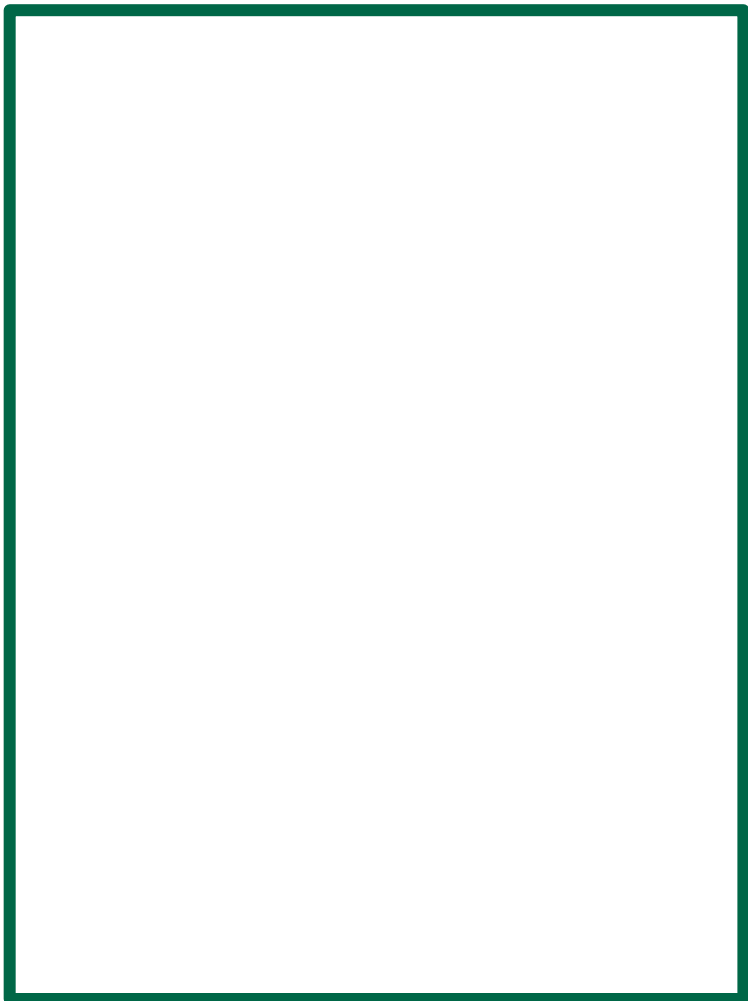




Three circular icons are arranged vertically in a dark green-bordered box. The top icon is a smiley face, the middle is an envelope, and the bottom is a speech bubble. To the right of the envelope icon is a blue horizontal line, and to the right of the speech bubble icon is another blue horizontal line.



the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million (1990–2000) (Office for National Statistics 2002).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the health care needs of the elderly population. The Department of Health (2000) has set out a strategy for the care of the elderly, which includes a commitment to improve the health and quality of life of the elderly population. This strategy is based on the following principles:

- To ensure that the elderly population has access to the best possible health care services.
- To ensure that the elderly population is able to live independently and actively in their own homes.
- To ensure that the elderly population is able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

The Department of Health (2000) has also set out a number of key objectives for the care of the elderly population, which include:

- To reduce the number of elderly people who are admitted to hospital.
- To reduce the length of stay of elderly people in hospital.
- To reduce the number of elderly people who are admitted to care homes.

The Department of Health (2000) has also set out a number of key actions for the care of the elderly population, which include:

- To improve the quality of care for elderly people in care homes.
- To improve the quality of care for elderly people in hospital.
- To improve the quality of care for elderly people in their own homes.

The Department of Health (2000) has also set out a number of key indicators for the care of the elderly population, which include:

- The number of elderly people who are admitted to hospital.
- The length of stay of elderly people in hospital.
- The number of elderly people who are admitted to care homes.

The Department of Health (2000) has also set out a number of key targets for the care of the elderly population, which include:

- To reduce the number of elderly people who are admitted to hospital by 10% by 2005.
- To reduce the length of stay of elderly people in hospital by 10% by 2005.
- To reduce the number of elderly people who are admitted to care homes by 10% by 2005.

The Department of Health (2000) has also set out a number of key messages for the care of the elderly population, which include:

- The elderly population is a diverse group of people with different needs and interests.
- The elderly population is a valuable resource for society.
- The elderly population has the right to live independently and actively in their own homes.