

# Protecting our Parents

There are more pensioners than children living in Britain. As our population gets older, its health and care needs are becoming more complex, increasing pressure on a health and social care system at times already struggling to cope.



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Programme running: 3 x 60 mins Production: BBC

With unprecedented access to the NHS and Social Services' older adults care teams in Birmingham, *Protecting Our Parents* follows medics and social workers as they attempt to meet the increasing demand on their services.

Filmed over the course of a year against a backdrop of stretched budgets and damning reports, *Protecting Our Parents* looks at cases from the perspective of the professionals, families and older adults themselves to explore one of the most important challenges facing our society: how should we care for our ageing population?

## Safe From Harm

The journey through the system begins in Heartlands Hospital, with three patients who like half a million older adults in the UK each year, have been taken to hospital following a fall.

Across the care system, medical professionals and social workers have to balance keeping older adults safe, while maintaining their independent-living for as long as possible. Conventional wisdom suggests "there's no place like home," but what happens when home itself becomes a risk to health and quality of life; when hospital poses the danger of life-threatening infections; and care homes are perceived to hasten the loss of skills needed for independent-living? *Safe From Harm* encapsulates the care system's dilemma: where is the safest place to care for older adults?

## Who Decides?

Exploring how the NHS and Social Services are struggling to work together in joined-up partnerships to manage our expectations of care at home against the reality of their competing budgets. As we get older, most of us would choose to remain in our own homes. But what happens when the



professionals decide we can no longer make that decision for ourselves? Who should take the decision that we can no longer live in our own homes?

## Nowhere To Go

Revealing the pressure the system is already under in providing appropriate care settings for older adults in the community. As our population ages, so more of us can no longer be cared for at home. But with places in care homes already in short supply, so the options for doctors, social workers and families are limited – increasing the strain on hospital wards, older adults and carers alike, with sometimes shocking results.



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