



## Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group Newsletter July 2021

### Update on recent developments

While awaiting a national inquiry (promised for Spring 2022), ERSCAG produced an **Updated Review of Covid Learning** for submission to Ealing Council. The document draws on publicly available material to look at learning in Ealing on hospital discharges, Council coordination efforts across the fragmented residential and domiciliary care sector (with PPE, vaccinations, practical support), networks created for those shielding, and the value of good data and communications. The document highlights many positive responses at the local level & suggests that some of the Covid-19 measures need to be retained for the foreseeable future.

To mark the 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the NHS, ERSCAG members joined the Ealing Save Our NHS/Ealing Trades Council celebration outside Ealing Hospital and spoke briefly about the campaign for a **National Care Support and Independent Living Service (NaCSILS)** (see on, campaigning). It was great to see local MPs Rupa Huq & Virendra Sharma, and Greater London Assembly member Dr Onkar Sahota present, along with other political party representatives and members of the public. Rupa has asked several Parliamentary Questions and replied to constituency letters about social care. ERSCAG met with James Murray MP in July to update him on the latest developments. Individuals living in Ealing are reminded to contact their local MP directly if they have a specific social care concerns needing intervention.

The importance of lobbying our local politicians was highlighted in a discussion organised (14 July) with Tara Flood who works for our neighbouring Council (Hammersmith and Fulham). Tara explained to ERSCAG's Direct Payment User Group the fact that H&F introduced principles of **independent living and co-production** into the Council's staffing structures, budgetary decisions, and operational practices as a direct result of political choices made by local Councillors. In order to guarantee independent living in H&F, direct payment support is community led & there is no charging for home care (see on, campaigning).

Looking ahead: On 21<sup>st</sup> August, Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group will be sharing a stall with Ealing Save Our NHS at the **Hanwell Carnival** – hope to see you there!

### **Sources of official advice/help in the time of coronavirus**

Current official guidance can be found at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) Direct Payment users may be interested in a recent government circular (dated 3 July) explaining that “*the supply of PPE to all of Adult Social Care is until the end of March 2022*”. Ealing Council also provides local guidance – see [www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/coronavirus) – and a central 24/7 signposting service by the Advice & Referral Centre for social care (0208 8258000 – with a duty social worker for emergencies outside normal working hours).

More generally, on Direct Payments: see

[Ealing Council Direct Payments Guide](#) and/or for financial aspects see the [DYFC Booklet 19 20 V2.pdf](#). On the council’s website there is also a brand new [vital help and support section](#), and specialist independent advice is available from the Ealing Advice Service ([www.ealingadvice.org](http://www.ealingadvice.org)) on issues such as charging, assessments, etc.

### **Campaigns – current or upcoming**

Our June newsletter noted that the “**Scrap Social Care Charging Coalition**” is getting going nationally and ERSCAG wrote to all three local MPs to alert them to the campaign. If you have not emailed your MP already, see: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/introduce-free-home-care-and-scrap-care-charging?source=direct-link&>. Note earlier comments about how Hammersmith & Fulham have ended charging for social care, and for a commentary on a court finding that Norfolk Council’s charging policies were discriminatory see <https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2021/07/02/councils-failing-amend-social-care-charging-systems-deemed-unlawful-high-court/>

Motions of support from constituency parties, trade unions or other such groups have been developed by the campaign for a **National Care Support and Independent Living Service** (NaCSILS) and ERSCAG has alerted all three local Ealing MPs and local Councillors to the demands for “*a national framework, locally delivered – a service that is provided in cooperation with users, promotes independent living, and is democratically accountable; one that provides decent staff pay and conditions; and support for informal carers.*”

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is currently carrying out an inquiry into the experience of individuals and groups that have **challenged decisions about adult social care** –check out the survey and other material available on the EHRC’s website at: [https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/inquiry-challenging-decisions-about-adult-social-care?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=Orlo](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/inquiry-challenging-decisions-about-adult-social-care?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Orlo)

## **Information and latest developments nationally**

### **Care-workers**

- The Independent (10 July 2021) reports on a publication “Unfair to Care” issued by leading charity Community Integrated Care, saying that frontline social care staff are being paid an average of £7000 (or 40%) a year less than other workers with equivalent skills which in part explains the 112,000 unfilled vacancies in the sector. For full report see [www.UnfairToCare.com](http://www.UnfairToCare.com) or [www.communityintegratedcare.co.uk](http://www.communityintegratedcare.co.uk)

“Freedom Day” there was plenty of upbeat media coverage about 19 July but see also

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/16/englands-covid-unlocking-a-threat-to-the-world-experts-say>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jul/22/people-learning-disabilities-freedom-day-covid>

### **Health and Social Care legislation:**

Various organisations are concerned about this draft legislation, describing it as little more than a “corporate takeover” of the NHS. It has relatively little about social care, but if you want to learn more, see detailed analysis by Professor Alyson Pollock **Health and Social Care Bill 2021-22**. The National Pensioners Convention has written to all MPs urging them to oppose the legislation - <https://www.npcuk.org/post/health-and-care-bill-letter-to-mps>

**Key facts and figures** [Key facts and figures about adult social care](#)

### **National covid Inquiry?**

- <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/24/public-inquiry-into-covid-must-begin-now-says-senior-judge-sir-robert-owen>
- For interim conclusions and recommendations from the People’s Covid Inquiry, chaired by Michael Mansfield QC, see [www.peoplescovidinquiry.com](http://www.peoplescovidinquiry.com)

## Social care over the longer term

A parliamentary debate was organised (24 June) in the House of Lords on the theme of Social Care and the Role of Carers, <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/3bbb19f8-560c-4160-ac85-a69914c6cf3a?in=14:37:50> or <https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-06-24/debates/96211CEC-0C7E-48DB-9471-B5CAFF4F385/SocialCareAndTheRoleOfCarers>

It is difficult to determine what is likely to happen in terms of government proposals on long term funding of social care. For recent ebbs and flows, see interviews with the leading actors (Sajid Javid in the Telegraph on 10 July) and then speculative media coverage between 16-18 July in the Independent, Guardian, the Financial Times, the Sunday Times, the Mail on Sunday, and the Telegraph. Labour thinking about social care funding was well covered the same weekend on the Andrew Marr Show on BBC and the Politico blog (27 July) cited a Financial Times article where Labour's Rachel Reeves ruled out a rise in national insurance to pay for social care reforms ([FT's](#)). Despite all the speculation, the long-promised government 'long term plan for social care' was eventually NOT tabled before the summer recess.

More useful background material:

- National Pensioners Convention: <https://www.npcuk.org/post/webinar-series-who-cares-the-future-of-health-and-care>
- [https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2021/06/18/alison-gopnik-on-a-revolution-to-properly-value-caregivers?utm\\_campaign=coronavirus-special-edition&utm\\_medium=newsletter&utm\\_source=salesforce-marketing-cloud](https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2021/06/18/alison-gopnik-on-a-revolution-to-properly-value-caregivers?utm_campaign=coronavirus-special-edition&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_source=salesforce-marketing-cloud)
- The Care Crisis What Caused It and How Can We End It?— by Prof Emma Dowling: <https://www.versobooks.com/books/3667-the-care-crisis>
- A range of different groups have been lobbying government to bring forward their long-promised proposals for social care reform. Age UK has made a great video <https://fb.watch/v/46jUBX9d0/>

Follow Us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) at [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action](#) and join our Facebook group [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group](#). Any of the papers here as available from ERSCAG can be requested from ERSCAG Secretary ([maggiebeirne@googlemail.com](mailto:maggiebeirne@googlemail.com))