

# 9. A Social Care system on its knees

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Our Social Care system is failing everyone except the private providers rinsing it for profit. £1.5bn leaks out of the care home industry annually in the form of rent, dividend and interest payments, directors' fees, and profits. Half of those requesting support get no help. Support is erratic and institutionalised, focusing on meeting basic physical needs and providing little choice, control, dignity or support for independent living. The inability to discharge medically fit people safely into the care sector is also one major reason for delays in urgent hospital treatment.

## WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

- 84% of 18,000 different care providers are for-profit - provision is fragmented and unstable
- Local Authority care spending has hardly increased over the past decade despite rising demand
- The average hourly wage is £10.11 in the private sector for half the workforce (below national minimum wage £10.42); overseas workers are being exploited
- 152,000 vacancies and annual staff turnover of 30% meant 500,000 hours of homecare not delivered (Spring 2023)
- Care packages are being cut and charges hiked; some people are forced to give up essential support to pay for food, heating etc.
- 60,000 disabled adults and those with long-term illnesses in England were pursued for care charges debt and Councils took legal action against 330 people in 2021/2
- While UK's 2021 Census recorded close to 5 million unpaid carers, Carers UK estimate 10.6 million (6,000 are children)
- Carer's Allowance is only £68.70/week, irrespective of how many people the carer supports
- Almost 30% of 13 million disabled people in the UK live in poverty; counting carers and family members, half of the 14 million living in poverty are affected by disability
- The Government was found in breach of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons (2016) with Disabilities but is now making further cuts and has downgraded the role of disabilities minister

## **WHAT MUST HAPPEN NOW?**

**End Social Care Disgrace Campaign (ESCaD)** calls for a National, Care Support and Independent Living Service which is

- free at the point of use
- publicly provided, funded and accountable
- nationally mandated but radically re-imagined and co-produced locally with service users, carers, workers and local communities
- offering choice, control, dignity and independence
- providing support for carers with good pay and conditions