Social care

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Twin pillars of care
Are adult and children’s services in safe hands?
Finding new ways to deliver three well-regarded acts

Increased demand

At least 1.2m more people are likely to require adult social care services by 2035. That includes 2m more older people and 1m more people with brain injuries or learning disabilities. The Care Act needs to be fit for purpose.

With a properly funded system, the act could be already in place; legislation that many seeking change have been asking for.

Comment

Julie Ogley

The current system is a distant stretch from the one imagined

Finding new ways

This Care Act was passed, my professional colleague and president of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, in 2014. I believe it was the most important legislation for social care in my lifetime and the one I’ve worked on most closely. It had to offer solutions to the challenges of the day.

I would like to believe that the Care Act is in place. However, I am writing today because I believe, with regret, that this is not the Care Act we intended and for which we fought in 2014.

It is widely accepted and widely acknowledged that social care is needed to be better. It is widely acknowledged that social care is a national priority.

A clear and consistent national strategy for social care is needed. It is clear that social care is underfunded and understaffed. It is clear we need to capture the extent of the crisis.

A well-funded social care system that meets people where they are at is desperately needed. It is clear there is a need to deliver three well-regarded acts.

The current system is a distant stretch from the one imagined.
Housing for older people

Provision across regions is a postcode lottery

Every resident of extra care housing, which has a higher cost per unit than other forms of housing, should be considered separately. This is because, for older people, the cost per unit is much higher than for younger people. However, this is not always the case, and the average age of residents in extra care housing is often much lower than expected. This is because there is a lack of data on the age distribution of residents in extra care housing, and the cost per unit is often based on the average age of residents in the area. In addition, the cost per unit is often based on the number of weeks in a year that residents are expected to live in the housing, rather than the number of weeks in a year that they are actually expected to live in the housing. This can lead to a significant underestimation of the cost per unit, and can result in a significant underestimation of the cost of housing for older people.
Children’s homes
The right kind of placements in the right kind of places

Councils are opening children’s homes again, but unlike the impersonal ones of yesteryear, the new family-style homes better suit the needs of vulnerable children with complex needs.

Linda Jackson

Most decisions of whether, how and where to place children’s homes are made with little understanding of the psychological and social needs of the young people who are placed there.

The truth is, most people do not understand children’s social emotional and mental health needs. We need to work together to ensure that the right kind of places are in the right places.

We need new council children’s homes that will improve their chances of long-term success. With appropriate support, young people can reach their full potential.

Why we need family-style homes

Most children coming into care are placed in residential homes. They are a last resort if no other option is available. Some children have been in care for years, sometimes moving from one home to another, with little stability.

Placement is usually to move away from an oppressive or inappropriate care environment. But new placements are also sites of trauma for children who have suffered emotional neglect and abuse.

We need family-style homes

Family-style homes are designed to be places of hope. They are places that foster resilience, community and normal life. They are places where young people can develop independence, build relationships and have experiences that will last a lifetime.

A family-style home is designed for young people who have complex needs. It is a place where they can learn to manage their own lives, make decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

Family-style homes are community-based. They are places where young people can participate in local life, such as school or work. They are places where young people can develop their skills and interests.

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Technology

Is data analysis safe to protect children at risk?

Machine learning is being used to identify at-risk children, but the use of such tech raises ethical questions.

Technology has advanced enormously in the 30 years since the Children Act, the UK’s system of child safeguarding. Today, for example, a “machine learning” that produces predictive social work to assess the probability of a child coming to or at risk of falling into the care system. But they might prevent that happening. Over the technical hurdles that need to be overcome is the issue of how to use such technology to understand a child’s risk level accurately and act on that information.

Stratulis is also concerned about the ethical implications of the technology. “We need to consider how data analytics are used, especially as they are being used in education and health service delivery,” she says. "It’s important to be aware of the issues before we get too excited about the possibilities of using technology to understand a child’s risk level accurately and act on that information.”

In an interim report, earlier this year, the ICO concluded: “While there are undoubtedly benefits to the use of AI in social care, there are also risks, and both public and commercial sectors need to be aware of these risks. In the longer term, it is important to consider how we can mitigate these risks. One such risk is the potential for bias. AI models can incorporate and perpetuate biases, which can then be applied to new data, resulting in unfair consequences for people.”

The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), which regulates the use of personal data, has highlighted the biggest risks related to the use of AI in social care. The ICO has set up a project to ensure that machine learning is being used appropriately in social care. The ICO is also developing a set of principles for the use of AI in social care, which it plans to publish in late 2020.

The ICO said: “We welcome the opportunity to support the development of ethical principles and good practice in the use of AI in social care.”

The ICO’s report also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the technology is transparent and accountable. “It is important that the technology is transparent and accountable, as it can be used to reduce the risk of discrimination,” the report said. “The technology should be designed and developed in a way that ensures that it is transparent and accountable, and that it can be audited and reviewed.”

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A new referral app aims to tackle the recruitment crisis in social care by rewarding existing workers who encourage friends and family to apply for vacant roles.

From Peninsula to York, a decline in staff has deepened a crisis in adult social care already struggling to cope with a dearth of skilled workers, rising demand for services and continued absence of workforce needed reform. Latest figures show that almost one in ten jobs in adult social care in England remain unfilled.

Even so, there are signs that social care providers are experimenting with new ways to recruit. Care and Support Workers – a mobile app which taps into workers’ social networks. Working on the image of being a care worker. Recruitment campaigns run by the Department of Health and Social Care, in partnership with social care organisations, have already shown potential to create significant interest. The potential is seen in Cornwall, where a pilot project investigating how to find, keep and develop care workers.

"We have a turnover rate of 40% and staff shortages in every sector of care work in the past have been hampered by pay rates that do not suit.\" Nic Ferns, director of the Cornwall Care, says. "It is very apparent that some people come to interview for a job and then they do not turn up to work. However, within weeks of us launching the app, we had 150 people putting forward their details. We are very hopeful that the Care Friends app will turbo-boost recruitment!" says Ferns.

The app was inspired by Employment Skills for Care, a declining recruitment strategy that has already generated widespread interest across the workforce, our 120,000 care staff in England, called Care Friends at a care home in Surrey on Wednesday 20 November 2019. Our 120,000 care staff in England, called Care Friends at a care home in Surrey. The app incentivises those who recommend work for colleagues, employers are pinning their hopes on Care Friends app vs care home in Surrey. Recommendations added to the application are gaining momentum, and the app has already shown potential to have a transformative effect, with more people putting forward their details to join the workforce than ever before.

Use of the recruitment process. Points can be earned if they take a short-notice interview slot. The potential is seen in Cornwall, where a pilot project investigating how to find, keep and develop care workers.

When I think of the recruitment process, I think of not just one person but a cluster of people taking on a recruitment role. It’s about getting recommendations from friends and family. It’s about using the image of being a care worker.

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Careers for the caring

Debbie Andalo

Mental health needs and disabilities.

Wednesday 20 November 2019

Debbie Andalo

Men working in care Why we need more jobs for the boys

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M 0.00

Careers for the caring

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Mental health needs and disabilities.

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**Experience**

When this apprenticeship option was made available, I knew I had to participate.

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**Integration**

Searching for the best of both worlds

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**Health and social care providers are plotting a joint apprenticeship – can pay conditions and balance be aligned across sectors?**

Debbie Reader

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**Apprentices usually get a day studying at university twice a week at most**

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**We are upskilling our staff when and where they realise they need their degree, they aren’t going to go anywhere.**

Jane Hannah

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**Mental health community support worker Peter Chitsenga is training to work in either adult or children’s services – an opportunity to go on to leadership as a mental health community support worker.**

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**A new integrated apprenticeship in health and social care is being developed that will support staff in adult social care, children’s social care and adult mental health services, with a single qualification.**

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**The training has helped me feel so confident**

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An integrated apprenticeship gave Marcus Taylor the chance to try three different sectors before deciding to become a healthcare assistant.
Exceptional support, flexible working and a chance to do things differently

Our young people are looking for experienced social workers who are down-to-earth, honest, approachable and who can be themselves.

If this sounds like you, we would love to hear from you!

At Doncaster Children’s Services Trust, we are proud to have created a place where social work can flourish. By having smaller teams, constantly looking at how we can safely lower caseloads and cutting down on bureaucracy we can offer you unrivalled support and ensure your sole focus is on improving the lives of children, young people and families.

We are looking to recruit experienced social workers who share the same vision, passion and enthusiasm as our current child protection teams and are dedicated to providing the very best support.

Why work for the Trust?

• We are at the forefront of positive change in social work practice. In January 2018 our services were rated ‘Good’ by Ofsted and since then our adoption and fostering services have also been rated as ‘Outstanding’.

• We are one of the Department for Education’s Practice Improvement Partners. By joining the Trust you can be part of a team working with other authorities to improve their social work practice.

• At the heart of our business is a team of young people who have experience of care — our Chief Executive’s Young Advisors — who advise on how we can improve our services for other children and young people.

There are many benefits for working for us. To find out more visit: doncasterchildrenstrust.co.uk/join-our-team