

Proposed Bill to abolish charges for non-residential social care

Page 2: About you

Please provide your name and other contact details. Please provide at least one means of contacting you (address, e-mail or telephone) - e-mail is our preferred option. (NB: you will be given the option shortly to specify whether it is your name or your organisation's name that is to be used, and you may also request anonymity or confidentiality for your response.)

Your name (mandatory)

██████████

Name of your organisation (if applicable - otherwise leave blank)

The Coalition of Carers in Scotland /
National Carer Organisations

Your Job Title (if applicable - otherwise leave blank)

██████████████████

Contact details (please provide at least one of: email, telephone number, postal address) (mandatory)

██████████████████████████████

Please indicate below whether you are content for your response to be attributed to you by name (either your name or that of your organisation)

I am content for my response to be attributed to my organisation

Page 4: Your comments on the proposal

Q1: Do you support the principle that non-residential social care services should be available free at the point of delivery to those who have been assessed by a relevant professional as requiring them (as is the case within health care)?

Yes

Please explain your answer

I believe there are several reasons why people should not be charged for social care. Including the following: - Citizens do not have to pay for other services which are offered universally and are paid for through taxes. This includes health care, education, libraries, community facilities. - Disabled people should have equal access and rights to independent living - There is clear evidence that care charging contributes to disabled people, their families and unpaid carers living in poverty - Much of the income from care charges is wasted on administration - Care charging puts many people off accessing a service. This means preventative services are not accessed and people end up in crisis, which is more costly to the system

Q2. Do you agree that legislation is a necessary and appropriate means of addressing the issues identified?

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Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response

The Government's response to the lack of consistency in relation to care charging has been to task COSLA with working towards a more consistent and fair system for charging for non-residential services by producing national guidance. After 4 years no discernable progress has been made and the government has not enacted its power, within the Community Care and Health Act (2002), to produce national guidance on care charging. We believe that since care charging is unfair, inconsistent and expensive to administer, it should be scrapped and the government should bring forward legislation to this effect.

Q3. The current system has resulted in varying charges in different areas for the same level and quality of service. Do you agree that there should be consistency across Scotland?

Yes

What do you think the advantages and disadvantages would be?

Along with the Learning Disability Alliance we produced a paper outlining the current variations in care charging and how the system could be made more consistent and fair. I have submitted this paper along with our response. Our preference would be for care charges to be scrapped, as I have outlined. However, if this is not brought forward the government needs to look at introducing a national approach to minimise variation and the impact charging has on disabled people, their families and carers.

Q4. Should all social care related services be free at the point of delivery?

No

If you answered Yes, please explain your reasons. If you answered No, please explain which services should be excluded, and why. (Please refer to the services set out on page 7 of the consultation document).

It is reasonable to have a charge for those services where the person would have incurred a cost in addition to the costs associated with their disability. For example, if they are provided with a meal, it is reasonable that they pay for the cost of the ingredients, but not the preparation of the meal, or if they require help with eating.

Q5. What are the likely financial implications (if any) of the proposed Bill to you or your organisation? What (if any) other significant financial implications are likely to arise?

If the legislation was brought forward without funding there could be an impact on other social care services due to the loss of income to local authorities. This could potentially impact on our members, who are third sector carer support organisations, mostly funded through local authorities.

Overall social care is underfunded and services are stretched to their limits. We believe that the government needs to look at additional investment in social care. For example, through long term care insurance, which is a system adopted by several other European Countries. This would enable them to increase the provision of social care and scrap care charging, as it would be funded by everyone in a fair way, rather than disproportionately by individuals who are unfortunate enough to require support.

Q6. What do you think the implications of the proposed Bill are for equality? If it is likely to have a substantial negative implication, how might this be minimised or avoided?

Positive

Please explain your answer. If you answered Negative, please suggest any ways this impact could be minimised or avoided.

It would provide disabled people with more equal access to independent living and the ability to participate in their local communities and in the workforce

Q7. Are there any other comments you would wish to make that are relevant to this proposal?

No Response