



Background

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) represents Directors of Adult Social Services in Local Authorities in England. As well as having statutory responsibilities for the commissioning and provision of social care, including the safeguarding of vulnerable adults, ADASS members often share a number of responsibilities for housing, leisure, library, culture, arts, community services, and increasingly, Children's Social Care within their Local Authority.

ADASS members have statutory responsibilities to promote social inclusion and wellbeing, to lead on adult safeguarding, and have leadership responsibilities in Local Authorities to promote good standards in Homecare, although increasingly Local Authorities are no longer providers of these services.

ADASS welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Low Pay Commission in addressing low pay amongst social care workers

Comments:

1. ADASS is concerned about any workers within the social care sector not in receipt of the minimum wage and would strongly urge that provider organisations (who cover 70% of the total social care workforce) operate within their statutory responsibilities to their employees.
2. The social care sector workforce makes a tremendous and valuable contribution to supporting individuals enjoy improved outcomes, as well as being both a significant component of the UK workforce and contributor to the national economy. Further, this is a sector that is expected to grow substantially (the State of the Workforce Report indicates that an extra 911,000 social care workers will be required by 2025).
3. ADASS is working closely with the Skills Academy and Skills for Care, as just two of several partner organisations, regarding workforce development and through such forums ADASS engages with partners to seek continued improvement and development of the social care workforce as a whole.
4. Further ADASS works very closely with stakeholders (including providers) in seeking improvements and to bring about the reforms to health and social care particularly through the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) arrangement. This partnership places a strong emphasis upon supporting and developing the social care workforce and TLAP has produced a series of tools to assist providers in workforce development and shaping. ADASS is also very supportive and engaged in the Dignity in Care Campaign and the work of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and these settings provide further platforms to engage with providers regarding improving the

quality of service and consequently developing and supporting the social care workforce.

5. In terms of commissioning activity undertaken by adult social care, commissioners remain focused upon constructing care packages that address individual needs and are outcome based and the increasing expansion of personalised budgets is at the same time, shifting the commissioning activity towards the individual. This twin set of circumstances focuses upon individual need and creates an environment of numerous possibilities as to how improved outcomes are achieved. It is within this creative context that the market has to meet these new opportunities and consequently new approaches need to be taken as to how the workforce is deployed and utilized increasingly beyond the direct commissioning activity/influence of councils.
6. It is widely accepted that Adult Social Care is experiencing gaps in its funding, which is not keeping pace with demographic demand. The ADASS Budget Survey identified that councils have reduced their budgets by £1bn in 11/12 and expect that this pace of reduction will continue into 12/13 and beyond. The effects of a loss of £2bn worth of spending power in an approximately £14bn market – something like 15% all told – over a two-year period cannot, and must not, be underestimated.
7. This set of circumstances places increasing pressure in the rationalisation of scarce resources but councils have sought to protect the front line from reductions, with 69% of the planned reductions gained from increased efficiency and service re-design.
8. Importantly, Councils have sought also to protect and sustain the vital contribution of providers in providing care and support for individuals, and the ADASS Budget Survey noted that 79% of councils either maintained or increased their fees to providers, and latest published data from the Department of Health indicates that the unit costs for residential care, nursing care or intensive homecare was £609 per person per week in 2009-10, which was an increase from £593 in 2008-09 (this represents an increase of 3% in cash terms and 1% in real terms)
9. Despite these approaches, the ongoing pressures of the funding gap places councils with reducing options to shift the current positions on prices, which themselves are largely determined through the tendering process and in conclusion ADASS is urging the Government to positively and urgently respond to the recommendations of the (Dilnot) Commission of the funding of social care for a sustainable long term funding solution