

Task force launched to enhance older people's housing sector

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Housing for older people – Bbernard, Shutterstock

The government has announced that Professor Julienne Meyer will lead a task force to help improve the housing options for older people.

Meyer is professor emerita of Nursing: Care for Older People at City, University of London, with visiting professorships at the University of Hertfordshire and Ulster University. Meyer co-founded My Home Life, an international collaborative initiative to promote quality of life in care homes for older people. She is a former nurse and has led research in care for older people at City, University of London for 23 years.

The task force will work across the housing, health, and care sectors with the aim of driving an increase in the volume and range of housing options. It will make recommendations to the government.

The announcement was made as part of the Adult Social Care Implementation plan published by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) last week.

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“Working between housing, health and social care will be critical to its success and I’m looking forward to advising the government on proposals that give older people more choices in later life.”

The task force will run for up to 12 months. It is assigned to produce an independent report to ministers at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and DHSC.

The panel is expected to include up to 14 members from across the social and private retirement sector, local government, adult social care, and from investors and developers.

Meyer and the government will now finalise the membership and the group’s terms of reference. A first meeting is expected to take place before June.

Housing minister Rachel Maclean said: “Making sure older people can access the right homes that meet their needs later in life is a government priority. And by unlocking more housing for older people, we can also have a hugely beneficial impact on their health and wellbeing.”

Richard Morton, chair of Retirement Housing Group UK, said: “The Retirement Housing Group UK has worked hard to develop constructive proposals that can increase housing supply in this very important but neglected sector of the housing market. We welcome the creation of the Task Force on Older People’s Housing and are committed to working with the task force and with Professor Julienne Meyer to develop policies that will increase housing choice for older people. With an ageing population it is essential we increase the supply of suitable and attractive homes for this key section of society, and in turn, then release desperately needed housing for other age groups.”

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