

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Westminster
London SW1A 2AA

14th August 2020

Delivering a long-term funding settlement for social care

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing on behalf of Health for Care, a coalition of national health organisations which is calling for social care reform in England. You have promised to fix social care ‘once and for all’ and we now urge you to set out a timetable for reform which will both address the immediate crisis and result in comprehensive legislative proposals to place the sector on a sustainable footing.

During the pandemic, our members have seen first-hand the unacceptable pressures experienced by those working in the care sector – whether in residential homes or in the community. We are clear, as we believe you are, that this is a fractured, under-staffed and under-funded system in desperate need of reform. With the potential of a second wave of COVID-19, localised outbreaks, and the challenges of winter ahead, we are now gravely concerned about the ability of social care services to cope. These difficulties will be compounded by the need to simultaneously provide care and rehabilitation to patients suffering from the long-term effects of COVID-19 and those who have not had COVID-19 but have experienced a decline in health as a result of shielding during lockdown.

The Health for Care coalition is clear that we need a long-term funding settlement to stabilise the market, extend provision to support more people in the community, and integrate social care and healthcare services.

There have been debates for too long about the nature of reform, but we are clear that:

- Eligibility should be based on need and widened to include both older people and those of working age with unmet or under-met need.
- We need a workforce strategy which encompasses health and care, tackles the recruitment and retention crisis in the sector, and addresses the serious inadequacies in pay, training and career progression for social care staff.
- We need a set of measures to support unpaid carers which recognises their huge contribution to the economy.
- The Government must seek to build stronger ties between the health and social care sectors, and between them and the wide array of community, voluntary and third-sector providers.

The pandemic has exposed the frailty of the social care sector, but it has also demonstrated how much the NHS relies on the care sector. Failure to invest in and reform this area puts incredible and unnecessary pressure on our health services and puts at risk our efforts to create a caring and effective NHS.

We recognise the enormous agenda faced by you and your government, but if you are serious about this issue, then as a matter of urgency we call on you to chair a national summit of health and care leaders to chart a way forward and set out the timetable by which you expect reform to be delivered.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Dickson CBE

Chief Executive, NHS Confederation
Chair of the *Health for Care* coalition

Sean Duggan

Chief Executive, NHS Mental Health Network
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Louise Patten

Chief Executive, NHS Clinical Commissioners
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Chris Hopson

Chief Executive, NHS Providers
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Dr Minesh Patel

Chairman, National Association of Primary Care
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Neil Tester

Director, Richmond Group of Charities
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Prof. Donal O'Donoghue OBE

Registrar, Royal College of Physicians
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Prof. Helen Stokes-Lampard

Chair, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Prof. Martin Marshall CBE

Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Prof. Tahir Masud

President, British Geriatrics Society
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Rachel Power

Chief Executive, Patients Association
Member of the *Health for Care* coalition

Fiona Carragher

Director of Research and Influencing,
Alzheimer's Society
Supporter of the *Health for Care* coalition

**Cc: The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Helen Whately MP, Minister of State for Care**