

# Age

## Evidence of health inequalities affecting older people and young people

Last updated: 17 January 2012

### Demographics

The population of the UK is aging, and it is anticipated that 41% of people will be over 60 by 2033. There were 13.3 million dependent children living in families in the UK in 2010, the same number as in 2001.<sup>1</sup>

Bradford and district has a growing population with a disproportionate number of young people and a growing elderly population particularly in North and South Bradford.<sup>2</sup>

As would be expected, the ethnic minority population sub groups tend to be younger than the average for the district, with only 8% of the existing retirement age population having an Asian background. This compares to 30% of all 0 to 15 year olds. Of the Bangladeshi population, 37% are under 16 years of age. The corresponding figure for the Pakistani population is 34%, compared to 19% for the White population in the district.<sup>3</sup>

### National data

People who are admitted to hospital **over the age of 80** are twice as likely to become malnourished than those under the age of 50.<sup>4</sup> Becoming malnourished leads to serious consequences for us, including the need to stay in hospital for longer, the need to take more medications, an increased risk of suffering from infections and even death.<sup>5</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that the health service sometimes deals with some older people in ways that they find humiliating or distressing.<sup>6</sup>

Our health needs change as we age. The incidence of disability rises with age and older people (65 and over) also have a higher rate of depression than younger people.

---

<sup>1</sup> Office of National Statistics

<sup>2</sup> BTHFT Single Equality & Human Rights Scheme 2009 Draft

<sup>3</sup> Bradford's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

<http://www.observatory.bradford.nhs.uk/pages/jsna.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> *Malnutrition within an Ageing Population: A Call for Action*, European Nutrition for Health Alliance, 2005

<sup>5</sup> *Still Hungry to Be Heard*, the scandal of people in later life becoming malnourished in hospitals, Age UK, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Equality & Human Rights Commission, "How Fair is Britain?" (2010)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/triennial-review/online-summary/health/>

The NHS also needs to take into account young people's needs. The Department of Health "You're Welcome" quality criteria lay out principles that will help health services get it right and become more young people friendly.

### **Local data**

Men are more likely to first access mental health services earlier in their lives between the ages of 18 and 35.<sup>7</sup>

Women are more likely to access mental health services later in life aged between 45 and 60.<sup>8</sup>

**Older BME people:** Current work shows that disproportionately low numbers of BME people use community hospitals, older people's mental health services and continuing health care funding.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> BDCT Equality Analysis

<sup>8</sup> BDCT Equality Analysis

<sup>9</sup> Equality Impact Assessment work carried out by BTHFT, NHSBA and BDCT