

The Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper provides background to the LGA Councillors' Forum discussion with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP.

Recommendation

That the LGA Councillors' Forum notes this report as background.

Action

As directed by members.

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Overview of LGA policy on social care, health and integration

Social Care Green Paper

1. Over the last year, since the LGA's green paper was published, the Government's green paper has remained unpublished. In that time, the pressures facing social care have continued to rise and their consequences have continued to impact across the board – most importantly on people who use services. The recent BBC Panorama programme covering the experience in Somerset County Council is one powerful example of this; it is a situation replicated across the country. It is absolutely vital that the Government commits to publishing its green paper at the earliest opportunity and uses it, and the forthcoming Spending Review, to address the immediate funding crisis in social care and sets out how it plans to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term funding solution that can deliver the prevention, care and support that people need".
2. The LGA's response to its green paper consultation was published last November. It set out key findings and implications from the consultation and set out fourteen recommendations based around two key objectives: stabilising and sustaining the 'here and now'; and moving towards a system for the long-term that we know could be better.

Prevention Green Paper

3. The publication of the Secretary of State's vision document, *Prevention is better than cure*, in 2018 signalled a very welcome and timely interest in increasing the priority given by Government to the prevention of avoidable ill health. The expected publication of a Green Paper on prevention provides a major opportunity to put into effect tangible policy actions to achieve the ambitions set out in the vision.
4. The vision document set out a new approach to;
 - 4.1 keeping people healthy, happy and treating their health problems quickly;
 - 4.2 empowering people to manage their own physical and mental health needs closer to home with the support of professionals in the community;
 - 4.3 delivering care in the right place, in settings that suit them and their needs.
5. As set out in the Government's Aging Society Grand Challenge launched earlier this year, it's the Government's aim for this country's population to enjoy, on average, five more years of healthy, independent living by 2035, while closing the gap between the richest and the poorest.

6. The strongest determinants of our health are the social, economic, commercial and environmental conditions in which people live. Unless the wider determinants of health are addressed in the Green Paper, major improvements in prevention will be limited.
7. While interventions to prevent specific diseases will rightly feature in the Green Paper, the LGA has repeatedly called for a focus on how the whole of Government can be harnessed to improve the conditions that have the biggest impact on keeping people healthy.
8. The Government's Green Paper on Prevention must take the opportunity to put real funding back into preventative services for children and adults, recognising that the most effective support to give children the best start in life, keep people of all ages well and enable communities and those who live in them to be safe and to thrive can only be delivered through and with local government. A great deal of evidence suggests that over time the costs of failing to provide that support outweighs by far the costs of keeping appropriate support in place – and the growing debate about knife crime being linked to cuts in youth services illustrates one aspect of that argument.
9. A genuine shift in government priorities towards prevention not only requires specific policy actions and investment in the right areas, but also strategies that embed a prevention approach across Government and beyond. The role of place-based approaches to prevention led by local government should be at the heart of the prevention strategy. To create the conditions for locally-led approaches, it is vital to involve communities in decision-making and action.

The Better Care Fund

10. The £5.3bn Better Care Fund was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, to ensure a transformation in integrated health and social care. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is the major national programme across the NHS and local government which creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together to shift resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the people, communities and health and care systems. In many areas it has been a major driver of improved partnership working. But some aspects of the BCF have caused real tensions between health and social care partnership and between national and local leaders.
11. The future of the BCF is currently being reviewed and the LGA continues to represent the views of councils in their work with Government and NHSE/I on its future development.

NHS Long Term Plan (LTP)

12. The LTP was published on 7 January. It provides a comprehensive action plan and set of national priorities for how the NHS will use the additional 3.4 per cent a year over the next five years – amounting to £20.5 billion a year – to improve health and address health inequalities, redesign the model of care and support and to ensure

the financial sustainability of the NHS. The document makes detailed proposals for many aspects of NHS activities. The LGA briefing on the areas of most interest and relevance to local government and the LGA position on the proposals is available here: <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/20190117%20LGA%20briefing%20-%20NHS%20Long%20Term%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf> .

13. The LGA welcomes many aspects of the LTP, in particular the focus on expanding community care, support and prevention. But this is a plan for the NHS rather than a comprehensive plan for the wider health and care system so it offers only part of the solution to the health, social care and wellbeing challenges facing our communities. Three other key components of the policy framework for health and social care have yet to be published: the adult social care green paper, the prevention green paper and the spending review.
14. The LTP recognises that partners, in particular local government, have a leading role in promoting health, wellbeing and independence but the measures it outlines focus primarily on the NHS.
15. We strongly support the renewed focus on prevention, health inequalities and a population health focus but cuts to funding for public health services and other wider council services underline the need for Government to take a consistent approach to population health and to local government funding more generally.

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Biography

1. The Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP was appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on 9 July 2018.
2. He was Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport from 8 January 2018 to 9 July 2018. He was previously Minister of State for Digital from July 2016 to January 2018.

Career

3. Matt Hancock is the MP for West Suffolk, having been elected in the 2010 general election. From 2010 Matt served as a backbencher on the Public Accounts Committee and the Standards & Privileges Committee. Mr Hancock entered Government in September 2012 and has served in a number of Ministerial Roles, including for skills and business, and as Paymaster General. He oversaw the expansion of apprenticeships, and championed the digital transformation of Government.
4. From July 2016 he served at DCMS as Minister of State for Digital and was responsible for broadband, broadcasting, creative industries, cyber and the tech industry.
5. Before entering politics, Mr Hancock worked for his family business, as an economist at the Bank of England, and as Chief of Staff to the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer. He holds degrees from Oxford and Cambridge Universities.