

# United Kingdom Homecare Association (UKHCA)



## National Assembly for Wales Elections Manifesto 2016

Enabling citizens in Wales to live  
independently at home



# UKHCA Manifesto

## About UKHCA

As the professional association for homecare providers, we call on each political party in Wales to make a firm commitment to high quality, sustainable homecare services which enable citizens to live independently, at home and in their community.

## Current state of care

Homecare services in Wales are in crisis. Demand on services is growing as the population increases, while local authorities have had to absorb sizeable budget reductions. This has led to decreased access to care, for example this year there was a 7% decrease in the number of new assessments made by local authorities for adults with care and support needs.<sup>1</sup>

Homecare services in Wales support over 39,000 citizens a year to live independently at home and in their communities. The majority of homecare services in Wales, over 85% are purchased by the state. With the population of citizens aged 65 year or more set to increase by 25% over the next 20 years the demand for homecare services will increase significantly.<sup>2</sup>

The homecare sector in Wales provides employment to 26,000 frontline careworkers.<sup>3</sup>

However the escalation in costs of providing quality homecare services and other statutory obligations are increasing at a greater rate than any increases offered in fees for these vital services.

Effective homecare services reduce costs for NHS Wales, by supporting citizens at home with greater access to preventative services so that citizens may avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, and discharges from hospital are timely and effective, reducing delayed transfers of care from hospital into the community.

## Commitments for the next Welsh Government

UKHCA calls on all political parties to commit to the following principles, all of which are consistent with existing legislation and evidenced based good practice.

## Support citizens's right to independence

- Recognise that the vast majority of citizens in Wales, should they require care and support, would prefer to remain at home in their communities, for as long as possible, in preference to emergency hospital admissions or long term residential care. Research has also found that the majority of adults would prefer to receive end of life care at home.
- Ensure that Government policy facilitates and encourages homecare and addresses barriers to access.
- Consistently encourage and facilitate high quality co-ordinated social care and health care which meets the needs of individuals and the outcomes they wish to achieve.

*As a start, in the first session of the new Assembly:*

The Welsh Government must support all local authorities in Wales to commission care services that are person-centred, focussed on achieving outcomes, are integrated with health services and are sufficient to meet the needs of the local population. This should be done by the National Commissioning Board, the Social Services Improvement Agency and supported by the National Provider Forum.

## Realise the potential of health to improve social care

- From April 2016 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 will give citizens with care and support needs statutory safeguards that will protect citizen's wellbeing and promote their inclusion in society.
- The Welsh Government should foster better co-ordination of resources between front-line social care and health services, so that citizens get the support they need early enough to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital, residential or nursing care.

*As a start, in the first session of the new Assembly:*

Require local authorities to develop plans to integrate social care and health care services, and leverage the benefits thereof. Local authorities should consult with citizens who use services to develop care plans and work collaboratively with providers from independent and voluntary sector to ensure the best outcomes.

## Prioritise social care

- Commit to addressing the major financial deficit in social care, ensuring the allocation of adequate resources to improve the benefits to individuals and value for money for tax payers.
- Ensure that resources allocated to meet needs actually reach frontline services and are not diverted to competing services or to infrastructure. This could be achieved via a ring-fencing mechanism.
- The Regulation of Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 states that homecare visits should not be shorter than 30 minutes, unless there is good reason. This is re-iterated in NICE good practice guidance for homecare. We support this measure, and call on the Welsh Government to ensure that it is reflected in local authority commissioning practices and fees paid for homecare services.

*As a start, in the first session of the new Assembly:*

Commission a robust, independent review of the true cost of care in each local authority, to understand the real cost of delivering a safe, dignified homecare service to citizens who need support; providing additional ring-fenced money where this is shown to be necessary.

## Regulation and quality of care

Require the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to inspect and report on the commissioning practices of local authorities in Wales, to ensure that these practices are consistent with the provision of safe and dignified care services to meet citizen's needs, and that services are sufficiently funded to ensure long term market stability.

*As a start, in the first session of the new Assembly:*

Require CSSIW to scrutinise the commissioning of social care services effectively, systematically and on a regular basis.

## Support the social care workforce

- Recognise the significant contribution that the social care sector makes to the Welsh economy by maintaining citizens' wellbeing; providing employment; supporting working family carers and generating tax revenue.
- Actively support the social care workforce through measures that facilitate better terms and conditions for the Welsh homecare workforce and actions which develop their skills base and raise their professional status in society.

*As a start, in the first session of the new Assembly:*

Commit to funding increased state investment in training in order to enhance the quality of care, the status of the workforce and attractiveness of social care as a career.

The Welsh Government must also recognise that for the majority of careworkers in the homecare sector, zero hour contracts are an effective way to work flexibly and promote a good work life balance.

UKHCA support the ethical use of zero hour contracts and oppose an outright ban. The Assembly should introduce measures to ensure that such contracts are only ever used appropriately and ethically by employers.

## Why we must act now

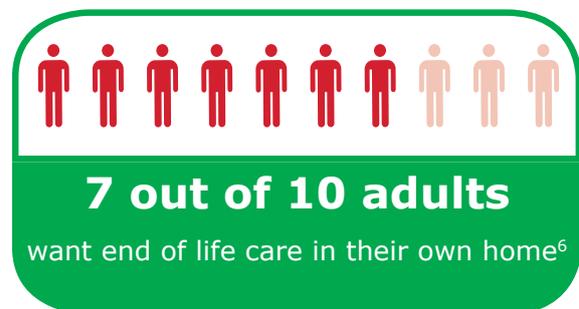
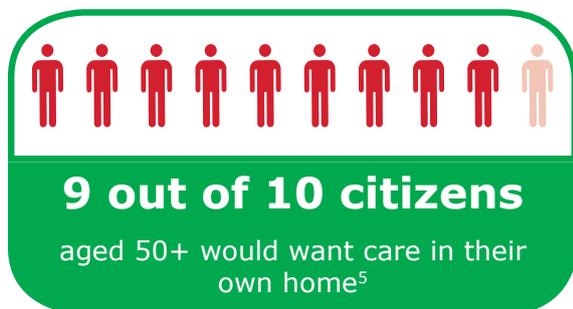
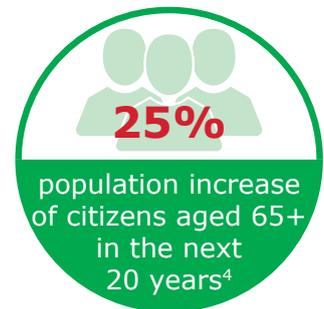
As the population of Wales ages over the next 20 years, we will face increasing demands, as the proportion of society that is of working age decreases in relative terms.

The political parties that address and start taking action on these issues over the next Assembly term will significantly meet the needs of voters to enhance the wellbeing of older and disabled citizens, their family carers and create a social care workforce that is highly valued, appropriately remunerated and capable of meeting the needs of society now and in the future.

### Sources:

1. Statistics for Wales, Assessments and Social Services for Adults in 2014/15, January 2016. Available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/assessments-social-services-adults/?lang=en>
2. UKHCA, An Overview of the Domiciliary Care Market in the UK, June 2015. Available at: <http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=109>
3. UKHCA, An Overview of the Domiciliary Care Market in the UK, June 2015. Available at: <http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=109>

## Quick facts about homecare services in Wales



### Sources:

- 1-4. UKHCA, An Overview of the Domiciliary Care Market in the UK, June 2015. Available at: <http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=109>
5. Saga / Populus survey of Saga customers 2013
6. Dying matters / Comres 2014

### For more information on homecare services

**UKHCA website**  
[www.ukhca.co.uk](http://www.ukhca.co.uk)

#### Reports

- The Homecare Deficit (2015) – a report on the funding of older people’s homecare across Wales and the rest of the United Kingdom. Downloadable from: [www.ukhca.co.uk/rates](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/rates)
- The Minimum Price for Homecare (2015) – Downloadable from: [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434)
- Care is not a Commodity – UKHCA Commissioning Survey (2012) - Downloadable from: [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=356](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=356)

#### To contact UKHCA

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