

16 March 2005

**LEONARD CHESHIRE STATEMENT ON CHANCELLOR'S
ANNOUNCEMENT THAT COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE
INSPECTION AND HEALTHCARE COMMISSION ARE TO
MERGE**

Commenting on today's Budget announcement and Chancellor Gordon Brown's plan to integrate the work of the Commission for Social Care Inspection with that of the Healthcare Commission, Claire Kober policy manager at disability charity Leonard Cheshire said:

"Today's announcement comes only a year after the Commission for Social Care Inspection came into operation (April 2004). Over the last year the commission has worked to inspect and regulate essential social care services and ensure that they meet the needs of the people who access them. An enforced merger with the Healthcare Commission not only threatens to 'medicalise' social care, but also silences the voices of services users. The Chancellor's plan appears to be a challenge to the Prime Minister's recently announced landmark vision for improving disabled people's life chances. Political vandalism such as this threatens to push back social care services 10 years, and will slow down the great progress that has been made in reforming regulation and inspection practices."