

2/8/24

For the concern of: Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

The last few days have raised alarm bells for those working in adult social care and those drawing on care and support services. Warm words about the economic importance of adult social care and the commitment to identify a cross-party solution to this fundamental public service have rung hollow in light of decisions announced around funding and reform.

Clearly, we are operating in a hugely challenging economic market. However, choosing not to progress both charging reform and the training and development fund is a bitter pill for social care in a climate where other public services and their workforces are finally having their contribution recognised.

Voices from across the sector have come together to make clear a number of key points:

We stand ready to work with the new government, but we need assurances about the timeframes and support needed to move to a National Care Service and the introduction of a Fair Pay Agreement for care workers.

If the government wants cross party commitments to social care, then it must lead by example. This means properly consulting and communicating with the sector, and those who rely on social care, about the value and importance of what has been agreed in the past, as well as what might come in the future.

Significant delays by the previous government left social care vulnerable to cuts because programmes were not nailed down. We urge this government not to continue that pattern. Future commitments must be steeped in an understanding of the importance of valuing and respecting those whose everyday lives depend on social care delivery and employment. For millions of people, social care has the power to transform everyday life. Cutting these vital programmes has not only a material impact on all of their lives, but the lives of loved ones, friends and families.

Social care contributes to local and national economies. It also has the power to contribute to global solutions to care needs of generations across the world. Whether addressing skills and education, innovation and development, infrastructure and industrial strategy the government would do well to think social care first. It matters to us all.

Social care has been recognised as a key contributor to a great number of government priorities. Without high quality social care, it will be impossible to fix the broken NHS. Without high quality social care, it will be impossible to sustain economic growth. Without high quality social care, it will be impossible to lift-up our communities and the people that live in them.

We now need to see positive action on social care. There is time, political capital, and the expertise of a united social care sector to make this happen. We urge the government to change course and we stand ready to help you transform social care for the millions who work in it and most vitally, rely upon it.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Vic Rayner OBE, CEO, National Care Forum

Hope Lightowler, co-Chair of APPG for Adult Social Care and Expert by Experience

Melanie Weatherley, co-Chair, Care Association Alliance

Professor Martin Green OBE, Chief Executive, Care England

Jane Townson OBE, Chair, Care Provider Alliance

Nadra Ahmed CBE, Executive Co-Chairman, National Care Association

Karolina Gerlich, CEO, The Care Workers' Charity

Mike Padgham, Chairman, Independent Care Group

John Pattinson, Chief Executive, Independent Care Group

Sarah Burslem, CEO, MacIntyre

Dr Rhidian Hughes, Chief Executive, Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG)

Sarah Mistry, Chief Executive, British Geriatrics Society

Michelle Corrigan, Programme Director, Digital Care Hub / Better Security, Better Care

Jane Townson OBE, CEO, Homecare Association

Rachael Dodgson, CEO, Dimensions

Belinda Phipps, Interim CEO, United Response

Adam Micklethwaite, Director, Autism Alliance UK

Sarah Maguire, Chief Executive, Choice Support

Dr Ruth Owen OBE, CEO, Leonard Cheshire

Clive Parry, England Director, ARC England

Kathy Roberts, CEO, Association of Mental Health Providers

Eddy McDowall, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers

Kathryn Smith, Chief Executive, Social Care Institute for Excellence

Michelle Atkinson, Chief Officer, Leeds Care Association

Samantha Clark, Chief Executive, Learning Disability England

Nicola Richards, Chair, Sheffield Care Association Ltd

Nicola Richards, Founder, Support Social Care Heroes

Lee Goddard, Co-Production Advisor, Curators of Change CIC

Paul Tennant, Chief Executive, Abbeyfield Living Society

James Creegan, CEO, Kirklees Care Association

Jackie O'Sullivan, Executive Director of Strategy and Influence, Mencap

Dr Mark Wilberforce

