority communities, who should be included in the process.
- 4.3 The planning process should be informed by effective management information systems which support data collection about the needs of black and ethnic communities. Ethnic record keeping and monitoring must be developed to ensure that the Social Work Department can analyse referrals, assessments and service information.

#### **5 COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 There is a need to develop strategies for communication and information which are more innovative and ensure that relevant information reaches the section of the community at which it is directed. It is essential that all staff have clear protocols and guidelines on the use of interpreters and translation, and training on how to make effective use of these resources.

#### **6 ASSESSMENT, CARE MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW**

- 6.1 Assessors, and their managers, play a critical role in ensuring equality of access to services. They need to develop anti-discriminatory practice, cultural sensitivity, be aware of their own knowledge and skill limitations, and have an awareness of when it is appropriate to involve someone else with more specific expertise.
- 6.2 Assessors, and their managers, need to be informed, flexible and avoid seeing black elders as problems or blaming individuals who do not "fit" into existing services.
- 6.3 Joint arrangements for multi-agency and multi-disciplinary assessment and care management processes for black elders should be assessed and improved.

#### **7 SERVICE DELIVERY**

- 7.1 The needs of black elders are the same as those of other older people, but may need to be met in specific and different ways. This must be recognised and explicitly stated.

- 7.2 Social Work Departments should have mechanisms to establish and maintain the suitability, appropriateness and effectiveness of the services delivered. Complaints procedures should be available in appropriate languages and formats.

## **8 PROTECTION FROM ABUSE**

- 8.1 Existing generic elder abuse policies and procedures should be further developed with other agencies and ethnic minority groups to address the experiences of black elders who may suffer racial abuse and harassment.

## **9 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

- 9.1 As staff vary in their level of understanding, interest and skill, there should be training strategies targeted at those who work directly with ethnic minority elders to instil and develop the skills required. Social Work Departments should have Race Equality policies and procedures and must ensure that all staff are acquainted with them, follow and implement them.

## **10 SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE**

- 10.1 As noted above the demography of the local authorities studied differs substantially from that of North Lanarkshire in relation to numbers and concentrations of black and ethnic minorities.
- 10.2 The West of Scotland (SWD) "Race Equality Means Quality" Working Group are at present working on a paper for presentation, around the end of the present year, to all Councils via COSLA. North Lanarkshire Council Social Work Department has a delegate on this group.
- 10.3 This paper uses the Commission for Racial Equality guidelines as a base covering the points raised in the Social Services Inspectorate Document and contains recommendations more specifically directed towards Scottish Councils.
- 10.4 In light of this the Social Work Department considers that the Social Services Inspectorate Document should be noted and the West of Scotland (SWD) "Race Equality Means Quality" Working Group paper be awaited and its contents communicated to a future meeting of the Social Work Committee.
- 10.5 While this paper is awaited the department will take the following steps to improve its performance in this area:
- ◆ Ethnic record keeping and monitoring will be improved to enable the Department to analyse referrals, assessments and service information
  - ◆ Training strategies will be developed and targeted at those staff who work directly with minority elders.

**11 RECOMMENDATIONS-****11.1 Committee is asked to:**

- ( i) note the Report from the Social Services Inspectorate
- ( ii) agree to await the further paper from the West of Scotland (SWD) "Race Equality Means Quality" Working Group, a report on which will be presented to a future meeting of the Committee once received
- (iii) note the action to be taken by the Department as outlined at 10.5.
- (iv) refer to Policy and Resources Sub Committee (Equal Opportunities) for their interest.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**31 July 1998**

*For further information on this report please contact , George McNally, Principal Officer (Strategy) (TEL: 01698 332063)*

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

A copy of the report from the Social Services Inspectorate can be made available to members upon request.