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## Treat elderly with more respect, says Parky

people would prefer to die at home than in hospital.

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'Ambassador' Parkinson

OLDER people should be treated with more dignity and respect, Sir Michael Parkinson said yesterday.

The former chat-show host and ambassador for the Government's Dignity in Care campaign, said society had to be reminded of "old-fashioned values" of caring for the elderly.

Speaking at the Royal College of Nursing confer-

ence in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, yesterday, Sir Michael, 74, said they should not be "shoved" into a corner and forgotten, adding: "What's wrong with a wrinkle?"

He said: "Why are we so afraid of growing old? Why do we neglect older people

as a society? They should be treated as younger people, not be neglected and shoved into a corner. It's not a government job, it's not a nursing job, it's the job of all of us."

Sir Michael spoke of the final months of his mother Freda Rose in a nursing home who was diagnosed with dementia. He recalled how she began to imagine things, including a cat and a blond child.

"She would imagine my father was still alive. He had been dead for 30 years. These stories make you want to cry and laugh at the same time."

Meanwhile, a report by MPs has revealed that hundreds of thousands of