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Strengthening the link between housing, health and social care

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Why do we find it difficult?

- Differing priorities across health, housing and social care that can obscure the common agenda
- Revenue and capital cycles are not synchronised and timescales for delivering a return for investment in service improvement
- Two tier authorities see themselves as facing particular difficulties

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A matter of perspective

- Many of the potential impacts of collaboration are easier to measure at a population level
- Health and social care commissioning focuses on the single patient or service user
- Yet despite this collaboration often focuses on system issues with an assertion of benefit to the individual.

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Looking through the other end of the telescope

- Where does it hurt?
- A bundle of undifferentiated needs and aspirations!
- Capturing the expertise of the individual older person
- Outcomes determined by point of entry
- Qualification by ability to navigate the system

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Signs of progress

- Shared structures for determining need and planning responses
- Some sharing of resources of personnel and of finance
- Service structures built from assessment of individual requirements
- The theory of individual budgets and self-directed care

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Reasons to be cheerful

- Assessment for support
- Integration in delivery of care and support
- Focus on delivery into communities rather than buildings
- Moving the estimation of housing related needs upstream in the acute health sector

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Continuing anxieties

- Housing is everywhere acknowledged but generally engaged with superficially
- Health, housing and social care still inhabit service determined silos
- Need may determine assessment but traditional structures determine delivery
- In a period of resource constraint individual budgets can become a smoke screen for a widening care gap

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Reflections

- In a time of resource constraint need to focus on collaboration to achieve outcomes for individuals rather than meet targets for organisations
- Need to establish “appropriate dwelling” as a key consideration for all professionals across housing health and social care
- Bringing the expertise of older people into the equation in a more thorough way

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