

## Emergency Support for Disability and Care Services

### About the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG)

The Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG) brings together the very best not for profit services who work alongside disabled people to live the lives they choose. Collectively VODG members deliver over £3bn in state funded support for over one million disabled people across the country.

We believe in social care services that harness the hopes, aspirations and needs of disabled adults and young people to live independent and fulfilling lives. The provision of essential care to disabled people in ways that promote independence, choice and control, as well as supporting their carers, is a statutory obligation. Social care also has a vital role in preventing escalating needs and costs falling on other services, such as the NHS. Voluntary providers of social care predominantly serve people who rely on the state to pay for their care. The current focus on 'fixing' social care based on how much personal income is used to pay for care is irrelevant for disabled people with lifelong impairments.

Providers supporting disabled people are trapped between financial pressures because they are directly funded by local authorities. They want to pay their skilled workforce fairly, yet have limited resources to do so. There is a growing gap between commissioning rates and the true costs of provision. Social Care organisations situation is exacerbated by high inflation. As a result voluntary services are moving away from care delivery and talented care workers are leaving the sector.



### Issues for voluntary sector care workers

Disabled people and families require high quality, safe and effective care and support. To deliver great services requires our social care workforce to be paid fairly for the invaluable work they do. Despite workers contributing over £50 billion to the economy in England each year<sup>1</sup>, thousands of care staff across the country risk being left behind. Independent analysis demonstrates:

- ⚠ Care work is one of the **lowest paid roles** across the economy<sup>2</sup>.
- ⚠ **Over one quarter of care workers live in, or are on the brink of, poverty.** Nearly 1 in 10 experienced food insecurity. And around 1 in 8 children of workers were 'materially deprived', meaning they may not have access to essential resources such as fresh fruit and vegetables or adequate winter clothing<sup>4</sup>.
- ⚠ When evaluating the complexity, content and remuneration in social care, **workers would be paid 39% more (nearly £7000 per year) in equivalent positions** within the NHS, local authorities, and other publicly funded industries<sup>3</sup>.
- ⚠ **The number of vacant posts in social care has increased** by 52% in one year and it is now the highest rate since records began in 2012/13<sup>5</sup>, leading to an over-reliance on agency and soaring costs as a consequence.

## The Solution

The ability to pay and reward first line leaders in the sector requires government to set an ambitious path above and beyond the legal minimum wage. There is a need for central government to commit to the principle of pay parity across the whole NHS and social care economy. This will enable a minimum pay floor for social care to be clearly identified and funding to be made to local authorities accordingly year on year.

Government's 'plan for patients' providing £500m to improve discharge of older people from hospital into social care<sup>6</sup> is welcome, but does not help the millions of working age disabled people who require support to live independent and fulfilling lives.

Additionally, given the state of social care as laid bare by the regulator, the Care Quality Commission<sup>7</sup>, and the need for reform highlighted by the Health and Social Care Select Committee<sup>8</sup>, we call on government to increase financial support to the sector.

## Our Ask to You

VODG, its members and partners have two simple asks for Government:

**Align social care pay to NHS pay bands and fund local authorities accordingly.**

This would mean first line care staff are tied to NHS band 3.

**Commit to fixing social care by delivering an additional £7 billion investment in the Spring Budget 2023.**

The situation is urgent, and must rank as a top priority for government.

## Additional information

£7 billion is the figure raised by the Health and Social Care Select committee, then chaired by Jeremy Hunt MP, in the report 'Social Care: Funding and Workforce' (October 2020)<sup>8</sup>. This figure represents the yearly investment required from government by 2023-2024, in order to fix social care.



**References:** 1. Skills for Care (2021) The Value of Adult Social Care in England. Accessed: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/Economic-value-report.aspx](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/Economic-value-report.aspx) 2. Skills for Care (2022) The State of the Adult Social Care Workforce. Accessed: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof) 3. Community Integrated Care/Korn Ferry (2021) Unfair to Care: Understanding the social care pay gap and how to close it. Accessed: [www.unfairtocare.co.uk](http://www.unfairtocare.co.uk) 4. Health Foundation (2022) The cost of caring. Accessed: [www.health.org.uk/publications/long-reads/the-cost-of-caring](http://www.health.org.uk/publications/long-reads/the-cost-of-caring) 5. Skills for Care (2022) The State of the Adult Social Care Workforce. Accessed: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof) 6. Department of Health and Social Care (2022) Our plan for patients. Accessed: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-for-patients/our-plan-for-patients](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-for-patients/our-plan-for-patients) 7. <https://www.cqc.org.uk/publication/state-care-202122> 8. <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/3120/documents/29193/default/>