

HALE PLACE NEWS

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Dear Friends of Hale Place

The social care white paper, which Hale Place appear in, includes spending £150m on digitalisation and £500m on training the social care workforce, but as I predicted, it does almost nothing to tackle workforce pay and the high vacancy levels which is widespread in our sector.

In response to the £86,000 cap on individual care costs, the white paper states £3.6bn will be allocated to reform the social care charging system. The assumption is that all local authorities will pay providers a fair rate for care. However, local authorities are already paying below the recommended rate to provide a basic level of care for people with dementia, which is why Hale Place does not contract with local authorities when admitting new clients. If we did, the home would be operating a two-tier system where the private fee-paying residents subsidise others and that is unacceptable for us, and I am sure, family members. However, this reality is widespread throughout the country.

When local authorities pick up the monthly costs of providing dementia care in the Southeast, they will fall short of the average rates charged by providers, which stands at around £1,100 per week, rising to over £2,000 per week in some homes. Kent County Council currently pay £450 per week for residential care; it is unlikely, even with additional funding, this fee will reach £600 per week. That is a big shortfall which needs to be bridged and who will be making up the difference?

Encouraging high quality care provision, which requires high levels of staffing by well trained, qualified, experienced and appropriately remunerated care staff, is completely ignored in the white paper. It will be

remunerated care staff, is completely ignored in the white paper. It will be business as usual, a pat on the back and continued rhetoric about undervalued and underpaid care workers. In fact, the 1.25 % national Insurance hike, to pay towards the reforms, is another financial burden imposed upon Hale Place and our workforce, which means we are all worse off.

If a family is arranging residential care for someone who has dementia, the local authority won't always pay additional funds to a care home to cover their needs but they will if the person requires nursing care. Another unexplainable anomaly that has existed during my 34 years of working in this sector and not addressed in the white paper.

What was needed, was a complete overhaul of the social care system with a long-term vision to parody the NHS. After all, Health and Social Care is supposed to be integrated and working together but we saw how well that worked when elderly people with COVID were discharged from hospitals to unsuspecting care homes, resulting in thousands of deaths.

It is estimated that 400,000 older and disabled people are on council waiting lists for care, with 40,000 waiting for more than a year. There are over 100,000 care staff vacancies, predicted to rise to 120,000, and the already high turnover rates are soaring because of the unrelenting pressures on the care workers.

I love my vocation but there are limited numbers of workers who can do what we do. There are even fewer that would work the hours we do, there is no other profession that is as unrelenting, as highly regulated and scrutinised as we are. This care bill does nothing to support or reward my staff, to attract people to our profession or ease the pressures.

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Continued.....

Hale Place will do what it has always done. We will value everyone, we will continue to support individuals in every way we can, we will ensure all employees basic salaries are in the top 10 percentile in our sector and we will provide our best service to our service users whilst endeavouring to uplift their lives.

Enjoy the collage of Christmas fun, activities, animals and entertainment. Wishing all friends of Hale Place a happy New Year!





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