

## Care and support planning: Discussion with user and carer group 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011

This meeting with service users and carers was organised to discuss the planned resource for care and support planning in care homes and care at home services. The group included four men with dementia and two female carers. The session started with an introduction to the planned resource. The discussion started with several members of the group identifying that they thought having standards across services to ensure that people are treated as individuals was essential. The carers also identified that it was critical that carers were included in decision making, particularly where an individual has dementia. The following suggestions were offered to make care homes good places to live:

### ***What makes a good life in a care home...***

*It would be easy to bring items from home, maybe bits of furniture, curtains and a bedspread. It needs to be personalised.*

*Scented candles are a nice touch*

*The smell of home baking changes the whole atmosphere*

*You need to investigate the person's life history. What can you find out about their past and how can you use that to open up communication. Start with what matters to that person and think about their strengths and skills. Everyone has skills*

*Staff should sit down and have a meal with residents, at least occasionally*

*It really helps if you try rephrasing questions, to make sure the person understands what you are asking*

*You can't overestimate the value of a hug. It crosses all sorts of bridges.*

*You might think it's a problem if different residents want to listen to different music. That's where headphones come in. Then you can listen as loud as you want and it doesn't bother anyone.*

*You could have a situation where what the person really wants is to fly a plane. Ok, so then it's about how can be compromise and try to meet that in some way. You could take them on a flight simulator*