



ROUNDTABLES ON THE FUTURE OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Executive Summary



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Throughout November 2024, the Care Workers' Charity held a series of roundtable discussions to explore the future of Adult Social Care in England in the context of proposals for a National Care Service (NCS). Bringing together care workers, people drawing on care, unpaid carers, providers, commissioners, and advocacy groups, these discussions highlighted the critical challenges facing the care sector and key priorities for reform.

Key Themes from the Roundtables

- **Centering Care Voices:** Social care reform must focus on those most directly affected: frontline care workers, people drawing on care, and unpaid carers. Their voices need to be at the heart of decision-making.
- **A Shared Vision for Social Care:** A unified approach is needed to move beyond a crisis narrative and focus instead on care that supports dignity, autonomy, and fulfilling lives.
- **Elevating the Care Workforce:** Reforms must include plans for better pay, professional development, and recognition of care work as a skilled profession.
- **Social Care as a Distinct Sector:** Social care must be recognised and valued in its own right, with dedicated funding and priorities. Improved referral pathways with the NHS are necessary, but social care should not be seen solely in relation to healthcare.
- **Sustainable Funding & Investment:** The success of any reform, including a National Care Service, depends on long-term financial commitment and investment to ensure high-quality, accessible, and equitable care.

- **Public Perception & Societal Value of Care:** We need to discuss how we value care in society and how we can better understand care work as a vital, skilled, and valued profession.
- **Professionalisation:** Care workers widely support professionalisation, including a national registration system, to strengthen workforce identity and improve standards. However, concerns about costs and flexibility must be addressed.
- **A National Minimum Pay Standard:** There was support for a sector-wide minimum pay of £15 per hour, rising with experience and responsibilities. This needs to be backed by sustainable funding.
- **Structural Inequalities in Social Care:** The system must address inequalities affecting people drawing on care, unpaid carers, and the workforce, including race, gender, and disability disparities.
- **Commissioning & Funding Reform:** There is a need for multi-year funding settlements, equity-based funding formulas, and national oversight to ensure stability and equitable distribution of resources.

The National Care Service could transform social care in England, raising the status of the sector and workforce. However, its success will depend on inclusive policy development, sustained investment, and recognition of care as a fundamental part of society. These roundtables provided a space for meaningful dialogue, offering insights that could help guide the development of a fairer and more sustainable care system.

This report presents a starting point for further consultation, advocacy, and action. Achieving lasting change requires a commitment to ensuring that care workers, people drawing on care, and unpaid carers are central to shaping the future of social care.

With thanks to the roundtable participants

Abbey Milne, Sona
Alexandra Johnston, Community Integrated Care
Alicia Graham
Amrit Sumal, Superior Care Ltd
Andrea Kinkade, Lifeways
Ann Taylor, Kent Integrated Care Alliance
Anne Pridmore, Being the Boss
Ashleigh Fox, Catalyst Care Group
Caitlin Durham, Living Wage
Dr Jahan Foster Zabit, Race Equality Foundation
Dr Jane Townson OBE, Homecare Association
Euan McPherson, Services for Independent Living
Holly Baine, The Rayne Foundation
James Rycroft, Vida Healthcare
Jane Brightman, Skills For Care
Jim Thomas, Longhouseman Ltd
Joey Teepso, Sona
Josh Isaac, Prosperity Care and Wellbeing
Kaddy Thomas, Elijahs Hope
Lara Bywater, LDC Care
Liz Waight
Louise Jackson, AgeUK
Matthew Kalupka, Home Counties Carers
Max Goodman, Sona
Nadra Ahmed, National Care Association
Rachel Kelso, Homecare Workers' Group C.I.C
Raina Summerson, Agincare Holdings Ltd
Rhian Stone, Bolton Cares
Sanjay Dhrona, The Close Care Home
Sophie Chester-Glyn, Coproduce Care CIC
Susan O'Sullivan, The Rayne Foundation
Teresa Exelby, Community Integrated Care

The Care Worker Advisory Board and Champions Project

Amandajayne Swann
Amaka Molokwu
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Caroline Tate
Clementine Okozi
Destiny Ugboh
Dylan Brown
Elena Ware
Elizabeth Cox
Georgia Edwards
Hannah Reeseigh-Lincoln
Happiness Endwell
Hayley O'Sullivan
Heather Ciesar
Idris Oluwo
Jeanette Wilford
Jon Healy
Katharine Byard
Kelvin Imoloame
Lisa McCulley
Muhammad Ahmed
Ogechi Abonuyo
Omatule Ameh
Rest Priscilla Ekirya
Sizakele Peters
Uchenna Rita Nwosu

“Thank you for a great opportunity to have this roundtable discussion. Quite an eye opener.”

“It stimulated a great debate.”

“Thank you for today’s session, it has been incredibly valuable to listen to everyone here today.”

With thanks to

