



End Social Care Disgrace

Campaign for a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service

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Newsletter

February 2023

Government piddling in the pond

In January the Government announced a plan to give £200m funding to the NHS to buy beds in care homes, hotels etc. to get people out of hospital and free up beds. It is shot through with holes.

It takes no account of where the staff are coming from to turn sticks of furniture into “beds”. It raises serious concerns about how much choice and control people will have, whether they will be bundled into institutions and stranded there or abandoned in unsafe hotel accommodation.

It will also put more money in the hands of private providers and bed booking services. See:

<https://keepourhspublic.com/ten-things-wrong-with-plan-to-buy-beds-in-care/>

For profiteering in action, you only have to look at the multimillionaire owner of Runwood Homes, the UK’s sixth largest, for-profit care home group. He paid himself £21m in five years despite inspectors finding multiple breaches of staffing, safety and leadership rules, residents left in dirty incontinence pads, staff accused of rough handling.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jan/17/owner-of-uk-care-home-group-paid-himself-21m-despite-safety-concerns>

Some successes on care charging

Great lobbying by disabled people’s organisations and others managed to get the Government to agree to rises in line with inflation in both the personal expenses allowance for local authority-supported care home residents and the minimum income guarantee (MIG) for people receiving LA arranged care and support not in a care home. Hancock froze MIG and PEA from the Care Act onwards. Javid raised them by 3% last year. The struggle continues to get the Government to fund Local Authorities to implement these commitments without more cuts in other areas.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-care-charging-for-local-authorities-2023-to-2024/>

Hot press: BBC exposes debt recovery

Working with disabled people’s organisations, the BBC has highlighted that “more than 60,000 adults with disabilities and long-term illnesses in England were chased for debts by councils last year after failing to pay for their social care support at home” Research by the BBC last year found that in 22 councils, charges had risen by the equivalent of £500 per person supported, since 2018-19.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58259678>

Claimants told the BBC this month that they can't afford the charges amid rising food and rent prices, plus the additional costs of living with disabilities. Councils took legal action against 330 people in 2021-22. Some disabled people said they felt they had little choice but to live without home care, others feared bailiffs being called in over unpaid debts. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64668729>

Workers fight back and fight together

The start of the year saw spreading strikes by nurses, ambulance workers, physios, rail workers, teachers, posties, civil servants, university staff etc., and a big jump in trade union membership. Care and support workers remain constrained by privatisation and fragmentation but Hestia workers have been out on strike again in Hounslow and public sector trade unions continue to battle to make inroads.



On February 1st workers rallied and marched across the country protesting against anti – strike legislation in the pipeline and expressing solidarity with workers taking industrial action. Look out for more collective action on budget day, 15th March.

Campaigners take to the streets

On January 28th SOSNHS & KEEP OUR NHS PUBLIC organised action across the country to END THE CRISIS IN THE NHS, which is impossible without addressing the broken state of social care and community health services. On March 11th they will be marching in London, assembling at 12 noon on Tottenham Court Road, by Warren St. Station. See



<https://sosnhs.org/events/>

If you can get there, look out for our End Social Care Disgrace banner and flags !

What has ESCaD been doing?

In December we held a large public meeting on Zoom. There were moving contributions from people with lived experience. MP Margaret Greenwood talked about what we can do and Lord Prem Sikka talked about universal, free social care and support being not just necessary but feasible, ending with a rallying cry: “the point is that the money is available but what is not available is the political will. Don’t ever accept that we can’t afford it. What we can’t afford is the misery, the pain of people.” You can watch the meeting here:

<https://www.facebook.com/keepournhspublic/videos/1481038659087575> and read much of Prem’s contribution in Left Foot Forward here: <https://leftfootforward.org/2022/12/privatisation-has-destroyed-the-social-care>.

We continue to badger MPs and helped to frame some ED motions and parliamentary questions. We have addressed a number of trade union branch meetings across the country and given out fliers at trade union conferences, If you would like a speaker(s) from ESCaD at your TU branch or TUC, please contact us at nacsilservice@gmail.com. We encourage people to raise ESCaD’s demands at street stalls, protests, rallies and marches.

Galvanising the opposition

The Labour leadership talks about implementing a national care service but over three Parliamentary terms at best and they are not committing to get the private sector out. We are still waiting for a report from the Fabian society, which has been tasked by Unison and Labour to draft a road map.

Meanwhile there is an opportunity now until 17th March for LP branches and CLPs to feed into the LP Policy Review. Please send this document to your branch or CLP to give them a big nudge. See: <https://nacsils.co.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2023/01/ESCaD-summary-for-CLP-debate-on-National-Policy-Forum.pdf>

You could also distribute our post-card at meetings. Text or phone 07419 295754 for free copies or Email nacsilservice@gmail.com



The Archbishop’s Commission on social care published its report last month. It suggests that “National government should set out a long-term commitment to introduce a universal entitlement to care and support (on a par with the NHS). Everyone should be able to lead a good life by accessing care and support when they need it regardless of wealth and income. This will require a means of collective funding and pooling of risk”. <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/archbishops-commissions/reimagining-care-commission>

Next up: A public meeting on carers



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Campaign for a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service

Public Meeting March 20th
6.30-8pm on Zoom

A fair deal for carers now!

Join us to lift the lid on the situation of an estimated 8 million carers, struggling to fill massive holes in health and social care with almost no support at all
Hear from carers, politicians, carers’ organisations and campaigners
Discuss what can be done to raise an outcry for radical change now - with

John McDonnell	MP Hayes & Harlington, Chair Labour Carers’ Group
Jo Walton	Full time family carer, ESCaD Steering Group
Jane Caygill	Member of Labour Carers’ Group
Paul Ridley	Member of Labour Carers’ Group
Judy Downey	National Pensioners Convention
Will Fremont-Brown	Archbishop’s Commission on Social Care

REGISTER HERE
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/zoommeeting/register/tZlkfu6oqD0jGNPNfjPHiDVHAtOUqOOGzESC>

End Social Care Disgrace (ESCaD) is a broad based coalition of disabled and older people’s organisations, health campaigns, carers, sector workers, trade unionists etc. campaigning for a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service, which is

Free at the point of use	Publicly funded and provided
Radically re-imagined and co-produced with service users, carers, workers and local communities	Offering choice, control, dignity and independence
Excellent support for carers	Staff pay and conditions which reflect their high value and skill

<https://nacsils.co.uk> Email: nacsilservice@gmail.com Facebook: NaCSiLS @nacsils

Join us on March 20 at 6.30pm. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/zoommeeting/register/tZlkfu6oqD0jGNPNfjPHiDVHAtOUqOOGzESC>