

Weekly Political Update

18 June 2018

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

NHS – Funding

Click on link for source

<p><u>Prime Minister's Speech – NHS Funding</u></p>	<p>Ahead of the NHS's seventieth birthday, Prime Minister, Theresa May MP (Conservatives, Maidenhead) has announced a 3.4% increase in NHS funding (in real terms) each year from 2019/2020 to 2023/2024.</p> <p>In her speech, the Prime Minister acknowledged that additional funding is needed if the NHS is to ever meet growing levels of demand. She acknowledged that this funding will have to go beyond giving the NHS “one-off” injections of cash.</p> <p>Theresa May MP therefore stated that the additional 3.4 % increase in NHS funding – a further £20.5 billion – “<i>will come from using the money we will no longer spend on our annual membership subscription to the European Union after we have left.</i>”</p> <p>The Prime Minister continued to state that the additional funds, would also come from taxpayers, who will be required to pay more for the NHS.</p> <p>Theresa May MP stated that further details of what this might look like will be set out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Phillip Hammond MP (Conservatives, Runnymede and Weybridge), in due course.</p> <p>To read the full transcript of the Prime Minister's speech, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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NHS - Systems

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<p><u>Health and Social Care Select Committee Report – 'Integrated Care: Organisations, Partnerships and Systems'</u></p>	<p>The Health and Social Care Select Committee have published their seventh report on 'Integrated Care: Organisations, Partnerships and Systems. The report sought to review integrated care partnerships and accountable care organisations, which have developed from the NHS's Five Year Forward View.</p> <p>The report acknowledges the importance of integration and collaboration but notes that constant changes to title and acronyms has heightened suspicion and has resulted in missed opportunities.</p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Social care

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<p><u>Written question on what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect on disabled people of lowering the eligibility criteria for social care</u></p>	<p>Neil Coyle MP (Labour, Bermondsey and Old Southwark) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has made an assessment of the potential effect on disabled people of lowering the eligibility criteria for social care; and if he will make a statement.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“The Care Act 2014 set out the eligibility criteria for social care which is set at a national minimum level. We are not making a specific assessment of the potential effects on disabled people as the Government published an Impact Assessment of the Care Act in 2014. We are currently evaluating implementation of the Care Act as a whole.</i></p> <p><i>Where a person is assessed as having eligible care and support needs, these must be met by their local authority. For those who do not meet the eligibility criteria, local authorities should signpost people to relevant services.”</i></p>
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Employment

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<p><u>Written question on how long Access to Work claimants have been required to provide invoices for the services of their self-employed support workers</u></p>	<p>Thangam Debbonaire MP (Labour, Bristol West) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for how long her Department has required Access to Work claimants to provide invoices for the services of their self-employed support workers; and what guidance and notification was given to Access to Work claimants about that change of practice.”</i></p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP (Conservatives, Truro and Falmouth) responded:</p> <p><i>“Access to Work grant funding is awarded and claimed in arrears with the customer being responsible for ensuring claim forms and the appropriate documentation is attached. This is either receipts, invoices or appropriate documentation demonstrating the support costs that have been incurred. This is a requirement of verification and assurance that the public funds are issued for the purpose for which they were intended. There has been no change to the requirements of supporting information when claiming and as such there is no guidance or notification given to the Access to Work claimants.”</i></p>
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Disability benefits

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<p><u>Written question on how many benefit assessment centres are fully accessible for disabled people</u></p>	<p>Lord Beecham (Labour) has asked:</p> <p><i>“Her Majesty’s Government how many benefit assessment centres are fully accessible for disabled people.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Work and Pensions, Baroness Buscombe responded:</p> <p><i>“Ensuring our assessment services are accessible to all claimants is a priority in line with the standards under the Equality Act 2010. Where customers are not able to access an assessment at one of our assessment centres, our assessment providers provide an alternative method of delivering the service. For example they may arrange an appointment at an alternative nearby assessment centre or arrange a home visit.”</i></p>
<p><u>National Audit Office – Report ‘Rolling out Universal Credit’</u></p>	<p>The National Audit Office published its report – ‘<i>Rolling out Universal Credit.</i>’ The report examines the implementation of Universal Credit – noting the challenges that have and continue to be experienced by the Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>

Education

Click on link for source

<p><u>Written question on whether the Government will assess the potential merits of introducing British Sign Language as a GCSE qualification</u></p>	<p>Dr Paul Williams (Labour, Stockton South) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing British Sign Language as a GCSE qualification.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Education, Nick Gibb MP (Conservatives, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton) responded:</p> <p><i>“There are no plans to introduce any new GCSEs in this Parliament, to allow schools a period of stability following the recent reforms. The Government is open to considering a proposal for a British Sign Language (BSL) GCSE for possible introduction in the longer term. The Department has indicated this to Signature, the awarding organisation proposing to develop a GCSE in BSL, and the National Deaf Children’s Society.</i></p> <p><i>Any new GCSE would need to meet the rigorous expectations for subject content, which are set by the Department. It would also need to meet the expectations for assessment and regulatory requirements, which are set by Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator. The Department and Ofqual will consider carefully the merits of any proposals put forward in due course.”</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