

Backbench Business Debate – Value of Social Care – Thursday 24 November 2022

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1. Suggested Interventions

- *The APPG on Dementia's latest report, Workforce Matters, explored what good care looks like for people affected by dementia and how the social care workforce can be empowered to deliver this care. The Group found that the best way to do this is to bring forward a People Plan for the social care workforce; will the Minister commit to bringing forward such a plan as soon as possible to ensure staff have the time, training and support they need?*
- *During today's debate, we've heard many examples of the social care workforce, and system more generally, delivering excellent care, including to people living with dementia. When will the Government present a timetable for planned social care reform and investment to ensure the value of social care is felt consistently and nationwide?*
- *Unpaid carers to people with dementia in the UK provide care to the value of £13.9bn a year, a figure that's set to increase to £35.7bn by 2040. Yet over half of carers of people affected by dementia have not had an assessment of their needs. What steps is the Government taking to deliver the £25 million promised in the Adult Social Care White Paper to kickstart change in services provided to unpaid carers?*

2. Background

There are currently an estimated 900,000 people living with dementia in the UK, a number that's set to rise to 1.6m by 2040.¹ **70% of older age care home residents and 60% of people drawing on care at home have dementia**, so it's vital that social care reform supports them to draw on personalised care that supports them to live the life they want with independence, choice and control.² **Unpaid carers to people with dementia in the UK provide care to a value of £13.9bn a year, which will increase to £35.7bn by 2040.**³

The up to £2.8bn committed to social care for next year through the Autumn Statement must go towards the delivery of high-quality, personalised care for people living with dementia. This could save the NHS millions of pounds and free up hospital beds, particularly by preventing potentially avoidable emergency hospital admissions for people with dementia (which rose by 27.2% between 2015 and 2019).⁴

The Care Quality Commission has reported that in four of the five Urgent and Emergency Care systems they reviewed November 21-April 22, people who were medically fit for discharge could not leave because of insufficient social care capacity.⁵ Investment in discharge as well as the social care system is thus key to ensuring people living with dementia get the care they want and need.

Alzheimer's Society campaigners have been sharing their positive experiences of the social care system with MPs directly via email ahead of this debate which demonstrate the value of social care in empowering people affected by dementia to live the lives they want. **We encourage MPs to share these accounts during the debate.**

¹ Wittenberg, Raphael et al. Projections of older people with dementia and costs of dementia care in the United Kingdom, 2019-2040. 2019. Care Policy and Evaluation Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science. https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-11/cpec_report_november_2019.pdf.

² Wittenberg, Raphael. The Costs of Dementia in England. 2018. Int J Geriatric Psychiatry, Vol 34, Iss. 7, pp.1095-1103. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/gps.5113>.

³ Wittenberg, Raphael et al. Projections of older people. 2019.

⁴ Alzheimer's Society. Emergency admissions from dementia care failures soaring, and worse to come, warns charity. 2021. <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/news/2021-05-17/emergency-admissions-dementia-care-failures-soaring-and-worse-come-warns-charity>.

⁵ Care Quality Commission. The state of health care and adult social care in England 2021-22. October 2022. https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-10/20221024_stateofcare2122_print.pdf.

In order to ensure innovation and good practice can be delivered across the country, **we must see a long-term, sustainable funding model for social care**, coupled with a **clear timetable for delivery of reform promised in the [Adult Social Care White Paper](#) (including the delayed cap on personal care costs) as well as a People Plan for the social care workforce.**

3. APPG on Dementia's *Workforce Matters* report

In January 2022, the [APPG on Dementia](#) launched its latest inquiry into how the social care workforce can enable people affected by dementia to live the lives they want to. Throughout the inquiry, the Group heard that **people affected by dementia want a workforce with knowledge and understanding of their specialist needs, who can provide care that sees the whole person and focusses on what matters to them.** People affected by dementia also emphasised the importance of a workforce that takes time to understand individuals and deliver personalised care, and that offers consistency of staffing that allows a supportive and trusting relationship to develop.

The [Workforce Matters](#) report's core recommendation is for the Government to develop and publish a **People Plan for social care** that focuses on meeting the needs of people affected by dementia and delivering personalised care. The Group's inquiry found that this is instrumental in delivering good care; some examples of good care presented to the group include:

- “Mum went in for respite care over a period of seven years. Staff continuity existed and they knew all about Mum's background and about her early life prior to dementia. They conversed with her about her life. They also encouraged her to try out classes they held, and took her to any musical event they had as they knew this bucked her up and made her smile.” (Gillian, daughter of a person with dementia)
- “Out of three home carers, one is exceptional [...] [they're] able to understand Mum's world, to understand what stresses her. She has created an amazing bond with Mum. She is able to cope with Mum's speech which has been affected by dementia. She is patient and kind towards her at all times.” (Caroline, daughter of a person with dementia)
- “The care company we used for homecare took full details of needs before commencing the contract. The information was updated and revised as the dementia got worse. The carers were well trained and happy to contact us if our relative was upset, anxious or refusing care. They would also spend time patiently trying to ascertain the cause of any upset and provide calming reassurance.” (anonymous, carer of a person with dementia)

Further report recommendations include:

- Introducing a minimum mandatory level of training in dementia for all care staff to Tier 2 of the Dementia Training Standards Framework.
- Calling on the Government to conduct and publish an annual audit of knowledge and skills in care staff.
- Identifying the size of the knowledge and skills gaps in dementia care in the current workforce and setting out a plan to deliver training to bridge these gaps.
- Calling on the Government to introduce clear standards for evidence-based training for the care workforce, meaning that commissioners only commission services where staff have received training that is evidence-based in improving outcomes, aiding the provision of high-quality care.
- Empowering local authorities to commission a wider range of services for people affected by dementia to allow them more choice and control over their care through increased funding from central Government. This should include models of care that expand beyond traditional care homes and homecare, such as Shared Lives schemes and Community Circles.