

later life ambitions



The Social Care Green Paper

Making your voice heard



Introduction

Dear member

Later Life Ambitions campaigns on issues to ensure that older people can lead an ambitious later life.

Many of us will require some level of care when we get older, and there is a growing number of people spending their later lives unwell. By 2030 the number of older disabled people is expected to double.

In response to existing challenges in the social care system, the government has announced that it will publish a Green Paper on care and support for older people by summer 2018.

Green papers are consultation documents produced by the government, which allow people both inside and outside Parliament to give feedback on policy proposals.

This Green Paper will set out plans for how government proposes to improve care and support for older people and tackle the challenge of an ageing population. The government will work with independent experts, stakeholders and users to shape the long-term reforms that will be proposed in the Green Paper.

Later Life Ambitions has been a vocal supporter of a renewed approach to funding social care, which will help resolve the considerable issues facing the sector today.

This is why we are asking members to write to their local MP, ahead of the publication of the Green Paper in order to generate support for the recommendations that our members hope to see. These are:

- Clear action to reduce the complexities of the care system.
- Introduce a cap of £35,000 on personal contributions to care, at which point the state will cover ongoing care costs
- Establish a cross-party working group to take the politics out of social care and agree a consistent way forward.
- Create a dedicated ring-fenced tax to fund social care services.
- Health and social care services should work more closely to relieve the financial burden on the NHS and ensure that patients receive the most appropriate care.

This toolkit explains how you can write to your MP, asking them to support LLA's policy proposals and ensure that they are considered in the coming Green Paper.

Please contact your candidates by:

1. Using the toolkit to find out more about Later Life Ambitions' recommendations
2. We have created a template letter to email or post to your MP (please feel free to edit this if you would like).
3. The best website for finding your local MP and their contact details is <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>
4. Please forward any responses you receive to laterlife@connectpa.co.uk so we can keep track of how your MP responds.

If you would like any more information about contacting your local MP, please contact Tristan on laterlife@connectpa.co.uk or call Tristan on 020 7592 9592.

We hope you will support Later Life Ambitions to influence the Green Paper. This is a hugely important piece of Government policy which will have an impact on our members and their families for years to come.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Duggan
General Secretary
Civil Service
Pensioners' Alliance



Steve Edwards
Chief Executive
National Association of
Retired Police Officers



Malcolm Booth
CEO
National Federation of
Occupational Pensioners

Influencing the Green Paper

We want to make sure that MPs are made aware of the social care issues that matter most to you ahead of the publication of the Green Paper. You can help do this by contacting your local MP and asking them to make efforts to inform the green paper with our important messages.

You can find contact details for your local MP [by clicking here](#) and entering your postcode.

Once you have their contact details, use the template email on page 4 to send an email to your MP.

Later Life Ambitions hopes to see clear, achievable and long-term recommendations from the upcoming Green Paper. Social care is in crisis and many of our members have contacted us about the difficulties they have experienced with the system. Members have told us they are worried about the cost and availability of social care, the quality of care and navigating the increasingly complex system. As such, we have collectively developed a series of key recommendations that represent the needs of our members and older people more

LATER LIFE AMBITIONS SOCIAL CARE POLICY

1. We believe that it is crucial that all political parties work together to ensure that a long-term solution is found.

Party politics should be avoided if the recommendations made in the Green Paper are to be implemented as soon as possible.

A cross-party working group should be established to take the politics out of social care and agree a consistent way forward. The group should set out a strategy for funding social care, reporting to the Care Minister, currently Caroline Dinenage.

2. The government should introduce a cap of £35,000 on personal contributions to care, at which point the state will cover ongoing care costs.

The cost of an average 30-month stay in a residential care home varies from £50,000 to £93,000. Long-term, intensive social care for older people can swallow up huge amounts of money, and is a considerable cost burden causing financial difficulty for many individuals and their families. Indeed, the complexity of the social care system and its interaction with the NHS and other services, such as housing and benefits, is very clear. Specifically, evidence we have received from some members highlighted the Disabled Facilities Grant as an example of how the structure of the system hinders service delivery. We hope to see the funding system reformed with the aim of reducing complexity by streamlining funding.

3. Create a dedicated ring-fenced tax to fund social care services.

In order to ensure that the necessary funding remains available to social care, a dedicated tax should be introduced. In resolving this, we support the findings of the recent report, Health and Social Care: Delivering a Secure Funding Future, which states that in the short-term, the NHS funding gap could be bridged by an income tax increase, though longer-term, health and care funding should be brought together in a single ring-fenced tax to include that currently allocated to the NHS from National Insurance.

4. Adult social care spending needs to rise as a proportion of total public expenditure.

Care services require the government to commit to increased levels of funding over the short, medium and long term. A commitment to increasing social care spending in line with total public expenditure is an effective way to ensure that spending does not drop below necessary levels.

5. Clear measures to reduce the complexity of the social care process.

Many LLA members have described their experiences of the social care system as being overly complex and even daunting. In order to make the system less difficult to navigate, advice that is available needs to be made more concise and easily accessible.

6. Health and social care services should work more closely to relieve the financial burden on the NHS and ensure that patients receive the most appropriate care.

The difficulties faced by the care sector are often increased due to the gaps between health and social care, and closer working will support the NHS to operate more efficiently.

Template letter to local candidates

template

Feel free to amend this letter if you find that it does not entirely reflect your own preferences.

You can also find a version of this letter online at www.laterlifeambitions.co.uk.

Dear [insert name of MP]

I live in the [name] constituency and am writing to you about the forthcoming Social Care Green Paper and the key recommendations that should be included to ensure that the views of older people are taken into account.

I am a member of the Later Life Ambitions campaign, which represents over a quarter of a million pensioners through three partner organisations: the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners, the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance, and the National Association of Retired Police Officers.

The social care system is facing a crisis, and in order to develop a suitable set of solutions it is important that the views of older people are used to inform the development of the green paper.

As my MP, I would like you to represent the following recommendations:

1. It is crucial that all political parties work together to ensure that a long-term solution is found.

A cross-party working group should be established to take the politics out of social care and agree a consistent, long-term way forward.

2. The government should introduce a cap of £35,000 on personal contributions to care, at which point the state will cover ongoing care costs.

Long-term, intensive social care for older people can swallow up huge amounts of money, and is a considerable cost burden causing financial difficulty for many individuals and their families. It must be controlled.

3. Create a dedicated ring-fenced tax to fund social care services

There are significant costs to providing social care, and in order to ensure that the necessary funding remains available, a dedicated tax should be introduced.

4. Adult social care spending needs to rise as a proportion of total public expenditure

Care services require the government to commit to increased levels of funding over the short, medium and long term.

The Chancellor's commitment in the Spring Budget 2017 to provide an additional £2bn for social care over the next three years is welcome, but falls short of the amount required to close the social care funding gap.

5. Clear measures to reduce the complexity of the social care process

LLA members describe their experiences of the social care system as overly complex and even daunting. In order to make the system less difficult to navigate, advice that is available needs to be made more concise and easily accessible.

We agree with the findings of the Dilnot Commission, which argued that the complexity of the funding system is part of the reason that people do not plan for their care. It highlighted that improving the availability of information and advice on social care is the most effective step towards resolving this.

6. Health and social care services should work more closely to relieve the financial burden on the NHS and ensure that patients receive the most appropriate care.

The difficulties faced by the care sector are often increased due to the gaps between health and social care, and closer working will support the NHS to operate more efficiently.

As my MP, I would like you to represent my views on these issues, and to work to give older people an ambitious later life.

Yours sincerely

[Your name]

[Yours home address, including postcode]