

WHAT WE ALL NEED FROM THE NEXT GOVERNMENT ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Social care provides care, support and safeguards for all of us. It supports us when we are disabled or older; it supports us to live good lives and to die good deaths.

Successive Governments of all political shades have promised to reform adult social care and to create a sustainable system that is genuinely fit for the twenty first century, but have ultimately failed to deliver on that promise. It is essential that the next Government breaks this cycle and creates a social care system that works for all of us.

Over the last decade, social care has had to find £7.7 billion in 'savings' and, as a consequence, there have been dramatic increases in the number of us whose care needs are not being met and more of us providing care for family members.

The next Government must take action to rebalance the adult social care system. It is therefore important that during the General Election campaign each of the political parties should set out what they would do to ensure that all of us can get the care and support when and where we need it.

From the next Government we need three key things:

1. **Certainty about funding** - setting out at the earliest opportunity what money will be available over the course of the whole of the next Parliament to ensure that those of us who need social care get the support we need to live our lives as we want to live them.
2. **Long-term reform** - that enables us to build care and support for the millions of us who need it and create an enabling social care system that is truly fit for the twenty-first century.
3. **A long-term plan for adult social care** – that plots out how social care links with other public services and supports resilient individuals, families and communities.

Certainty about funding across the whole of the next parliamentary term will give the next Government and Parliament the space to develop and agree the reforms that will be required to craft a twenty first adult social care system that meets all of our needs. In turn, a reformed and sustainable will require a long-term plan for social care that sets out what is possible and what we can all expect in terms of care and support when we need it.

The three tasks facing the next Government are inevitably interlinked. The reality is that without significant investment and certainty, it will be much more difficult to agree on a long-term reform, and without reform there can be no long-term plan.

All of us who access care and support, those of us providing care for family members and those of us who work in adult social care, we cannot afford another false dawn. It is important that over the coming weeks each of the parties set out what they plan to do to rebalance adult social care. This will enable voters to make an informed choice about which party is best placed to break the recent of cycle of broken political promises and deliver for those of us who rely social care to enable us to live the lives we want to live.