

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased by 1.5 million (1990–2000) and is projected to increase by a further 1.5 million by 2020 (Office for National Statistics 2001). The number of people aged 65 and over in the UK is projected to increase from 10.5 million in 2000 to 13.5 million in 2020, with the number of people aged 75 and over increasing from 4.5 million to 6.5 million in the same period (Office for National Statistics 2001).

There is a growing awareness of the need to develop strategies to meet the needs of the ageing population. The Department of Health (2000) has identified the need to develop a 'new paradigm' for the care of the ageing population, one that is based on a 'continuum of care' rather than a 'dual system' of care. The 'new paradigm' is based on the principle that care should be tailored to the needs of the individual, rather than being based on a 'one size fits all' approach. The 'new paradigm' is based on the principle that care should be tailored to the needs of the individual, rather than being based on a 'one size fits all' approach.

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