

Weekly Political Update

16 July 2019

For further information on any of the parliamentary terms used in this document, please click [here](#).

Hearing Loss

Click on link for source

<u>NICE Quality Standards – Hearing Loss</u>	<p>The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published Quality Standards, as part of its guideline into ‘<i>Hearing Loss in Adults.</i>’</p> <p>The Quality Standards pinpoint ways of delivering high quality care and also identify areas for improvement in the delivery of audiology services. Quality Statement 5, in particular notes the importance of providing hearing aids on the basis of need:</p> <p><i>“Hearing aids can reduce the impact of hearing loss, improving communication and participation in everyday life. People should be offered the number of hearing aids that they need. In most cases hearing loss affects both ears. If a person has hearing impairment in both ears, there is significant benefit to wearing two hearing aids rather than one.”</i></p> <p>Action on Hearing Loss and others contributed to the development of these Quality Standards.</p> <p>To read more, please click on the left.</p>
<u>Written question on NICE guidelines on hearing loss</u>	<p>Following our parliamentary drop-in highlighting key findings from our ‘Valuing Audiology’ report, Dr David Drew asked the following question:</p> <p><i>“What steps he is taking to introduce the NICE guidelines on hearing loss across all Clinical Commissioning Groups.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Diné MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are expected to take account of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines published in 2018 on ‘Hearing loss in adults: assessment and management’, alongside local priorities when commissioning hearing loss services. The guidelines have formed the basis for the development a quality standard for adult-onset hearing loss, that CCGs can use to support commissioning, and which NICE will publish and promote on 10 July 2019.”</i></p>

Healthcare

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<u>Long Term Plan Implementation Framework</u>	<p>The NHS has published its Long Term Plan Implementation Framework setting out how the Long Term Plan will be delivered.</p> <p>As part of this Framework, local systems will define their own strategic priorities which they will incorporate into a five- year strategic plan. These plans will</p>
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	<p>reflect the needs of the local population and will detail how the system will meet commitments within the Long Term Plan.</p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Fourth Annual Report of the Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts</u></p>	<p>The Public Accounts Committee has published its Fourth Annual Report of the Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts. Within the report, the Committee's Chair, Meg Hillier MP (Labour, Hackney South and Shoreditch) identifies the key issues that the Government must urgently tackle – of which social care was listed among the list of key challenges.</p> <p>Meg Hillier MP also highlights within the report the Departments she believes are under pressure – identifying the Department for Health and Social Care in a list of Departments that are of ongoing concern. She stated:</p> <p><i>“Over the last three years, the sustainability of finances in the Department of Health and Social Care has been an ongoing concern. The 2017–18 Annual Report and Accounts showed that the NHS achieved a balanced position overall. However, this masks deficits at a local level: in 2017–18, 101 of the 234 NHS Providers (NHS Trust and Foundation Trusts) were in deficit at the end of the financial year and NHS Providers reported a total deficit of £991 million...”</i></p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>

Employment

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<p><u>DWP Consultation on disability and employment</u></p>	<p>The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has published its consultation – ‘<i>Health is Everyone’s Business: Proposals to Reduce Ill Health-Related Job Loss</i>,’ which highlights the ways that disabled people and people with long-term conditions can remain in employment.</p> <p>To read the consultation, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Oral question on Government measures to help people with disabilities into work</u></p>	<p>Mary Robinson (Conservatives, Cheadle) and Gillian Keegan (Conservatives, Chichester) have asked:</p> <p><i>“What steps her Department is taking to help people with disabilities into work”</i></p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Justin Tomlinson MP (Conservatives, North Swindon) responded:</p> <p><i>“...We support disabled people into work through initiatives like the Work and Health programme, the Personal Support Package, and the new Intensive Personalised Employment Support programme launching at the end of 2019. Access to Work approved support for nearly 34,000 disabled workers last year, and we engage with employers through the Disability Confident campaign.”</i></p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>

<p><u>Oral question</u> <u>Disability</u> <u>Confident</u></p>	<p>Robert Halfon MP (Conservatives, Halfon) has asked:</p> <p><i>“Whether she has discussed with Cabinet colleagues the potential merits of making all public bodies join the Disability Confident scheme.”</i></p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Justin Tomlinson MP (Conservatives, North Swindon) responded:</p> <p><i>“Disability Confident is a very effective voluntary scheme, so compulsory options have not been discussed with Cabinet colleagues. Public bodies are already subject to the public sector equality duty. All main Government Departments are level 3 Disability Confident leaders, and 80% of local authorities are Disability Confident.”</i></p> <p>To read in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Social Care

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<p><u>Social Care</u> <u>Funding Report</u> <u>– Economic</u> <u>Affairs</u> <u>Committee</u> <u>(House of Lords)</u></p>	<p>The Economic Affairs Committee has published its 7th report on <i>‘Social Care Funding: Time to End a National Scandal.’</i></p> <p>The report notes the inadequacy of the current adult social care funding system in England – highlighting the fact that funding is not keeping pace with need.</p> <p>The Committee urges the Government to publish a White Paper, rather than a Green with the purpose or clearly setting out clear, definitive proposals for a way forward.</p> <p>The report also notes the benefit of free personal care, suggesting:</p> <p><i>“Free personal care is fair, better aligned with NHS entitlement than the current system and easier to implement than alternative proposals. It may be more expensive than some alternatives, but it could reduce demand for residential care and health care in the long-run by encouraging users to seek domiciliary care early.”</i></p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>ADASS Annual</u> <u>Survey 2019</u></p>	<p>The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in England (ADASS) has published its Annual Budget Survey 2019.</p> <p>Among the key findings – the survey highlights the fact that only 10% of directors feel optimistic about the financial state of both the health and social care systems over the next twelve months.</p> <p>Additionally, directors note the difficulty in managing current demand for social care, whilst investing in prevention that will reduce future demand. The report states:</p>

	<p><i>“Furthermore, prevention activity to increase independence and limit the need for more expensive ongoing care and support is core to national policy and is intrinsic to the Care Act 2014. Spend on prevention is set to increase by 5.4% in 2019/20 (see Figure 19), although as a percentage of the net adult social care budget this is only an increase from 8% to 8.4%. Councils are still trapped in a vicious circle of having insufficient funds to be confident they can meet all their statutory obligations, whilst being unable to release funding to invest in approaches that might reduce the number of people with higher needs in the future.”</i></p> <p><i>“Whilst some councils are investing in preventative services, the focus on meeting the care and support needs of those that meet the highest eligibility criteria remains the priority within limited resources.”</i></p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Oral question on the case for free personal care in England and the social care green paper</u></p>	<p>Baroness Wheeler (Labour) has asked:</p> <p><i>“Her Majesty’s Government what assessment they have made of the Institute for Public Policy Research’s report Social care: Free at the point of need—the case for free personal care in England, published on 23 May, and whether this matter will be addressed in the forthcoming Social Care Green Paper.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford (Conservatives) responded:</p> <p><i>“...We welcome the contributions made by recent reports on how social care should be funded in future, including the report by the IPPR. The Green Paper will bring forward ideas for including an element of risk pooling to help protect people from high and unpredictable costs. This Government are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to the care and support they need, and we are clear that people should continue to expect to contribute to their care.”</i></p> <p>Baroness Wheeler continued:</p> <p><i>“...Age UK estimates that more than 1 million older people have died in the past two years either waiting for a care package or having been turned down and that nearly 1.3 million people have an unmet need for basic care support, such as washing, dressing and going to the toilet...The King’s Fund, the Nuffield Trust and the Health Foundation have independently identified the huge scale of government local authority social care cuts and the £2.5 billion investment needed just to keep the current system going. May I once again ask the Minister for news of the Green Paper? When is it going to be published? What is holding it up? The IPPR shows that free personal care would treble the number of older people with access to state-funded care, improve their health and well-being and save billions of pounds in hospital costs. Surely it is one of the key options for solving the current care crisis.”</i></p> <p>The Minister replied that Baroness Wheeler is:</p> <p><i>“...absolutely right that the Green Paper must be a priority. It will set out our sustainable plans for reform. We have welcomed the contributions that have been made by a number of recent reports... The noble Baroness is right that</i></p>

	<p><i>we cannot wait for that, because there are people who need improvements in care now, and that is part of what the better care fund has been set up to do—to improve the spreading of best practice and the new models of care work which have been put front and centre for the long-term plan improvements. That was introduced in 2015, and has brought in the funds required, taking the total of increased funding to £7.7 billion by 2018-19. We are looking at how we can make sure that that improves.”</i></p> <p>To read in full, please click on the link on the left.</p> <p>To read the IPPR’s report, please click here.</p>
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Research and Development

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<p><u>Joint Statement – Research and Development (R&D)</u></p>	<p>Business leaders, charities and universities have issued a joint statement urging the next Prime Minister to <i>“put research and innovation at the heart of their plan for UK prosperity, post-Brexit.”</i> The statement notes that the next Prime Minister should build on and go further than previous Government commitments dedicating 2.4% of GDP on R&D by 2027 and 3% of GDP by 2030.</p> <p>In doing so, they also call for the next Prime Minister to develop a <i>“long-term plan for research and innovation investment up to 2030.”</i></p> <p>To read the Statement in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>NIHR – funding for health research</u></p>	<p>The Government has announced a £135 million funding pot for health research. The fund will be distributed via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and will go to 15 partnerships that will help manage demands on the NHS.</p> <p>To read more please click on the link on the left.</p>

Industrial Strategy

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<p><u>Creation of the Longevity Council in the Modern Industrial Strategy</u></p>	<p>The Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have announced the creation of the UK Longevity Council. The Council which will consist of business and health experts, will provide advice on how innovations can be used to support an ageing population.</p> <p>The Council will support the Ageing Society Grand Challenge forming part of the Government’s Modern Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Equalities

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<p><u>New independent body – the Office for Tackling Injustices</u></p>	<p>Prime Minister, Theresa May MP (Conservatives, Maidenhead) has announced the creation of a new independent body – the Office for Tackling Injustices (OFTI), which will be tasked with gathering data on a range of demographics. The OFTI will look at:</p> <p><i>“..disparities in areas including socio-economic background, ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation.”</i></p> <p>It will also:</p> <p><i>“...Explore if specific groups of people are unfairly discriminated against or held back from getting on in life.”</i></p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Oral question on the new Equalities Hub</u></p>	<p>Maria Miller MP (Conservatives, Basingstoke) has asked the Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt MP (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“What steps she is taking to tackle inequalities through the new Equalities Hub”</i></p> <p>Minister for Women and Inequalities, Penny Mordaunt MP (Conservatives, Portsmouth North) responded:</p> <p><i>“The new Equalities Hub includes the Government Equalities Office, the race disparity unit and the new disability unit. Not only does it bring together the parts of Government that lead on gender, race, disability and sexual orientation, but it will use the convening power of the Cabinet Office better to leverage work across Whitehall.”</i></p> <p>Ms. Miller went on to ask:</p> <p><i>“...How will she make sure that Government Departments still see it as their responsibility to work together to deliver better equalities policies in future? In our inquiries, the Women and Equalities Committee often highlights that as a real problem.”</i></p> <p>The Minister replied:</p> <p><i>“The hub will hold those Departments to account. It will have some new tools to do that: better data and the ability to look at the multiple disadvantages that individuals face. There are also single departmental plans and other methods that the Cabinet Office has”</i></p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>

<p><u>Ministerial Statement – Government Response to Public Appointments for Disabled People Review</u></p>	<p>The Government has issued its response to Lord Holmes’ review into opening up public appointments to disabled people. The review which was published in December 2018, made a number of recommendations, including but not limited to recommending that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Government explores a central public appointments application portal. - All bodies making public appointments are Disability Confident by summer 2019, and all public bodies offer interviews to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria and wish to be considered for an interview. - The Government provides good practice guidance on how to provide adjustments efficiently and effectively. <p>In its response, the Government announced that it would be accepting “<i>the principle of all of the recommendations</i>” made.</p> <p>Along with the publication of its response to the review, the Government also published a revised Public Appointments Diversity Action Plan 2019.</p> <p>To read the Minister for Implementation, Oliver Dowden MP’s Statement (Conservatives, Hertsmere) and to access the documents, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Education

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<p><u>Written question on support for deaf children’s education</u></p>	<p>Stephen McPartland MP (Conservatives, Stevenage) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support deaf children’s education in the upcoming Spending Review.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi MP (Conservatives, Stratford-on-Avon) responded:</p> <p><i>“Our ambition for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including hearing impairments, is exactly the same as for every other child and young person, to achieve well in school and college, find employment and go on to live happy and fulfilled lives.</i></p> <p><i>Over 90% of children identified with hearing impairment as their primary type of need are in mainstream schools. Overall school funding is over £43.5 billion this year. This includes £6.3 billion of high needs funding for children and young people with the most complex SEND, up from £5 billion in 2013.</i></p> <p><i>However, we are well aware that local authorities and schools are facing challenges in managing their budgets in the context of increasing costs and rising levels of demand. We are looking carefully at how much funding for education will be needed in future years, as we approach the next Spending Review.”</i></p>
<p><u>Oral question on BSL courses</u></p>	<p>Shadow Minister for Health and Social Care, Justin Madders MP (Labour, Ellesmere Port and Neston) has asked what assessment the Government made:</p>

“...of the adequacy of the availability of British Sign Language courses. “

Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb MP (Conservatives, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton) responded:

“A range of qualifications in BSL are available, but of course it is for schools and colleges to decide whether to offer these qualifications or other courses in BSL. The Department for Education is working to develop draft subject content for a potential GCSE in BSL.”

Thangam Debbonaire MP (Labour, Bristol West) asked:

“...Will the Minister join me... in calling for a GCSE in sign language?”

The minister replied:

“...In February the Department announced that it would begin the process of developing draft subject content for a GCSE in BSL, which will need to be considered against the requirements that apply to all GCSEs.”

To read more, please click on the link on the left.

Parliamentary terms

Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands almost no chance of becoming law