

Meet your MP and tell them how the care system is letting many people down.

On Friday 12 October can you meet with your MP to tell them how the care system is failing to support those that desperately need help? You could have direct experience of needing care, or supporting someone who has. Or you could simply be someone who can see that our social care system isn't working for those that need it. We'll be asking people all over the country to do this on the same day to have the biggest impact possible.

Why this is important

This autumn, the Government is set to make a number of decisions, including those in the Autumn Budget, which will have a big impact on our crumbling care system. MPs need to understand the urgent need to provide people with the right care. Currently at least 1.4 million people go without the care they need – very basic care like help with washing, dressing and eating. This is a crucial time to highlight that, for those already needing care, times are desperate. You may have your own story.

Getting a meeting with your MP

To find out who your MP is, visit www.theyworkforyou.com and enter your postcode.

Call the MP's office or check their website to find out if they have a surgery (an informal session held by MPs where constituents are welcome to come and share their concerns). Ideally visit them on Friday 12 October, as part of our day of visits, but if this isn't possible find the nearest time you can.

Meeting your MP

The best way to get your MP to care is by telling them your own story. There's no need for you to remember lots of facts and figures (attached is a briefing with these included). Instead, tell them about your experiences of needing care and ask your MP to write to the Treasury to ensure there is immediate funding for social care in the budget.

What to do in the meeting:

- Outline why you're meeting them: to join in the campaign for improvements to the social care system and to ask for their support.
- Tell them your story: what is your personal experience of needing care / someone you know getting care? What was the impact? How could have things been improved? What would have made things better?
- **The key ask:** ask your MP to write to the Treasury asking for immediate funding for social care in the Autumn Budget.

At the end of the meeting, make sure you:

- Hand them over the briefing (headed FOR MPs) they can read this for more information and also to see what they can do next.
- Get a picture with them. We've included a sign in this pack for you to hold up.
- Post on social media afterwards with the hashtags [#carecrisis](#), [#Budget2018](#) and, ideally, include a picture.

Let us know how you get on

Tell us how your meeting went by emailing csa@nas.org.uk and do send us any pictures you take.

I care about social care

#Budget2018
#carecrisis

Social Care Crisis Briefing

October 2018

The Care & Support Alliance (CSA) represents over 80 of Britain's leading charities (including Age UK, Arthritis Research UK, MS Society and others) campaigning for a properly funded care system alongside the millions of older people, disabled people and their carers who need decent care.

What's the issue?

Currently 1.4 million people don't get the basic social care they need. Social care support is essential in meeting the needs of disabled and older people, and allowing them and their families to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. As well as relying on care and support for help with everyday tasks, like washing, dressing and eating, social care plays a vital role in supporting recipients and their carers to move into, or stay in, employment, and in preventing unnecessary visits to the NHS.

Yet the current system is facing severe challenges. More and more people need care, but chronic underfunding of the system means that fewer and fewer people receive it. There is an urgent need to address the shortfall in funding now. Cuts between 2010 and 2017 now total 49% and a £2.5 billion funding gap is estimated by 2019/20¹.

The Government has promised to address longer-term issues in a Green Paper, expected in autumn 2018. This Government must tackle the issue once and for all – in the past 20 years, we've had 12 separate consultations and reviews looking at the system.

We need the Government to make sure that:

- Immediate investment is made to avoid market collapse and keep the system afloat.
- The Green Paper cannot be used as an excuse to kick the issue into the long grass. Long-term reforms are needed for all those who need care – older people, disabled people and their carers.

What people tell us:

Nearly 4,000 people with experience of the care system took part in a CSA survey in 2018² and a clear picture of widespread unmet need emerged.

- 1 in 5 felt unsafe moving around their home and over 1 in 3 can't leave it.
- 1 in 5 went without meals due to a lack of care and support.
- 1 in 4 said they had struggled without basic support including getting out of bed in the morning, getting dressed or going to the toilet.
- Over 1 in 3 felt lonely and isolated because of a lack of care and support.

"I haven't been washed for over two months. My bedroom floor has only been vacuumed once in three years. My sheets have not been changed in about six months, and my pyjamas haven't been changed this year. My care workers don't have time for cleaning, washing or changing me."

"I feel 100% let down and not heard."

"When I was caring for my mother at home getting respite care was very hard – in fact for a long time, I didn't know I was entitled. It's a lottery as to whether social services give you the information you need about what you are entitled to as a carer."

"I've become a burden to my family, lost many friends and just can't be the husband and partner I would like to be. It's not just me that suffers, but all the family."

The impact on the NHS

Our survey also highlighted the negative impact of unmet care and support needs on the NHS:

- Over 1 in 3 people have seen their health deteriorate as a result of not getting the social care they needed.
- 1 in 6 have missed crucial medical appointments because changes to care services resulting from local authority cuts mean people cannot get to their hospital appointments.
- 1 in 4 people needed hospital treatment and 1 in 8 said they've been delayed in leaving hospital because of not getting the care they need.

The impact on wider society

Finally, our findings also shed light on the impact the current social care system is having on society as a whole.

- Over 1 in 5 people told us they have been unable to work because of a lack of care and support, meaning many have had to reduce their work hours. This is backed by evidence that shows people with a disability are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people.
- Nearly half of people told us they have had to rely more on family and friends. We know that too often, unpaid carers are filling the gap in care provision. They are already providing £132bn worth of care a year alone, and recent research found that there are 500,000 more carers than in 2005.

What needs to be done immediately?

Our 80 organisations have collectively agreed on seven key tests for a Green Paper that we think will address the issues in the care system.

To put social care on a sustainable footing now, and to develop a long-term solution for social care funding, the CSA would like to see the following.

The seven key tests

1. The investment of short-term funding required to keep the social care system afloat until long-term reforms are implemented.
2. A sustainable long-term funding solution that shares the costs of social care fairly across society and delivers an improved system.
3. A commitment to putting an end to unmet need for all (regardless of age), ensuring better provision of lower level care and support, as well as preventative care.
4. Improving the quality of care and enabling the provision of person-centred care for all people, regardless of their age, that is underpinned by a sustainable workforce and technology.
5. A system that works for everyone who needs care, including working-age adults, older people and carers of all ages.
6. Making social care more affordable and protecting working-age adults, older people and carers from high costs they cannot predict.
7. A long-term plan to put the care market on a sustainable footing.

What you can do

- Write to the Chancellor Philip Hammond and ask for social care to get immediate funding to fill the funding gap and stop the immediate crisis.
- Write to Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock and ask for the Green Paper to ensure social care is properly funded, highlight the CSA's seven tests above.

For more information contact csa@nas.org.uk

1. Kings Fund 2017 budget briefing <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/autumn-budget-2017>
2. Between January and March 2018, the CSA ran a survey on the experiences of people accessing care and support from the social care system. 3915 older people, disabled people and unpaid carers with self-identified care and support needs took part in the survey. There was a broad range of respondents from a wide range of ages, locations and financial backgrounds.