

Meg Hillier MP
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
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21 July 2020

Dear Ms Hillier,

Care England, the largest representative body for independent providers of adult social care, welcomes the recent publication of the Public Accounts Committee's report on NHS capital expenditure and management. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the intertwined nature of the adult social care and NHS's future fortunes. For example, the report also notes how the NHS's own finances will inevitably impact the ability of it to fulfil the integration agenda with adult social care. Care England will too continue to campaign for the need for greater integration and collaboration between the two sectors.

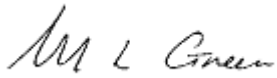
Perhaps the most pressing matter for the adult social care sector within the report is with regards to Personal Protective Equipment. The report calls for the Government to give particular dues to the distribution of PPE to the care sector is particularly pertinent – especially in light of the issues which we saw at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic around getting PPE to the frontline.

In addition, the report also raised the important issue of how the NHS will resume its normal working over the coming weeks and months. It is worth noting that during this crisis the adult social care workforce picked up many of the roles which were ordinarily fulfilled by the NHS. This ability of the sector to do so during the pandemic was, and continues to be, a testament to the professionalism of the adult social care workforce.

More broadly, Care England's own focus is now on supporting the adult social care sector through this 'new normal' and ensuring its voice is heard throughout. In many ways the new normal poses many additional issues for the adult social care sector. Thus, we believe that the adult social care sector should not in any way be an afterthought for the Government, in the way that it was at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus should be upon ensuring the financial sustainability of the adult social care sector in light of the unprecedented financial costs that have been imposed upon a sector already affected by a multi-billion pound funding gap prior to the pandemic.

Care England welcomes the work of the Committee and looks forward to contributing to its work in the coming months and years. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you like to discuss this issue any further.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M L Green'.

Professor Martin Green OBE
Chief Executive: Care England
DH: Independent Sector Dementia Champion