WE CARE FOR ENGLAND

Care England, championing care providers, is here to help Government to establish a long-term and sustainable future that will be to the benefit of all citizens and the economy.

#WeCareForEngland

Social care affects us all. Adult social care supports some of society's most vulnerable, who often live with lifelong conditions. Although the sector has historically stood as the poor relation to the NHS, the Covid-19 pandemic has shone a light on the essential role of adult social care.

Successive governments have promised social care reform but have not delivered. In light of continued funding and workforce pressures, against a backdrop of demographic change, the fragility of the sector is only becoming greater. The stabilisation of the adult social care sector should be the Government's priority in the coming months to secure the future of the nation; for the individual receiving support and care, the staff member and the taxpayer. Government inaction is no longer an option. A definitive solution is needed to ensure the future **sustainability** and growth of not only the sector itself, but England as a whole. Care England is here to help.

Quality social care cannot be delivered on a shoestring. The continued lack of a long-term sustainable funding solution will threaten the delivery of quality and timely care enabling **meaningful life**. The **people** who work in adult social care are everyday heroes and must be the cornerstone of any future reform. The sector requires a ten-year workforce plan, akin to that of the NHS, where career progression, pay and rewards are identified. Without a long-term commitment from Government to establish a sustainable social care sector the NHS will become increasingly burdened.

Money alone is not the answer, the independent adult social care sector is a key part of our health and care system and one that can help lead us into a stronger future underpinned by **integration**. One with services centred around individuals and free of much of the excessive bureaucracy and neglect within government that has characterised the attitude to this sector for too long. What is required now is a different culture, one where success is measured in outcomes, and in terms of the benefit delivered to people and communities more widely.

As we move beyond the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government must craft a new approach, one that ensures that vulnerable people are not abandoned by the NHS. We need a system of support in which health and social care systems act in a coordinated fashion focused around the person and are financed adequately and appropriately to allow for **innovation and investment**.

We Care For England represents a foundation for meaningful reform. The sector is brimming with innovation, energy and commitment which Care England, with the help of its members, can harness. Professor Martin Green has submitted this document to the Prime Minister. We are ready and waiting to help Government reach a definitive solution.

"The Government should see social care as part of the solution in terms of how we look after our nation, but unfortunately it is seen as the poor cousin to the NHS. Urgent action needs to be taken now as the people that we serve will not benefit from any delays."
Care England member

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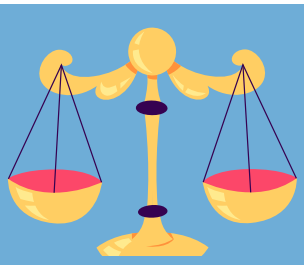
SUSTAINABILITY

Delivering sustainable care fit for the 21st century



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It is well known that adult social care has for many years been afflicted by a multi-billion-pound funding gap. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this as an issue.

Over the Covid-19 pandemic the Government has allocated an unprecedented amount of funds, approximately £5bn, to local authorities to aid the pandemic response. Although welcome, as with previous funds, the money represents a short term and inadequate injection to help fund struggling councils, or to temporarily prop up the NHS facing winter pressures. It does not address the deep-rooted problems within the current system. Crucially, these funds, although generous, have not always arrived at the frontline, which only hampered providers efforts to safeguard society's most vulnerable. **Care England agrees with the Commons Health and Social Care Select Committee's call for £7bn annual increase in social care funding as a starting point for reform.**

The sector requires continued and increased investment in frontline social care services by the Government, in addition to the inward investment the sector generates, to ensure a sustainable system fit for the 21st century. This will give taxpayers value for money and empower those in need of care, and their families, to make meaningful choices so they receive the right care. Care England supports corporate financing that upholds quality of care and the long term sustainability of the sector.

> Social care needs a new deal.
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> Click here to watch the video

This must be coupled with robust, but non-bureaucratic, mechanisms which ensure that funding reaches the frontline, supporting existing services and placements, with a strong audit trail. Our members see first-hand how the system works and doesn't work, let us be part of the solution.

"The cost of care is spiralling as people are living longer with complex health needs, including dementia. We must, as a society, have open and honest conversations about what is needed from the social care system, with a political consensus on how to fund and support it sustainably over the long term."

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MEANINGFUL LIFE

Delivering sustainable care fit for the 21st century

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Whilst funding is integral to help address the issues prevalent within the adult social care sector, it is important to focus on what the funding is for; to ensure those in receipt of support or care are enabled to enjoy their rights to live purposeful lives as active members of families and communities.

Social care is essential to improving and maintaining the quality of life of some of the most vulnerable members of society. Given demographic pressures, we know that demand for social care is increasing. Government must respond if the sector is to continue to provide quality care.

Quality care reflects an individual's choices. People must be empowered to make their own choices regarding their support, particularly where, when and by whom. Given the stretched local budgets, the amount and quality of care varies nationally across both publicly funded and self-funded individuals. This should not be the case. Government must set out clear expectations about what outcomes citizens should expect from social care, ensure that these are delivered across the country and end the current postcode lottery.

> We want to draft a new vision that enables us to live well.
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In order for this to be facilitated, **quality service provision must be enabled so that people in need live with comfort, dignity and choice.**

"The opportunity to live a meaningful life must be seen as a right not an option depending on where you live or who you are. The whole system needs to work together with a shared vision and purpose to ensure this becomes a reality for all."
Care England member

PEOPLE

The adult social care workforce is our biggest resource

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The adult social care workforce is our biggest resource. Before the pandemic, it faced many adverse trends including absenteeism, recruitment, retention and turnover. Covid-19 has exacerbated these issues, as well as creating new challenges and opportunities.

An increasing cohort of individuals receiving adult social care services have been supported through a decreasing government funding pot. The lack of government action has had an inevitable consequence on the nature of some employment opportunities within the sector and has hampered providers' efforts to recruit and retain staff. This has affected the overall financial attractiveness of the adult social care sector as an entity, but also providers' ability to compete with other sectors.

This is compounded by the unsustainability of the National Living Wage; increases in the National Living Wage undermine wage differentials and the ability of providers to maintain them without the subsequent funding.

The workforce has shown immense resilience throughout the pandemic. This resilience must not only be recognised, but also fostered if the workforce is to continue their heroic efforts every day.

A new reality must be imposed. **The sector requires a ten-year workforce plan, akin to that of the NHS, where career progression, pay and rewards are identified.** The plan must be characterised by a basic pay framework for social care staff and a national directive as to what social care staff should be paid and the concomitant funding provided for that. Currently, services are commissioned without reference to any benchmark figure.

> Social care is essentially about people.
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> Click here to watch the video

The adult social care workforce needs to be seen for what it is; an exciting, challenging, professional career and we have to ensure that staff are remunerated accordingly. We Care for England.

"Post pandemic, we have an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the amazing people who work in social care. In addition, highlight the diversity of rewarding roles, and opportunities to build a career that makes a difference and is as equally represented as those within the NHS. This needs a plan, it won't happen by accident or with luck."
Care England member

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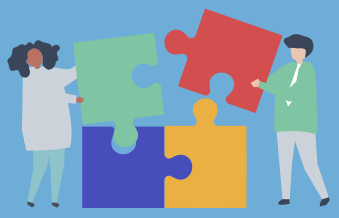
INTEGRATION

Bridging the gap between health and social care



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The divide between the health and social care system is deep-rooted, stemming back to the divide created by the 1948 settlement, but our health and care needs cannot be differentiated so neatly. However, the lack of integration has been shown to be untenable by the Covid-19 pandemic. The current fragmentation is catalysing inefficiency and hampering outcomes.

Integration must be judged by the experiences of people who use services. We must shift our focus from organisations and processes to people and outcomes. A truly integrated health and social care system has the capacity to improve outcomes and experiences of care.

Bridging the gap between health and social care stretches beyond funding integration, but also encompasses reforming commissioning practice, data and information practice and service delivery. This would aid in relieving the pressure on finite NHS and emergency services.

> We need to reclaim the term integration and it needs to be about the experiences of the people who use services.
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All the regulatory and support organisations commissioned by government that surround the sector should be reviewed. Their success measures must be aligned to ensure that all parts of the system are working to one strategic goal and are all judged by a set of agreed outcome measures.

The publication of the Health and Care Bill highlights the Government's commitment to catalysing greater integration, particularly through the reformed position of social care in the Integrated Care System structure. However, this commitment must be met with meaningful change. Integration and partnership are key to supporting quality care and value for money. People want a seamless service; thus the independent sector needs to be involved.

"Integration is not just a real benefit for the care sector but equally important for the reduction of pressure on the NHS. Properly managed and funded, the availability of creative models of personalised high quality care can enable earlier 'step down' from hospitals reducing stress and costs for them and helping avoid the institutionalisation that results from long term hospital stays."

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INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

Harnessing innovation through investment

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The adult social care market is unstable. This is largely a result of consistently low fee rates paid by local authorities. This reality is only going to become more challenging with local government spending on adult social care being squeezed.

This has, in many cases, hindered local authorities' capacity to adequately meet the needs of social care providers and the people they care for, constraining both innovation and investment; **providers need certainty about funding to invest in wider community development. This investment must be for providers of both state-funded and privately financed care.** Investment will allow for innovation in service development; the adult social care sector is immensely diverse, and the needs of service users are best met by a variety of services and service settings. This ambition must be fostered to avoid inappropriate placements.

The pandemic has been a catalyst for technological innovation throughout the sector, with major developments in dementia, learning disability and autism care. It is important that this new wave of innovation is harnessed through sufficient investment into the sector. This can be achieved through the introduction of an innovation fund for social care.

> Our sector is creative and dynamic.
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> Click here to watch the video

Ensuring the future sustainability of the social care sector market through appropriate investment is of fundamental importance for the sector itself, but also for England's society and economy in broad terms. A mixed economy is, and will continue to be, the best means of ensuring that quality care is both maintained and increased.

"Providers, whether they be corporate or charities, have invested heavily in social care and will increase their support substantially in a sustainable sector. Government investment will thus reap a rich added dividend from the independent sector. This will both provide enhanced living environments and enable digitalising of key functions such as medicine control, to ensure optimum reliability."

Care England member

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