

Written evidence submitted by Labour Social Work Group (ASC0012)

HEALTH AND CARE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO COSTS OF INACTION OF REFORM OF SOCIAL CARE

Submission from the Labour Social Work Group

The Labour Social Work Group a member-led group that seeks to contribute to improved wellbeing and life chances of some of the most vulnerable members of society. Our members provide community and personal social work services, research and training across age and needs groups, and work collaboratively with people who use services, their carers and advocacy groups.

We wish to address the following two questions posed by the Committee:

‘What is the cost of inaction to individuals and how might people’s lives change with action on adult social care reform?’

‘Where in the system is the cost of inaction on adult social care reform being borne the most?’

We believe that the way councils deploy their resources to both meet and prevent people’s needs for care and support requires fundamental reform. The current system gives priority to complex cases with high levels of need to the detriment of meeting many people’s needs, and the needs of their family carers, in a preventive way.

The NHS uses a different model to deploy resources that gives more weight to prevention. We think that this and other models should be explored for adult social care. Inaction on reform is being borne by the NHS (e.g. unnecessary admissions to hospital, earlier than needed admission to a care home), family carers (who are at much greater risk of breaking down, being harmed by caring) and by adults with care needs who find themselves ‘ineligible’ for access to publicly funded services, including social work.

It has long been known that best use of public money happens when resources are allocated to meet the unique needs of individuals as they aspire to make their *lives the best they can be* - support that is *personalised*. Social work skills are required to support people to identify the best use of resources to make this a reality.

The Care Act remains the right legislation. Properly applied, it can have a significant transformative impact on the productivity and effectiveness of the sector and the lives and wellbeing of adults with care and support needs and their families.

We can provide both the evidence to support the above statements and the ways in which the Statutory Guidance needs to change if the Committee would like to pursue this as a way forward.

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