

Adult Social Care: the Government's Green Paper and the LGA's Fair Care Campaign

Summary

1. In the 2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review the Government committed to a 'radical rethink' on long-term care, including a Green Paper on how to best fund adult social care and support in the future. The Government's 'big debate' on the future of adult social care was launched on Monday 12 May.
2. This year the LGA is also focusing on adult social care, by making the issue one of the association's six 'Putting People First' priorities. A multi-discipline officer team has been established to take forward this LGA campaign work.

Recommendations

Board members are asked to note the report.

Action

As determined by the Board.

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The Government's 'big debate'

- 1. The Government is committed to reforming the system of adult social care and support so that it:**
 - a. Promotes independence, choice and control for everyone who uses the system.**
 - b. Ensures everyone can receive high quality care and support.**
 - c. Is affordable for government, individuals and families.**

- 2. On 12 May, Gordon Brown and Alan Johnson launched a six month debate on the future of care and support services. During this time the public and various stakeholders will be invited to express their views on how best to realise the type of system outlined above.**

- 3. The debate is structured around the following themes:**
 - a. Improving care and support: what more the Government can do to provide:**
 - i. Better information.**
 - ii. Higher quality services.**
 - iii. More preventative services.**
 - iv. Personalised services.**

 - b. Paying for care and support:**
 - i. What should the balance of responsibility be between individuals, families and the government?**

 - c. Delivering care and support: if an individual needs care and support, what should the help available depend on?**
 - i. The kind of support needed.**
 - ii. Where the individual lives.**
 - iii. How much money an individual has.**

- 4. The consultation will end in November 2008 with the Green Paper expected in Spring 2009.**

5. Over 13,000 people have visited the Government's Care and Support website, www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk – the dedicated site for the consultation on the future of care. The website is a useful source of information and includes:
 - a. A dedicated section on the stakeholder debate, including themed debates written by stakeholders.
 - b. Summary reports of the regional stakeholder events.
 - c. A toolkit of materials designed to help stakeholders lead their own discussions.
 - d. A refreshed public-facing area presenting the issues for debate in more accessible language.

LGA Fair Care Campaign activity

6. Since the last Board meeting the campaign has completed, and commenced, a number of activities:
 - a. On 12 September we published 'Our Lives, Our Choices' – the first in a series of publications under the banner of: 'Fit for the future: a new vision for adult social care and support'. This first document provides an assessment of the current care and support system and begins to sketch out the principles that we believe should underpin a future system. We hoped this would be a helpful contribution to the current debate on the future of care and support and it has already been picked up by the national media (Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail), partner organisations such as In Control, and the specialist press, such as [Community Care](#), who used it to spark a debate about the risks of including social security benefits within a single system of care and support. We are currently working on the second publication in the series on funding, and expect to publish this in early November.
 - b. In September we submitted an article for Which? magazine's quarterly Policy Review Journal. The article focused on 'who is the consumer of long term care?' We argued that the evolution of adult social care to a more person-centered service, the interplay of social care with other council departments (and other local public services), and the increasingly tight financial framework in which social care operates have all shaped the consumer of care. The article suggests consumers of care are now defined by the much broader range of practical frontline services that improve their wellbeing and the more information-based services they access to make independent and informed decisions about the support they may need with everyday living. The journal should be published by the end of October.
 - c. In October we submitted an article for the Department of Health's consultation website on the topic of fair and clear access to care and

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support. The paper is available at:

<http://www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk/stakeholder-information/>

- d. Our paper for the Department of Health looked in some detail at the national consistency vs local flexibility issue, and the related issue of portability. This was also the focus of a Smith Square Debate we hosted on 15 October. Chaired by Cllr Margaret Eaton delegates heard from Polly Toynbee, Stephen O'Brien MP and Tony Travers before the debate opened to the floor, where topics ranged from the innate wish in the UK for fairness, the need for difference to create innovation and whether there is a local democratic mandate given turnout at local elections
- e. The National Adults and Childrens Services Conference provided another opportunity for debate with Government and Shadow Ministers. The CSCI review of eligibility criteria for social care "Cutting the cake fairly" was published on 22 October. The immediate recommendations were:
 - Everyone should have an assessment of their support needs, and be offered information and advice to help them make the right choices
 - Government should produce new eligibility criteria based on the urgency of a persons need
 - Government should ensure that there is a consistent approach across the country

The full report can be found at:

http://www.csci.org.uk/about_us/publications/cutting_the_cake_fairly.aspx

The Government's response to the report (Annex A) contains a very helpful endorsement of the role of local government in the process and is also noteworthy in being a joint response from DH and CLG. LGA will of course be closely involved in any redrafting of new guidance.

Action plan for future activity

7. The Fair Care Campaign will continue into 2009 and, regardless of its official 'end point', its work will carry on in some form once the Government's Green Paper on the future of care and support is published. Over the coming weeks the following activity is planned:
 - a. "My council" posters featuring adult services
 - b. Vision piece 2: funding – to be published early November
 - c. Vision piece 3: a model for the future – to be published early 2009
 - d. Second one-day conference on the future of care and support – March 2009
 - e. Second round of Lead Member polling – to support Vision piece 3
 - f. Lead Member Sounding Board newsletters – ongoing
 - g. Autumn seminar 1: health and social care interface – 29 October

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- h. Autumn seminar 2: personalised and protected – 25 November
 - i. Autumn seminar 3: trade offs and tax hikes – 8 December
 - j. Simple flowchart of how to access social care – November
 - k. Identifying further opportunities for disseminating LGA messages (such as the Which? magazine article) - ongoing
8. More activity is being planned and we would welcome Board Members' views on further work the campaign should be involved in.
9. Encouraging Members to engage local people in the debate on the future of care and support is critical to the debate's success and securing changes to the system that will make a real difference to people's lives. We would be grateful for the Board's views on how this can be done, particularly as our newsletter for Lead Members (who have signed up to be on our sounding board on the green paper) is not generating much feedback.
10. We know the Department of Health is keen to hear from local areas to help shape the Green Paper. A number of materials are available on the consultation website www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk for this purpose including: a presentation template, a guide for event/debate organisers, a booklet for event/debate participants, a form to record discussions and a poster.

Financial Implications

None

Implications for Wales

None

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