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23 January 2025

I am writing to update you on our plans for the National Care Service going forward. I delivered a statement to Parliament today (Thursday, 23 January) on some proposed changes to the Bill, as well as plans to improve the social care system.

Following feedback and lots of discussions with people who access or deliver social care, social work and community health, as well as other stakeholders, I have worked to find a way to deliver on our commitment for a National Care Service that delivers much-needed change.

We are absolutely committed to bringing forward a Bill that will ensure reforms to information records and standards, procurement, and a right to breaks for unpaid carers.

The introduction of Anne's Law, which upholds the rights of residents in care homes to be visited by families or friends, will be included in the legislation to reform social care, alongside a right to breaks for unpaid carers. This fulfils a commitment this Government made to the many families who have campaigned for this.

Despite considerable efforts to gain agreement, there are some parts of the Bill we have had to change, meaning some of our proposed policies will now be delivered in other ways. For example, we will introduce an Advisory Board rather than a National Board enshrined in law. This non-statutory advisory board – comprising of people with lived experience of accessing care, social care workers, care providers, trade unions, the NHS and local government – will be established to provide guidance and drive improvement within the sector. It is expected to meet for the first time in the spring.

I know some of you might feel disheartened by this, but please take comfort in the fact that developing this Board without the need for formal legislation means we can pick up the pace of reform and introduce changes faster than if we had to wait for the Bill to pass.

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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Our plans for the National Care Service have always focused on improving the services that people need, in partnership with people with first-hand experience of delivering or accessing social care, social work and community health. We will not hesitate in our commitment to reform the landscape in Scotland and ensure everyone in Scotland gets the care and support they deserve.

You can find my full statement on [Ministerial Statement: Future of the National Care Service - gov.scot](#). There is also a factsheet available to read online which provides further detail on each area of the Bill and our future National Care Service plans.

I want to thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to creating a National Care Service. I have been privileged to meet with many of you to hear your thoughts and experiences of social care, and I understand how crucial it is that we get this right. I look forward to continuing to work with you all as we deliver strong, meaningful social care reform for the people of Scotland.

With best wishes,



MAREE TODD MSP
Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport
Scottish Government

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