

Extra priority to supervision of services for elderly people over the next four years



During the period 2009-2012, the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision will give extra priority to supervision of services for elderly people. This will involve supervision of municipalities, specialized health services, and cooperation between services. The supervision authority will use different methods of supervision, and will carefully follow up the municipalities and health trusts that are involved. We will also find ways of disseminating information in order to inform others. Deficiencies are to be found in all sections of health and social services, and our efforts will cover a broad spectre of services.

People who are elderly, and who are dependent on a range of health and social services, are vulnerable when there are deficiencies in the services that are offered. People suffering from dementia are also completely dependent on other people looking after them. It is not enough for services for elderly people to be accessible and appropriate in content and scope. They must also be coordinated in an appropriate way. The Norwegian Board of

Health Supervision in the Counties and the Offices of the County Governor are directing their attention to nursing and care services. Many institutions provide high quality services, but there is still a lot to be done, and there are some inadequacies in services that we see repeatedly. Cooperation between service providers in different services, and between services on different levels, represents a special challenge. Especially when many providers are involved, there is a great danger in deficiencies occurring. Experience from supervision and knowledge gained from surveys have shown us that people who receive home-based services are particularly vulnerable, because many service providers are involved. Regular general practitioners are important people for coordinating services for elderly people. When elderly people are admitted to or discharged from hospital, cooperation based on appropriate routines are important for avoiding deficiencies. Many institutions do not have adequate management. Systematic management in practice is about clear distribution of responsibility, good routines and adequate knowledge. It is also important to use the experiences of clients, to assess risks, and to work continuously to improve the services.