

The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister,

As a society we face a growing care challenge.

We should celebrate the fact that we are all living longer lives, particularly disabled people and those with long-term conditions. But the unavoidable challenge we face is how to support the increasing number of people who need care.

It is currently a challenge which we are failing to meet – resulting in terrible examples of abuse and neglect in parts of the care system.

This comes at huge cost to the dignity and independence of older and disabled people, but also to our society, family life and the economy:

An estimated 800,000 older people are being left without basic care¹ – lonely, isolated and at risk. Others face losing their homes and savings because of soaring care bills.

Disabled people are unable get the support they need to live their lives independently and be part of society.

Businesses are losing increasing numbers of experienced staff who are forced to give up work to care for older or disabled relatives. These carers can then be pushed to breaking point, providing round the clock care.

Our NHS is also paying the price, as a lack of support leads to avoidable hospital admissions and then keeps older and disabled in hospital beds because they cannot be cared for at home.

We have a duty as a nation to change this – but it requires political leadership.

This summer, the independent Dilnot Commission into Funding of Care and Support published its recommendations. In response, your Government has committed to publishing a White Paper on Social Care by April.

With new cross-party talks on the future of care, we are closer than ever to reaching a new consensus. We urge you and the other party leaders to seize this opportunity for urgent, fundamental and lasting reform: delivering a social care system which can provide the well-funded and high-quality care and support we would all expect for ourselves and our families.

Signed:

¹ *Care in Crisis* (2011) Age UK

Rick Henderson, Chief Executive, Action for Advocacy
Gary Fitzgerald, Chief Executive, Action on Elder Abuse
Dr Roger Wicks, Director, Research, Policy & Government Relations, Action on Hearing Loss
Gary Fitzgerald, Chief Executive, Action on Elder Abuse
Michelle Mitchell, Charity Director, Age UK
Jeremy Hughes, Chief Executive, Alzheimer's Society
Jane Ashcroft, Chief Executive, Anchor
Otto Thoresen, Director General, Association of British Insurers
Mike Parsons, Founder and Chief Executive, Barchester Healthcare
Hilton Dawson, Chief Executive, The British Association of Social Workers
Dr Hamish Meldrum, Chairman, British Medical Association Council
Michael Adamson, Managing Director, British Red Cross
Caroline Waters OBE, Director of People and Policy, BT plc; Chair, Employers for Carers
Mark Ellerby, Managing Director, Bupa Care Services
Emily Holzhausen, Director of Policy & Public Affairs, Carers UK
Helen O'Brien, Chief Executive, Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN)
Professor Sue Yeandle, Director, Centre for International Research on Care, Labour & Equalities, University of Leeds
Mel Flogdell, Head of HR Policy, Centrica Plc
Gillian Guy, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice
Baroness Campbell of Surbiton, Crossbench Peer
Baroness Meacher of Spitalfields, Crossbench Peer
Lord Low of Dalston CBE, Crossbench Peer
Anne Roberts OBE, Chief Executive, Crossroads Care
Gavin Hayes, General Secretary, Compass
Martin Green, Chief Executive, English Community Care Association
Andrew Harrop, General Secretary, Fabian Society
David Cowdrey, Head of Public Policy & Campaigns, Guide Dogs
Bruce Moore, Chief Executive, Hanover
Rachael Byrne, Executive Director, Care & Support, Home Group
Bill Crowder, Head of Care Services, Huntington's Disease Association
Baroness Greengross of Notting Hill, Chief Executive, ILC-UK
Janet Morrison, Chief Executive, Independent Age
Simon Morris, Chief Executive, Jewish Care
Terence Stokes, Chief Executive, Lasa
Anthea Sully, Director, Learning Disability Coalition
Alex Turner, Managing Director, Listawood Ltd
Ciarán Devane, Chief Executive, Macmillan Cancer Support
Imelda Redmond CBE, Director of Policy & Public Affairs, Marie Curie Cancer Care
Mark Goldring, Chief Executive, Mencap
Roger Davies, CEO, Methodist Homes (MHA)
Dr Kirstine Knox, Chief Executive, Motor Neurone Disease Association
Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive, MS Society
Mark Lever, Chief Executive, National Autistic Society
Sue Bott, Director, National Centre for Independent Living
Oi Mei Li, Director, National Family Carers Network
Eve Richardson, Chief Executive, National Palliative Care Council

Ailsa Bosworth, National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society
Jeremy Taylor, Chief Executive, National Voices
Arlene Wilkie, Chief Executive, Neurological Alliance
Mike Farrar, Chief Executive, NHS Confederation
Elaine Kerr, Chief Executive, Norwood
Roger Phillips, Regional Vice President, Nutricia
Steve Ford, Chief Executive, Parkinson's UK
Liz Fenton, Chief Executive, Princess Royal Trust for Carers
Liz Sayce OBE, Chief Executive, Radar
Judy Downey, Chair, Relatives and Residents Association
Paul Jenkins, Chief Executive, Rethink Mental Illness
Lesley-Anne Alexander, Chief Executive, RNIB
Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive, Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA)
Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive, Scope
Gillian Morbey OBE, Chief Executive, Sense
Peter Beresford, Chair, Shaping Our Lives
Alex Fox, Chief Executive, Shared Lives Plus
James Lloyd, Director, Strategic Society Centre
Jon Barrick, Chief Executive, The Stroke Association
Paul Woodward, Chief Executive, Sue Ryder Care
Brendan Barber, General Secretary, Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Victor Adebawale, Chief Executive, Turning Point
Su Sayer, Chief Executive, United Response
John Hannett, General Secretary, USDAW
Val Morrison, Moderator of the General Assembly, United Reformed Church