



## Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group Newsletter February 2022

### Update on recent developments

Ealing's Racial Equality Commission issued a report [Report – Do Something Good](#) and the Council accepted its recommendations including a Citizens Assembly to monitor progress. <https://www.aroundealing.com/news/ealing-council-agrees-citizens-tribunal-in-wake-of-race-equality-report/> The report includes health and social care concerns locally and recent national coverage has also highlighted important racial disparities in health: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/feb/13/radical-action-needed-to-tackle-racial-health-inequality-in-nhs-says-damning-report>

Ealing has local government elections on 5 May 2022: [Are you registered to vote?](#)

The Council discussed budget proposals at a cabinet meeting and will decide on 1<sup>st</sup> March about a proposed 1.99% increase. [The cabinet report is available online.](#) Cabinet also discussed whether to add the government's 1% social care precept to council tax bills – as a separate charge, it can only be spent on providing social care for adults. The 1% rise proposed would generate around £1.5million extra for Ealing.

### Campaigns – current or upcoming

A well-attended public meeting was organised virtually by the campaign for a National Care Support & Independent Living Service (NaCSILS) on 3 February to discuss how to “End Social Care Disgrace”, with speakers from the National Pensioners Convention, UNITE & Care & Support Workers Organise!, Keep Our NHS Public and disabled activist and author - Don O'Neal. For an audio version of the event - <https://anchor.fm/nacsils> ERSCAG is part of this national campaign and will be working to promote NaCSILS's seven principles during the forthcoming hustings for local elections and afterwards.

The local elections will also provide an opportunity for ERSCAG to push its campaigning to Scrap Social Care Charges – more information to follow in coming few months.

A national Day of Action is planned on 26 February. Locally Ealing Save Our NHS (ESON) is organising a demo outside Ealing Hospital (between noon and 1.30) calling for (a) emergency NHS funding to save lives; (b) a fully publicly owned NHS & guaranteed free healthcare and (c) proper pay and conditions for NHS staff. See also ESON petition to re-open mental health beds in Ealing - [our petition](#)

The national Residents and Relatives Association is calling for a new legal right to maintain contact with relatives/friends in health and care settings. They have invited the Care Minister to attend an event in Parliament on 9 March to discuss this and hear from a panel of speakers, including families, about the impact of separation and isolation. For more information and a

template for inviting your MP to the event: <http://www.relres.org/invite-mp-event/#:~:text=Download%20a%20template%20invite%20for%20your%20MP%20>

## Information and latest developments nationally

### Covid & Vaccinations:

- The Department of Health & Social Care has issued - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for people receiving direct payments](#) – reflecting the latest guidance on the booster programme, travel and self-isolation, and the extension of the free PPE scheme until 2023.
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/feb/01/all-uk-health-workers-vaccinated-building-trust-mandate-u-turn>; the government has announced its intention to [revoke vaccination as a condition of deployment](#) in all health/social care settings, subject to consultation as it believes it is no longer proportionate.
- No news yet on timing and remit of a national inquiry into the handling of the covid pandemic but in Northern Ireland the Health Minister Robin Swann is facing judicial review over the treatment of NI care home residents during pandemic and see also: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/feb/08/big-pharma-global-vaccine-rollout-covid-pfizer>
- For latest rules/advice on responding to Covid 19 see on for government advice services

### Direct Payments – DP users may be interested in:

- Practical advice about staff recruitment from Social Care Futures: <https://socialcarefuture.org.uk/who-makes-decisions-in-the-recruitment-process-co-production-in-recruitment/>; <https://socialcarefuture.org.uk/recruiting-through-workshops-instead-of-interviews/>; <https://socialcarefuture.org.uk/how-we-demonstrate-our-values-throughout-the-recruitment-process/>; <https://socialcarefuture.org.uk/living-in-the-place-we-call-home-summary-of-key-themes/>
- Did you know that the law states that Direct Payment users and personal health budget employers should display fire evacuation signs within the property? For more info/training – check out [info@blueskybrokers.org](mailto:info@blueskybrokers.org) or (01332) 404040 option 3; & Ealing Council for funding help.
- SENSE (an organisation working with children and adults who are deafblind) issued an email recently alerting people that Thames Water has a Priority Services option for those with complex disabilities. Sign up via this link, or call 0800 980 8800

### Privatisation:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/feb/01/us-healthcare-giants-takeover-of-uk-gp-practices-lands-in-high-court>

### Reports/reporting:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/feb/01/what-i-wish-people-knew-about-dementia-by-wendy-mitchell-review-a-book-of-hope>
- For theatre lovers locally: “IMPACT Theatre and Outreach Network presents Red Rope: Impact on Ocean Pollution, a powerful immersive film featuring artworks, music, and dances by people with learning disabilities. Working towards this creative project has kept our learning-disabled performers and artists engaged and optimistic

through the pandemic, and it has culminated in a fantastic piece that is wowing audiences. For more information visit [www.impacttheatre.co](http://www.impacttheatre.co).”

- **Universal quality social care: transforming adult social care in England** is a report issued in January 2022 by the Women’s Budget Group and the New Economics Foundation calculating the cost of the reforms needed to create a high-quality universal care service with well paid workers
- See <https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/> A recent issue carried articles such as – “tens of thousands driven into debt by care charges”; “the Equality and Human Rights Commission faces questions over failures to act on DWP benefit deaths”; or “Shaping Our Lives report on the ‘tokenistic service user involvement’ must be addressed”. Individual subs £10pm contact: John Pring, editor of DNS and author of Longcare Survivors: The Biography of a Care Scandal; email 0776206595, 01184 371378; email [john@disabilitynewsservice.com](mailto:john@disabilitynewsservice.com); Twitter @johnpringdns
- Books 1 and 2 of [\*The Best NHS?\*](#) are now available to purchase - Book 2 (*What Social Care is and How it can be Fixed*) is published (28 February) in paperback and Kindle.

#### Staffing:

- <https://news.sky.com/story/social-care-immigration-rules-relaxed-to-attract-migrant-workers-amid-staff-shortages-12542478>
- [Workforce burnout and resilience in the NHS and social care](#)

#### Your Help Sought:

A variety of organisations have asked people to engage and feed in their lived experiences; for example:


- Do you have views on the [Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care](#): the government consultation runs to 10 April [ijpimplementationquestions@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:ijpimplementationquestions@dhsc.gov.uk)
- Do you care about housing in Ealing? Around Ealing magazine (Spring 2022) talks of a target of “new-home 2500 target to be smashed “ but surprisingly there is little about ensuring housing suitably adapted for people with disabilities or with access issues. There is a survey “help shape Ealing Council priorities for housing in the Ealing” and the deadline is Friday 8 April - [www.ealing.co.uk/housingsurvey](http://www.ealing.co.uk/housingsurvey)
- Do you care about/ are you directly affected by/ or know of people affected by digital exclusion – see survey at: [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NWL2021](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NWL2021)
- Are you a user of District Nursing services in Ealing (or North West London generally) – they want to hear how the services can be improved <https://form.jotform.com/213421630487351>

### Sources of official advice/help

Important new arrangements come into play from 24<sup>th</sup> February, about the wearing of facemasks, isolation, and the availability of testing, so keep an eye on the official websites. Current official guidance about covid can be found at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus). The Department of Health & Social Care also issues regular updates about adult social care – to join their mailing list see [news@dhsc-mail.co.uk](mailto:news@dhsc-mail.co.uk) At the Ealing level, the Council also offers a lot of guidance – see [www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus) and/or [www.ealingtogether.org](http://www.ealingtogether.org)

Do you want help with your digital needs? Anyone living in the Borough of Ealing can call a free helpline on 0808 196 5883. You will be put in contact with the Digital Champion, who

will be able to train you remotely, either online or via the telephone whichever is most appropriate. The training is free (see Around Ealing magazine spring 2022).

<p>Are you a carer? Do you have an 'emergency card' to carry in the case of an accident to inform the authorities that you have someone dependent on you: see: <a href="https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201084/caring_for_someone/1568/carers_emergency_card/3">https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201084/caring_for_someone/1568/carers_emergency_card/3</a>.</p> <p>The Carers Forum organised a meeting to discuss emergency cards recently and organises regular meetings (March 8th, 11:30 AM-1PM Carers and Families with Learning Difficulties, and March 15<sup>th</sup>,</p>	<p>for carers and those with long-term conditions (Mental Health, Stroke, Parkinsons, COPD , Diabetes etc.). For more info phone the Ealing Carers Centre on 0203 137 6194.</p> 
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### **Social care over the longer term**

After several calls for more action from government on long term reform of the social care system, there has been a deluge of recent White Papers (see November/December ERSCAG newsletter). Yet another was issued (9 February) on the Integration of health and social care: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-social-care-integration-joining-up-care-for-people-places-and-populations>. Like some of its predecessors, it is accused by critics of being full of flowery aspirations but not always very accessible or specific.

You may want to read it together with some of the early responses. The Local Government Association has issued an initial response <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-response-health-and-social-care-integration-joining-care>. The Local Government Chronicle provides a briefing at: <https://www.lgcplus.com/politics/lgc-briefing/the-fundamental-flaw-in-health-and-care-integration-white-paper-16-02-2022/>; MENCAP raises concerns - <https://www.learningdisabilitytoday.co.uk/government-s-integration-white-paper-could-medicalise-social-care-say-mencap/>; and NHS providers comment here: <https://nhsproviders.org/resource-library/briefings/nhs-providers-next-day-briefing-health-and-social-care-integration-white-paper>

**Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter at [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action](#) and join our Facebook group [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group](#).**  
**For more information, or copies of any of the ERSCAG papers mentioned here, contact ERSCAG Secretary [maggiebeirne@googlemail.com](mailto:maggiebeirne@googlemail.com) or [erscaginfo@gmail.com](mailto:erscaginfo@gmail.com)**