



Campaign for a National Care, Support
and Independent Living Service

Newsletter

September 2024

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Now's your chance Labour!

While we celebrate the demise of 14 years of Tory Government we need to prepare for a persistent struggle to push Labour to take anything like bold action on Social Care. It doesn't bode well that despite their only concrete promise on social care being to improve wages and conditions for care workers, they have scrapped the £53.9m adult social care training and development fund announced by the Conservatives as well as the proposed cap on costs for residential care.

The task is huge while Labour is wedded to two neo-liberal doctrines which the rich and powerful have worked very hard to pass off as common sense. One is the that making money for a small elite is the only hope of creating trickle down wealth for the many, even though it patently doesn't work. Recent research by Oxfam exposed the fact that the world's five richest men have more than doubled their fortunes to £681bn since 2020, while the world's poorest 60% – almost 5 billion people – have lost money !

The other common 'nonsense' is that the national economy works like a household budget. You don't have to go the whole hog with modern monetary theory to appreciate what Keynes said in 1942: "anything we can actually do, we can afford". Just look at how the NHS, education and social security systems were set up after the Second World War, when public debt was at 270% of GDP, and how the Labour Government magically located £137bn to bail out the banks in 2008. The money can be found. What is needed is the political will.

We need to harness all the support we can from allies in Labour, as well as the Greens and Lib Dems. At the same time we need to build up a head of steam from the grassroots calling for radical change, which John McDonnell supported

at our public meeting before the election. See recording here, thanks to Rachael:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OAJ6ljGTys>



and John here speaking at DPAC's event on 18th July outside Westminster.

We also need to debunk the notion that social care is a minority concern not a universal necessity like the NHS. The Department for Work and Pensions Family Resources Survey noted that 24% of the UK population, or 16 million people, had a disability in the 2021/22 financial year. Official estimates of the number of carers are over 5 million but Carers UK estimates that there are over 10 million. If you add 1.6m care workers, that is 28 million people – more than half the adult population – with family members, neighbours and friends also affected and numbers set to rise.

For more on this see the piece by Gilda Peterson for the NPC: <https://www.npcuk.org/post/health-social-care-news-september-24> .

There is also an excellent article by Gordon Peters in the Chartist: <https://www.chartist.org.uk/stopping-the-rot-in-social-care/>

Our letter to Politicians

We have written to Stephen Kinnock and other Ministers as well as a number of MPs calling for bold action on developing a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service and immediate action on benefits, the pursuit of debts, ending pointless re-assessments, the exploitation of care workers from abroad, mechanisms for co-production etc. See letter attached. It would be great if you could send it to your MP.

Stand up to racism: Stand by care workers

New RCN data has revealed a six-fold increase in the number of overseas care workers being exploited by rogue employers in the past three years. RCN General Secretary and Chief Executive Professor Nicola Ranger said: "The exploitation being allowed to spread is deeply inhumane and undermines the entire social care sector. Faced with our evidence, ministers were right to commit to an investigation during the election campaign and this must now happen with urgency. Lives are being destroyed every day and this cannot wait. We need action to protect our migrant care workers and raise standards in the sector."

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/uk-rcn-demands-urgent-investigation-into-exploitative-migrant-care-worker-contracts-200824>

In the light of recent racist riots, stoked by the far right but seeded by years of scapegoating of immigrants by the Tory Government we need to relentlessly expose the myths that feed racism, stand up and defend those who are under attack. Many of the third of health workers and fifth of care workers from abroad who are the backbone of health and care services are even more fearful.

Labour has promised an investigation into the exploitation of care workers from abroad but has said nothing about lifting the recent restriction which stops care workers bringing their children to the UK or urgent changes to the visa system.

Solidarity with DPAC et al on July 18th

ESCaD activists joined the lively event organised by disability rights campaigners at Westminster, pressing for the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People to be incorporated into UK Law, a



Legal Right to Independent Living, a "triple lock" on annual benefit rate increases, access to education, transport, housing etc.

Here are Anna Rose, Brian Fisher and Gordon Peters raising a flag!

Thanks to Rosie Reed from Bournemouth UCU



our Tee-shirt also had an outing at the Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival, along with trade union banners

Drop plans to cut benefits

Sadly this doesn't just mean Tory plans to change the work capability assessment, impose tougher sanctions on those deemed not to be doing enough to find work, limiting PIP and looking at one off grants and vouchers instead! Now we have to add in Labour's own plans to continue down the same tracks by cutting the winter fuel allowance to older people and refusing to drop the two child cap on child benefit!

The National Pensioners convention, Age UK, Independent Age, Unite, DPAC and many others are resisting the withdrawal of the winter fuel allowance. This will cut support to up to 2 million older people, increase suffering and anxiety, add to hospital admissions and premature deaths.

Please join the resistance, starting with pushing this petition over the 500,000 mark.

<https://campaigns.ageuk.org.uk/page/154268/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=Website>.

Also email your MP to ask them to vote against the withdrawal of the winter fuel allowance in the Commons next Tuesday 10th Sept. You might remind them that MPs can claim allowances for heating their 2nd homes. The bill amounted to over £1m in the last 5 years!

And look out for action at Labour Conference, events round the country on Older People's Day 1st October and an NPC lobby of Parliament from 1pm on 7th October.

Meanwhile, let's celebrate small wins.

Well done to the Disability Poverty Alliance whose well evidenced lobbying was part of the push that led to the Government deciding to extend the Household Support Fund for 6 months at least.

And see here an interesting bit of info from Equity suggesting that you are 23 times more likely to be prosecuted for benefit fraud than tax fraud in the UK, yet tax crimes cost the economy nine times more! <https://www.equity.org.uk/news/2024/stop-the-scapegoating-the-truth-behind-uk-government-s-attack-on-sick-note-culture>

SUPPORT ESCAD and help to build the fight

Please Donate and affiliate your organisation

ESCAD has a big vision and lots of energy but we have no paid staff or grand infrastructure. Our supporters are us and take the lead on planning action. Donations and affiliations from trade union branches, TUCs and other organisations (we suggest £40/50 for organisations) are very welcome. You can send money via the donate button on the website or directly by bank transfer to Lloyds: Account number 49665263, sort code 309897 or by cheque made out to NaCSILS and posted to 11 Regina Drive, Leeds LS7 4LR

Get involved: share your talents and enthusiasm

Money is a big help but what we need most is your enthusiasm and involvement. Get in touch to join our working groups on politicians, trade unions, carers and publicity and come to our quarterly joint Activists/Steering Group meetings on zoom. We are keen to set up a meeting in Westminster and a series of public meetings or workshops.

The next Activists meeting will be on zoom

Thursday 17th October 4pm – 5.30pm

Zoom info: Topic: End Social Care Disgrace

Activists Meeting Time: Oct 17, 2024 04:00 PM

Topic: ESCaD Steering Group/Activists Meeting

Time: Oct 17, 2024 04:00 PM London. Join here;

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85818549194?pwd=mzJJaHZAOM6b8Ha2u0jxOAuzy4oEoP.1> Meeting ID:

858 1854 9194 Passcode:67322

Meanwhile we welcome any support at the rally at Labour Party Conference – Kings Dock 12 noon Sunday 22nd September.

You can pick up a free Tee-shirt to wear! We will also be popping up at fringe meetings to give out ESCaD postcards. Also at the Green Party Conference in Manchester on 7th September, the Lib Dems Conference in Brighton on 14th September and hopefully the TUC Conference in Brighton 8th – 11th September.

If you can circulate our campaign postcards at any meetings or events you are involved with or would like to invite an ESCaD speaker, just text a delivery address to 07419295754 or Email endsocialcaredisgrace@gmail.com



END SOCIAL CARE DISGRACE
Campaign for a National Care, Support and Independent Living Service

Free at the point of use	Publicly funded, provided and accountable
Radically re-imagined and co – produced with service users, carers, workers and local communities	Offering choice, control, dignity and independence
Full, fair support for carers	Staff pay and conditions to reflect their high value and skills: one workforce - no exploitation

We are a non – party political alliance of disabled and older people’s organisations, health campaigns, trade unionists etc. Please join us, work with us, affiliate your org.
www.endsocialcaredisgrace.org ✉ endsocialcaredisgrace@gmail.com Tel. 07419 295754
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We will be delighted to send you a small bundle of cards and one of our new badges free of charge. If you would like some badges to sell at £1 each, you can pay via the donate button, bank transfer or cheque as above, noting that the money is for badges. Many thanks.



Very best wishes and solidarity to all.

Hoping that you might take heart from this pic. One lone sunflower may not make a summer but it definitely makes a difference!

