



## Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group Newsletter October 2022

### Update on recent developments

***“There have been amazing changes nationally since our last newsletter – we have a King and an entirely new Cabinet”***. These were the opening words of our newsletter last month – and it is true again! At the time of writing, our Prime Minister is Rishi Sunak and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care is Steve Barclay.

Continuing on the discussion about the current political environment, ERSCAG followed the various party-political conferences in September and October, but relatively few touched at any length on social care.

- The Labour Party conference passed an excellent motion which is now being actively pursued at constituency party level & a fringe meeting was organised by campaigners for a National Support and Independent Living Service (NaCSILS) – see <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AISE6gakyRVwhOoPm6VKOhfId-vtWQ?e=FNA4hu>. A fringe event was also organised by the conservative think tank, Policy Exchange, see [here](#): “Trusted to deliver? Labour’s plan for health and care”.
- Local Conservative Councillor Fabio Conti reported that their party conference held “a number of fringe events at conference on social care, including one by the Health and Care Forum, another on providing long term sustainable support to an ageing population, and another on how can a patient’s experience on the NHS and social care inform and improve its future”.
- The Greens had no specific motion on social care at their party conference, but Dr Kate Crossland reported that their March 2021 conference motion agreed that: “All social care, support and independent living services for disabled adults should be: free at the point of use; fully publicly funded; subject to human rights standards; accountable to local democratic bodies, within a secure national framework of laws, guidance and funding; designed and delivered locally and co-productively involving Local Authorities, the NHS, disabled adults, carers and staff unions; underpinned by a workforce with good pay, conditions, training and career structure; and committed to giving informal carers the rights and support they need.” As such, Green party policy reflects most of the demands of the National Care Support and Independent Living Service campaign ([www.nacsils.co.uk](http://www.nacsils.co.uk))
- The Liberal Democrat Party deferred their conference until the Spring but Cllr Gary Malcolm sent the party’s current policy on social care (a 2019 motion) and accompanying policy paper: <https://www.libdems.org.uk/f15-brexite-nhs>

Local MP Rupa Huq has recently been active in pursuing social care issues by way of Parliamentary Questions – see, for example, [Written Answers - Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Care Homes: Energy](#) which asks questions about heating costs this winter for residential care homes.

## Campaigns – current or upcoming

Age UK has a very active campaign team and regularly circulates petitions for action. If you are interested – contact - [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns) - recent ones asked recipients to comment on “Has the mini-budget done enough for winter or not?” and discussed Black History Month.

The Independent Living Group had a well-attended formal launch on 4 October and the recording of the event will be posted on the [ILG Community](#) site.

Given the experience of isolation during Covid, campaigns are now underway to have primary carers be permitted in hospitals/care homes. For example, see both - [www.johnscampaign.org.uk](http://www.johnscampaign.org.uk) and a report by the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (July 2022) which recommended that – *“The government must introduce legislation to secure to care users the right to nominate one or more individuals to visit and to provide support or care in all circumstances, subject to the same infection and prevention and control rules as care staff”*.

The British Institute for Human Rights (BIHR) and other groups continue to campaign against government proposals to scrap the Human Rights Act. With the new Cabinet, the so-called ‘Rights Removal Bill’ may well be put back onto the political agenda, and the BIHR resource marking World Mental Health Day on the importance of the HRA for health and care rights is very timely.

[Read Deborah's blog](#)

Bringing Us Together ran a range of workshops in October about coping with the cost-of-living crisis. They report that they *“continue to be active on supporting various campaigns including: work on anti-poverty; care charges and social care; Direct Payments; avoiding admission of young people into inpatient services who are autistic and or with learning disabilities; work together with NHS England, disabled led and parent led organisations on the Advocacy Review and a new Guide from Challenging Behaviour Foundation.”* Contact [tony@bringingustogether.org.uk](mailto:tony@bringingustogether.org.uk).

## Latest developments nationally

### Austerity and cost of living crisis

- <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/oct/05/over-330000-excess-deaths-in-great-britain-linked-to-austerity-finds-study>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/06/covid-bereavement-uk-affected-prospects-tens-of-thousands-report>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-and-social-care-secretary-sets-out-plan-for-patients-with-new-funding-to-bolster-social-care-over-winter>

### Important dates:

- World Mental Health Day was marked on 10 October
- UK Disability History Month (16 November to 16 December) will be launched online: contact [callumrussell@crconsultancy.org](mailto:callumrussell@crconsultancy.org) in advance for the zoom link, including your name, telephone number, and any relevant organisation. See their website for resources to use in workplaces/colleges/schools ([www.ukdhm.org](http://www.ukdhm.org))

### Local events

- See Council website for [Black History Month events](#) & the Ealing Citizens Tribunal

- Ealing Over-60s Network (EON) heard from Dr Amy Kavanagh on 10 October about “The Social Model of Disability”, and a speaker from MIND on 24 October.
- On 18 October, Dr Louise Irvine spoke to ESON (Ealing Save our NHS) about government plans for the NHS ([www.ealingsaveournhs.org.uk](http://www.ealingsaveournhs.org.uk))
- **Forthcoming:** Two free events are taking place in the West London Trades Union Club to mark UK Disability History Month (a) 4pm 19 November - Tennessee Williams' film, 'The Glass Menagerie', with Katherine Hepburn, Sam Waterston, Dir. Anthony Harvey; (b) 8pm on 26 November, Janet Mearns, the club's Women and Equalities Officer (and ERSCAG committee member), will talk on: 'Can Legislation Achieve Disability Equality?'. 33-35 Acton High Street, London W3 6ND. Non-members welcome; for access see <https://wltuc.com/access> or [equality@wltuc.com](mailto:equality@wltuc.com)

### Privatisation:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/oct/13/nhs-crisis-private-health-public-service-uk>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/oct/13/why-global-investors-are-piling-into-the-uks-luxury-care-home-sector>

### Reports

- A Council of Europe report - “Active Ageing – states should show firm commitment to securing the rights of older persons”- was issued in September [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)
- A recent Panorama undercover investigation found evidence of patients being badly treated in a secure NHS psychiatric hospital: see “Undercover Hospital: Patients at Risk” on BBC catch-up option.
- Ealing Save Our NHS recommended an article by John Lister from ‘the Lowdown’ about Therese Coffey’s then plan to “rescue the NHS” - see [here](#)
- The Woolf institute ([www.woolf.cam.ac.uk](http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk)) earlier published -“Diversity in End of Life Care: A Handbook on Caring for Jewish, Christian and Muslim Patients”, and has now followed up with interviews with healthcare professionals and chaplains.
- ERSCAG previously reported (see [www.erscag.org.uk](http://www.erscag.org.uk)) that it had made a submission to a parliamentary inquiry into “The Invisibility of Social Care”. If you would like to follow some of the debates and a presentation by Sir Andrew Dilnot, see: <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/7dcb1169-96d8-4e90-9862-d94696cc0ac5>
- Act4Inclusion (previously Reclaim Social Care) held its annual meeting (22 September) and had an excellent presentation by Luke Beesley - talking about the “Social Care Crisis and the Birth of the Disabled People’s Movement”.
- State of Care 2021/2022: the most recent annual report from the Care Quality Commission can be found on [www.cqc.org.uk/publication/state-care-202122](http://www.cqc.org.uk/publication/state-care-202122) and the summary on [www.cqc.org.uk/publication/state-care-202122/summary](http://www.cqc.org.uk/publication/state-care-202122/summary)
- Bringing Us Together ran workshops between January and June 2022 on the lived experiences of social care users (on assessments, human rights, equality, charging etc). For the report, see [Copy of the Social Care report](#)

### Staffing

- Independent Living Alternatives (ILA) is a registered charity and is actively recruiting Personal Assistants. The ILA “*provides a unique insight into disability rights by providing personal assistance to enable disabled people to live independently. ILA provide personal care and practical support to disabled people as well as engaging in social activities and assisting in the workplace. ILA placements are on a regular basis with the same person every week*”. For more info, check: [www.ILAnet.co.uk](http://www.ILAnet.co.uk)

- <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/oct/11/englands-social-care-workforce-shrinks-for-first-time-in-10-years>
- Polly Toynbee (Guardian article, 11 October) talks of the [NHS staffing crisis](#); the fact that temping agencies cost the NHS [£2.5bn last year](#); and critiques the failure of government to heed Jeremy Hunt's call for a long-term workforce strategy (maybe this will change with Jeremy Hunt's 'promotion' to Chancellor since then?).
- For government advice to care workers see: [COVID-19 PPE guide for adult social care services and settings](#)

#### Your Help is needed:

- Ealing Council is consulting on its Health and Wellbeing Strategy - see

Consultation on Ealing's health and wellbeing strategy

### Sources of advice/help

The government put out a blog with several items relevant to World Mental Health Day: *"The public, including care and health colleagues, were urged to 'be kind to your mind' recently as the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) launched the latest [Better Health – Every Mind Matters](#) campaign on the eve of [World Mental Health Day](#). The annual day of awareness raising took place on Monday 10 October. Our very own Mental Health Social Work Lead, Jason Brandon, took the opportunity to applaud its reassuring messages of support in a new blog. He once again reaffirmed social work's important role in supporting people with mental health issues and signposted the [£122 million of NHS funding to provide mental health support alongside employment advice to help more people stay in work or return to the job market](#)".*

### Social care over the longer term

Given all the recent important personnel changes at the heart of government – as well as the changing economic situation (nationally and personally) – it is difficult to report too much on what is expected to happen to social care in the longer term. Do we even still have the Health and Care Levy as reported in the government press release on 24 September, or has that idea since been ruled out? Until the situation becomes a bit clearer, all that can be done is for groups like ERSCAG to keep an eye on the rapidly evolving situation and try as best we can to keep social care on the political agenda. Some local work is nevertheless underway. For example, Ealing Council is expecting to discuss soon its longer-term All Age Learning Disability Strategy Review, and ERSCAG is developing a submission to the National Inquiry into the learning from Covid. Please get in touch if you have any thoughts on these issues or other items raised in the newsletter.

[Check out our website - www.erscag.org.uk](http://www.erscag.org.uk)

Follow Us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) at [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action](#) and join our Facebook group [Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group](#).

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