

Executive Summary - ADASS Response to the Pause

This response builds upon detailed discussion and debate amongst Directors of Adult Social Services across the country and from the ADASS Listening Event held on Friday 20th May 2011.

There is much that is good in the current health and social care system, but there is no ground for complacency. ADASS notes with concern the reports of the Ombudsman, and the work of CQC on the standard of hospital care for older people. These are signs of a system that is in urgent need of reform to cope with the new demands of an older population, living with long term conditions and a higher incidence of disability. We welcome a new integrated system with reformed care at the centre of a social model that allows everyone to enjoy the success of modern healthcare with longer life matched with the joy of quality of life.

Local authorities are at the forefront of reform and already work in close partnership across health and local providers in providing and seeking innovative and sustainable solutions to improved outcomes. We acknowledge the significance of the Health and Social Care Bill in the reforms, but it is also important to recognise that much progress is already happening beyond the boundaries of the legislation and that this should be allowed to evolve as local conditions dictate. There is a real need to set out a clear strategic direction for the NHS after the pause, so that local partnerships can deliver “bottom up” change through successful joint working.

Our call from legislation is for strong, strategic Health and Wellbeing Boards, the meaningful transfer of public health to councils and a focus on engagement of all local people, and especially those who are most vulnerable, to help with getting the right focus for change.

We have been heartened by the many calls for integration of health and social care that have been heard during the pause. We welcome the Government’s commitment to the reform of social care, and whilst that will take time to come before Parliament believe that as part of this Bill, HM Government must strengthen that commitment such reforms that have been so long promised that they are now long overdue.

Peter Hay
President Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
May 2011