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AGE CONCERN'S RESPONSE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW

Age Concern's Director-General, Gordon Lishman said:

Boost for community care service

"The Government is right to increase funding for community care services. Community care services for older people have been disgracefully under-funded for too long and increased spending in this area is long overdue.

"It is essential that this money is not solely targeted at the most vulnerable, it must also be spent widening access of day-to-day care services such as chiropody, 'home from hospital' schemes and home care which help people stay independent and out of hospital. The increase in provision of care alarm systems will also reassure older people who want to remain in their own homes."

Increased spending to tackle fuel poverty

"Increased spending to tackle fuel poverty is essential and should help many older pensioners who struggle to heat their homes in the winter. Currently more older people die in Britain from cold-related illnesses during the winter than anywhere else in western Europe.

"Although we welcome this extra cash, what is really needed is a higher basic state pension so that older people can feel secure that they have enough money in their pocket every week to heat their homes."

Impact of job cuts

"It is essential that the Pensions Service offers an effective service for older people. The Government still has a lot of work to do on the Pension Credit. Around 5 million older people are entitled to it, but two million are still missing out. It is clear that the Government still has a long way to go to meet the targets it set itself to get this extra money to those who need it most.

Ends