

# What we want to do to improve adult care and support

Expert Advisory Panel on  
Adult Care and Support

**Easy  
Read**

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## 1. Who we are

The Expert Advisory Panel is a group of people who are helping the Department of Health to improve the care and support that adults get.



## What we have been doing

We contacted many people over many months to ask them to help us improve adult care.

These people included:

- those who use the services;
- their carers;
- people who work in adult care;
- other people who want to make the system better.



These people gave us their opinions and ideas.

We all agreed that the system has to change because it is not working well now.

In this booklet we describe the kind of things we think could be done to improve care and support.



## 2. Why adult social care is important

The government spends about £900 million every year on adult social care.

This care includes:

- Care in a person's home;
- Care in a residential home;
- Care in a nursing home;
- Day care.



Many more people are going to need this kind of support in the future. But there will be a gap between what is needed and what is available.



We need to look at what kind of support should be offered and when.

We also need to look at how other services like housing and transport can support social care.





## Proposal 1

We want people to agree that the system needs to change and think about what kind of changes should be made.

It should be made clear who is in charge of the adult care and support system.



The Department of Health, working with other government departments, should make people more aware of the purpose and value of adult care and support.



The Health and Social Care Trusts, working with other bodies, should tell the public how important adult care and support is.



### 3. Care that suits each person

We believe it is very important that each person gets the care and support that fits their individual needs.

The commissioners and the people who provide the care and support must work with and listen to the people who use it.

The commissioners are people who decide what services should be delivered.

We know that lots of people want to choose and control the care they get. They might need help to do this.

It may be difficult to give people this choice because of fears about risk and what could happen if they do not get the right care.





## Proposal 2

People should get to choose the care and support they need.

This will give people the power to shape services. It will help to create new ways to provide care and support.



They could use Self Directed Support funds. This gives people money to spend on services that will help them.



## 4. Why family carers are so important

We met many carers and know how much love and care they provide to people who need support.

It is clear that helping carers to continue to provide care is very important. Without their support the system will not work.

Carers said that they feel that no-one cares about them or values what they do.

Carers said that they would like better information and regular breaks from their caring role.

We believe that we need to find a way to support and value carers.





## Proposal 3



The rights of family carers should be covered by law.

Carers should be at the centre of changing the adult care and support system.



## 5. Building strong communities

Adults who do not need physical care and support may still have social needs. They need company and something to do.



There are some community groups who provide this kind of support.

We believe that someone in the community should have the job of helping people to get the care and support they need. This person would be called a Navigator.



This approach would help care providers to work together and improve services.

It would also allow the care providers to help people at an early stage before their health becomes bad.



## **Proposal 4**

The government should develop community support in every area of Northern Ireland to help people get the care they need.

This would include a Navigator role that would be led by a social worker.



## **Proposal 5**

The changes to the adult care and support system should line up with the Community Planning that local councils do.

There should be more ways of funding the development of strong communities, such as Social Impact Bonds.

## 6. The people who work in social care



The people who work in social care have many skills and are very kind.



But people do not seem to value care workers and they are not well paid. This does not help us deliver quality care services.

We need to give care workers more freedom to make decisions. They should also receive better pay. Then more people will want to be care workers.



We need to improve society's view of care workers. The national registration of care workers in Northern Ireland is helping to do that with all registered care workers required to comply with standards about how they should act and what skills they should have.



## Proposal 6

Care workers should be paid the Living Wage. In 2017 the Living Wage is £8.75 per hour.

In the future, everyone in the social care workforce should have the same pay and conditions of work.



## Proposal 7

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council should lead the way in improving society's view of care workers. It can do this through registration and by developing training and career development standards.



The Northern Ireland Social Care Council should think about setting up a professional body for care workers. This will help care workers to have their say in how the care system can be improved.



## 7. The 'market' for care



We think that the system of adult care and support should have more variety of services and be more flexible.



The commissioners and those who provide the services should work together. They should be honest about how much things will cost and which services are most important.

We think that people who can afford to pay some of the cost of their care should do so.



We know that there are some concerns about the quality of care. We believe that many things affect quality, including cost and the rules about how care is delivered.



It is important that we think about what services will be needed in the future, so that we can plan and make sure there are enough care workers to provide the services.



## Proposal 8

The commissioners and those who provide the services should work together to agree a plan for delivering services.



This should be based on the true cost of care, including paying the Living Wage and making sure the providers get enough money to keep providing the services.



## Proposal 9

People who can afford to pay some of the cost of their care should do so. The Department of Health should make sure this charging system is used across all adult social care services.

## Proposal 10



The Health and Social Care Trusts should begin to plan future care and support services along with others who are involved in social care.

**“ We need to  
manage our  
services, our  
people and  
our money in  
a better way ”**

**Workshop comment**





## Proposal 11

The Department of Health should think about whether it should give more power to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority to make rules about the professional care market.



These rules should include paying the Living Wage and making sure that providers get enough money to be able to keep providing the services.

## Proposal 12



The Health and Social Care Trusts should have more freedom to shape the care market.

This will help the Trusts put in place self directed and community based models of support.

## 8. Working together for the best result

Everyone in health and social care in Northern Ireland should work together to make sure the adult care and support system is as good as possible.



The system could be made better by improving the relationships between:

- primary and community care;
- hospitals, care homes and care at home;
- social care and housing.

Sometimes people could go into care homes for treatment instead of into hospitals.



People coming out of hospitals could go to a care home to get support while they get better.



Better housing would mean people could live independently and stay in their own communities, with or without formal care or family support.

We think there should be multi-disciplinary teams in each neighbourhood, connected to GPs and Community Navigators. This would provide better care and save money.



Multi-disciplinary teams are made up of people with different skills, such as nurses, podiatrists and social workers.



## Proposal 13

The Department of Health should make sure that commissioners and the providers of health and care services work together with the same aim. They should also involve the people receiving services and carers.



## Proposal 14

The Health and Social Care Trusts should encourage care providers and others involved in the care and support system to work together rather than separately from each other.

**Housing**  
Executive



## Proposal 15

The health service should work more closely with the Department for Communities and the NI Housing Executive on future plans for specialist and supported housing. This will make sure there is a better fit between housing and social care.





## 9. Taking a new approach

We believe that everyone should share the same vision for the future of adult care and support services.

Our vision is to place the person receiving care and support at the centre of the system. They will get support to build on their strengths and add to the support provided by their family and the community.



This new approach will tell people about their rights and what support they can get, as well as what they are responsible for.



It will also set out what the government intends to do:

- Putting the person at the centre of the care system;
- Preventing people from getting ill;
- Helping people to look after themselves;
- Supporting carers;
- Developing services in the community;
- Educating the public about social care and other public services.



## Proposal 16

The government should set out its ideas about improving adult social care. People can then talk about these suggestions and agree what the new system should look like, for example how it is organised and paid for.



This should include looking at how people view risk, and how they could get help to decide what risks they would take or how they could reduce risk.







