

- One fifth of people say they do not recall receiving any visit from social services in the year after they registered as blind or partially sighted.

As you know, these problems are not new. The Commission for Social Care Inspection's 2008 review of Fair Access to Care shared evidence on the marginalisation of blind and partially sighted people in our care system, often to the extent they are described as "hidden".

I believe a Special Review on the "care pathway experienced by blind and partially sighted people" should be a priority for the Commission in 2010/11.

- **Integrated care:** Where there is evidence that health and social care services fail to deliver joined-up care, there is a risk that government policies such as *Putting People First* and *High Quality Care for All* are weakened.
- **Productivity and prevention:** There are pockets of good practice, where people are being supported to adjust to a diagnosis of sight loss. For example eye clinic liaison services can prevent long-term dependence on care services. However, unless every organisation working with people who lose their sight is deployed in this way, gains in productivity will be difficult to achieve.

With the number of people with sight loss set to increase sharply to 4 million by 2050, action must be taken now to establish whether health and social care services are working as they should to meet the needs of a growing section of the population.

Many people who lose their sight have grown used to inadequate services, but we can no longer tolerate patients being left on their own. We trust the Commission will rethink its priorities and review the quality of care provided to the hundreds of people who lose their sight each week.

Yours sincerely,