The Ageing Population

Lord Filkin*

Lord Filkin commenced proceedings by referring to three strands of thinking with respect to the ageing population: the ageing society; issues generated by the ageing population; and the interplay between ageing and technological solutions. He then posed three questions to stimulate the debate.

- The ageing society: brought about by longer life expectancy; ONS census data in the UK suggests that the population of older people has never been so great, and that it will continue to increase as a consequence of the 'baby boom' generation of the 1950s. A complicating factor for any service delivery is the social gradient that exists within the elderly population sector.
- Issues generated: public policy adaptation; changes in health and social care provision; the ability for individuals to adapt to new needs; using the ageing population as an asset to society in general; closure of the gaps in quality of life as people get older.
- The ageing population and technology: individuals to start thinking about healthy lifestyles before they get old (feel old?) and any technologies that may help them to adapt to that new lifestyle; individuals to lead fuller working lives, especially between the ages of 50 to 65 years old; provision of technological solutions that support independent living.

Three questions to stimulate the debate:

- Is there a market failure in this area?
- Is there a problem with innovation that would support the ageing population?
- Is it a problem of adoption of existing solutions?

*Notes taken by Ron Summers