

# The lives we want to lead

## The LGA green paper for adult social care and wellbeing

Response to the consultation

November 2018



Easy Read Version

Pictures: Photosymbols

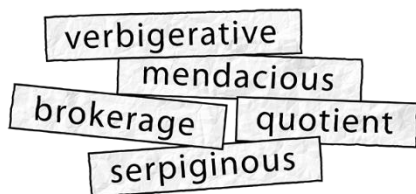
## About this report



This is an easy read summary of a report called “The Lives We Want to Lead – consultation response”.

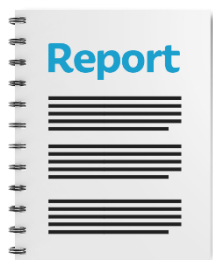


You may need help and support to read and understand this report. You may want to ask someone you know to help you.



Some words or ideas in this report may be difficult to understand. These are explained in a box underneath the word or idea.

## What this report is about



In July the Local Government Association (LGA) wrote a report (called a “Green Paper”) about social care for adults.



The LGA is an organisation that supports local councils and represents the work of councils to the government and others.



The LGA wrote the report to ask people for their views on adult social care and support and how we should pay for it in the future.



We also asked people for their views on how social care, health services and other public services can work together to support people to stay well and independent.



**Adult social care services** are arranged by local councils. They cover a lot of different services and support people in different ways.



Social care services are about supporting people who might need extra care or support to do everyday things.



Adult social care services support older people and adults that are working age.



People might have a physical disability, a learning disability, autism or a mental health condition. They might be older and need extra help to do things.



We also ran five focus groups and asked more than 1700 people through a poll to get views from members of the public.



This report is about what people told us. There will be a full research report coming out soon.

This report also gives the LGA's ideas for what needs to happen now.

## Who told us their views and got involved



More than 15,500 people looked at the LGA website about the LGA's report.



The easy read version of the report was downloaded 400 times.



Lots of different people told us their views. This includes: members of the public, councils, other public sector organisations and the charity/community sector organisations.

## Why adult social care matters



People told us that adult social care and support is really important.



People gave different reasons for this. Some people said that making sure people get care and support is the right thing to do and is about people's human rights.



Many people said it was important because it helps people to have a good quality life and to be a part of society.



If social care decisions are made by councils it means that they have to answer to their local residents who vote for them. Most people who gave their views thought it is important that decisions about social care are made locally.

People also thought it was important the decisions are made by people who know about the local area.



**But:** people also worried that this can mean that people can get a different sort of service depending on where they live. Some people said that social care should be delivered locally but that there should also be some guidelines that are decided nationally.



The importance of social care is something people agree on. But people don't understand it in the same way as they understand other services like the National Health Service (NHS).





The LGA thinks more needs to be done to support people to understand social care, what needs to change and why.

## What we think should happen (our recommendations):



1. The Government should set up a working group to co-produce a campaign to raise awareness of adult social care and support and why it matters. People with lived experience should be at the centre of this work.

**People with lived experience** are people who have personal experience of using services. They might also be a family member or carer for someone who uses services.



2. The campaign should be clear about the support for decisions about care and support being made locally. But it should also be clear about how social care is also a national issue.

## Funding for adult social care



The people who gave us their views said that the social care system is failing because there is not enough money to pay for it.

This is causing lots of issues like:



- People are not getting the support they need to meet their needs
- There are fewer people getting services and support
- Unpaid carers are under more pressure
- Care providers are in difficulty because funding is uncertain

**What we think should happen next (our recommendations):**

**3. The Government needs to close the social care funding gap. We think this will be £3.56 billion by 2024/25.**



The **social care funding gap** means the money that is needed to pay for adult social care so that councils can keep delivering the same number and quality of services as they are now as the cost of things go up.

**4. Providing care and support to all adults who need it will cost an estimated £5 billion by 2024/25.**



**The Government needs to work with people who have experience of adult social care to agree a clear cost of unmet and under-met need. This should happen in time to be part of the Government's Spending Review discussions in 2019.**



The **Spending Review** is when the Government decides how much money it will spend on different things.



**Unmet** and **under-met** need means people who need care and support but are not getting it or are not getting enough.

## The options for change to improve things



There was a clear message from the people who gave us their views that more money is needed to pay for care and support for adults.



In our first report the LGA talked about 5 options for changing social care for the better. We asked people which options they thought were the most important.





These options were picked the most often by people as the most important things to do **now**:

- Pay providers a fair price for care and support to stop them having to close or cancel contracts.

**Care providers** are organisations in the community that give care and support to people. They might be asked by councils to do this.



- Make sure there is more money to cover the cost of things as they go up and to pay for the extra people who will need care and support.

These options were picked the most often by people as the most important things to do **over the next few years** up to 2024/25.

**But:** these were only picked by 1 in 10 people:

- Give people free personal care

At the moment we check how much money people have to see if they can pay for their personal care themselves. This idea is about giving everyone free personal care.





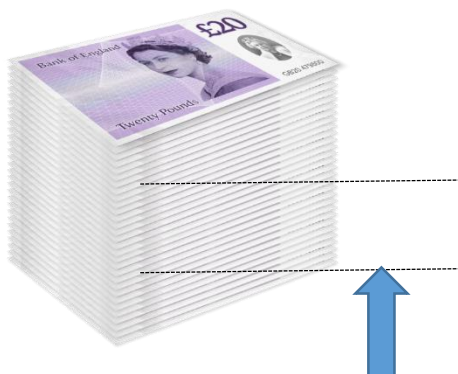
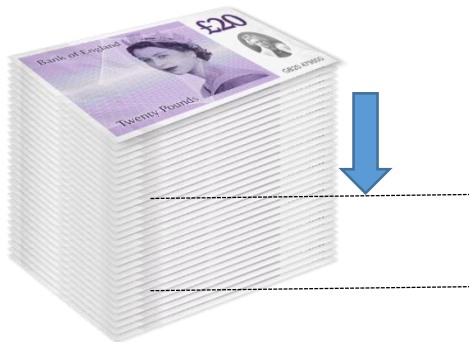
- Provide care and support for all those who need it.

This idea is about making sure that those people who need care and support but don't get it now will get it in the future.

These options were picked the most often by people as the most important things to do for the future (beyond 2024/25).

**But:** they were only picked by about 1 in 10 people:

- free personal care
- A 'cap and floor' on how much people pay towards their own care and support.



This idea is about deciding a maximum amount of money that someone has to pay towards the costs of their care and support. This is sometimes called a "cap".

It is also about deciding an amount of money that would protect a minimum amount of a person's assets. A person's assets include things like their house and how much it is worth. This would set an amount that is protected and cannot be then used to pay for care and support. This is sometimes called 'a floor'.



In our focus groups and through our poll people told us that they thought it was right that people pay something towards their own care costs.



**But:** only about 1 in 5 people thought that the amount of £23,250 that is set now is the right level.



Just over half of the people who gave their views thought that only those people with assets and income over £100,000 should pay towards their social care costs.



The LGA think this it is important that, when we explain to people the different options, it is clear that a 'cap' on care costs would cost a lot of money. Free personal care is a similar sort of option because it is like a cap of 'zero' on care costs.

**What we think should happen next (our recommendations):**



**5. The Government should provide new funding that will close the adult social care funding gap and make sure that all adults that need care and support are able to get it.**



**6. Local areas should be able to choose how they use any new money so that they can choose how to spend it on the things that are most urgent in those areas.**



**7. The Government should only introduce its care cost ‘cap’ and asset protection ‘floor’ idea if it is part of looking at bigger changes that secure the long-term sustainability of adult social care and support as a whole.**

## How to pay for these changes



A big question that the LGA asked people in our first report was about how to pay for social care and support in the future if we make any of these changes.



We gave some options that could be thought about. We asked people what they thought of these.





The most popular option that people chose was **increasing National Insurance**.

**National insurance** is money that is paid by people who work and the people who employ them. It helps the government to pay for things like welfare



People liked this idea for different reasons. Some people said that it was a good idea because it would be a national solution to a national problem. Other people said that it would be simpler to do and would raise a lot of money.

The next option that was picked the most was **increasing Income Tax**. This was for similar reasons.



**Income Tax** is what people have to pay to the government from the income they have. For example, from the money a person earns from their job. It is used to support the work of government.





The third most popular option was about **means-testing benefits**.

Some benefits are only available to people who have less money or savings.



There are some benefits that everyone receives. This includes winter fuel payments and free TV licences for older people.

This option was about only giving these benefits to those people with less money. This would save the government money that could be spent on adult social care.



**But:** people also had more concerns about this option.



People who took part in our poll also choose the option to increase to National Insurance the most. Just over half of the people who took our poll said this.



Increases to Income Tax were also preferred by just under half of those who took our poll.



In our poll just under 7 in 10 people said that it was fair that people should pay towards some of their care costs if they can afford it. Just under half of people said that it is fair for people to pay all of their care costs if they can afford it.

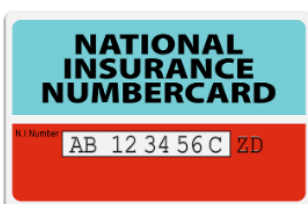


The poll and focus groups also showed that just over half of people said they would support paying extra for social insurance.

This idea is about having an insurance scheme that people pay into that would support the costs of social care.



Our survey of council leaders and lead councillors for adult social care showed that councillors preferred increases to Income Tax.



Increases to National Insurance was the lowest of the five most popular options but it still had the support of just over 6 in 10 councillors.



People from our focus groups said it was unfair that they might have to sell their homes to pay for care.



People thought that more money is needed but also felt worried about paying more money. Some people thought this would be more pressure on them. Other people said they were worried that their money would not be used on social care.

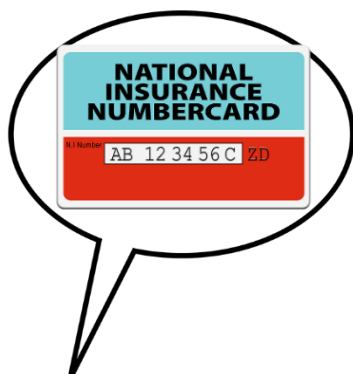


Based on what people told us, the LGA think that looking at options around increases to national tax should be looked at by the Government.



But we think it is also clear that this option needs to go alongside more work to explain how social care works and why some of these options need to be looked at.

**What we think should happen next (our recommendations):**



**8. In its own consultation on social care, the Government should make the case for increases in Income Tax and/or National**

**Insurance and/or a social insurance payment.**



**9. Building on the campaign to raise awareness of social care, the Government should make the case for national tax rises or other solutions that will last into the future. They should consult on clear proposals which explain the options for how funding for social care and support could be raised nationally.**

## **Adult social care and wellbeing**



People said that lots of services work to together with social care to support people's wellbeing and independence.



This includes things like housing and public health services. These can prevent care needs from developing in the first place.



But people also said that these services are under pressure too.

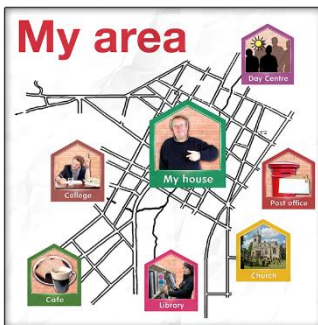
Cuts to these services make it difficult for councils to look at the other things that can have a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.



**What we think should happen next (our recommendations):**



**10. The Government should reverse the cuts of £600 million to the public health budget.**



**11. In the Government's spending review it should think about the role of different council services and the services that councils buy from public sector and voluntary sector organisations in supporting people's wellbeing.**

## **Adult social care and the NHS**



People said it was important that decisions made by the local NHS are understood by and involve local people. The people who make decisions should have to answer to local people.

Some people gave their views about Health and Wellbeing Boards.



**Health and Wellbeing Boards** are people from health and social care who work together in local areas to look at how to improve the health and wellbeing of local people.





Just over half of the people who gave their views on Health and Wellbeing Boards said that they should have more powers as this is a good way to make sure that local health services are accountable to local people.

The LGA gave some options for strengthening health and wellbeing boards. The two options that were most popular were:

- making sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) work with health and wellbeing boards in developing STP plans



**STPs** are a way for different parts of the health service to work together and to work with other organisations that provide health and social care services.



- giving health and wellbeing boards legal duties and powers to lead the work on integration locally.



**Integration** is a way of working that means health and social care services are working closely together in local areas. This should help people to have a better experience of services.



The LGA also asked about the new funding for the NHS and how this should be used. We gave some options and asked for people's views.

The most popular option was that this should be used to fund prevention, primary care and community health services to help people to stay healthy and independent.

**What we think should happen next (our recommendations):**



**12. The Government should give more money to prevention, community and primary health services for the £20.5 billion additional expenditure for the NHS.**



**13. The Government should use the law to make sure the NHS and STPs work with Health and Wellbeing Boards to develop jointly agreed local plans to integrate health and care services.**



**14. The Government should make sure that the NHS takes decisions based on (1) the needs of local communities as a whole and (2) public spending as a whole.**