

Weekly Political Update

17 June 2019

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

Hearing Loss

Click on link for source

<p><u>Written question on requiring CCGs to collect uniform data from audiology services</u></p>	<p>Following our supporter action inviting MPs to attend our upcoming parliamentary drop-in highlighting findings from our <i>'Valuing Audiology'</i> report, Dr Rupa Huq MP (Labour, Ealing Central and Acton) has asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the recommendation of Action on Hearing Loss in its report on valuing audiology that clinical commissioning groups should be required to collect uniform data in the audiology departments they commission."</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>"Responsibility for audiology data collection rests with individual National Health Service trusts. NHS England's commissioning framework does however include recommended key performance indicators that can support clinical commissioning groups to incorporate quality management in their contracts. For audiology services this includes recommendations that 90% of service users referred to the service should be assessed within 16 working days of receipt of a referral, and that 90% of service users requiring a hearing aid fitting should be seen within 20 working days of the assessment."</i></p>
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Cuts to Audiology – funding pressures (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)

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<p><u>Debate – provision of hearing aids: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG</u></p>	<p>Heidi Allen MP (Independent, South Cambridgeshire) successfully secured a debate on the funding pressures facing Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) within her constituency. In doing so, Ms. Allen referenced the provision of NHS hearing aids in the area. She stated the following:</p> <p><i>"Everyone knows that Cambridge and the surrounding region are growing, yet somehow we are expected to manage on less and less money every year. Let us bring some colour and real life to the situation. The provision of in vitro fertilisation, of any number of cycles, is totally under question. Hearing aids for those with moderate hearing loss, and community diagnostics, such as ultrasound services, might go, as might vasectomies..."</i></p> <p>Action on Hearing Loss is seeking to engage with Ms. Allen to discuss what her contribution to the debate means for the provision of NHS hearing aids within her constituency.</p>
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	To read the debate full, please click on the link on the left.
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Employment

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<p><u>Report – ‘Making Self-Employment work for Disabled People’</u></p>	<p>The Community Trade Union and the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed have published a joint report on ‘<i>Making Self-Employment work for Disabled People.</i>’</p> <p>The report makes a number of recommendations to Government on ways to improve the experiences of self-employed disabled people.</p> <p>Most notably the report recommends:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better promotion of the Access to Work scheme by the Department for Work and Pensions. 2. GP referrals to Access to Work to ensure better take-up of the scheme. <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Social care

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<p><u>Written question on social care provision for the elderly</u></p>	<p>Scott Mann MP (Conservatives, North Cornwall) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) funding and (b) grants her Department makes available to elderly people in relation to the provision of social care.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“The Government has given councils access to up to £3.9 billion for 2019-20. This includes a £240 million adult social care winter fund to help local authorities alleviate winter pressures on the National Health Service, getting patients home quicker and freeing up hospital beds across England. As a result of these measures, funding available for adult social care is increasing by 9% in real terms from 2015-16 to 2019-20, allowing councils to support more people including the elderly and to sustain a diverse care market. The Disabled Facilities Grant supports older and disabled people, on low incomes, to adapt their homes to make them suitable for their needs. The amount of funding available has more than doubled from £220 million in 2015-16 to £505 million in 2019-20. Furthermore, the most recent data shows public spending figures on adult social care amounted to £17.1 billion in 2017-18 with £5.3 billion spent on older adults.”</i></p>
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Education

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<p><u>Written questions on the provision of teachers of the Deaf</u></p>	<p>Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Deafness, Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a bursary scheme to fund the training costs of new Teachers of the Deaf.”</i></p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Education, what steps he has taken to ensure that there are adequate numbers of teachers of the deaf to support deaf children, their families, and their education settings.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, Nadhim Zahawi MP (Conservatives, Stratford-on-Avon) provided the same response to both questions:</p> <p><i>“I am determined that all children and young people, including those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment, receive the support they need to achieve the success they deserve.</i></p> <p><i>Local authorities are best placed to judge local priorities and to make local funding decisions. It is therefore for local authorities, in consultation with local people and having regard to the range of statutory responsibilities placed on them, to determine the exact nature of provision in their areas, including services for supporting children and young people with hearing impairment. The Whole School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Consortium is being funded by the department to embed SEND into school improvement in order to equip the workforce to deliver high quality teaching across all types of SEND, including children and young people with hearing impairment.</i></p> <p><i>I have met with the National Deaf Children’s Society and asked my officials to consider their proposal for a central bursary scheme for teachers of the deaf. They will report to me once they have collected all the relevant information.”</i></p>
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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