

**POLICY BRIEF**

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

29 January 2020



**The information contained within this brief is correct at the time of publication (Monday 20 January 2020).**

**HEADLINES**

- General Election 2019 – the Conservatives won a majority with 365 MPs. Government ministers remain in post and continue to run their departments – a cabinet reshuffle is expected in February 2020.
- The provisional [Local Government Settlement](#) was published on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The proposals include an additional £1.5bn for social care comprising £1bn additional grant for both adult and children’s social care and a proposed 2% council tax precept for adult social care. These additional resources sit on top of the existing social care package, which will continue at 2019-20 levels.
- Chancellor’s [Budget set for 11 March 2020](#). The Budget will prioritise the environment, and build on recent announcements to boost spending on public services and tackle the cost of living. These include investing in new hospitals, training thousands of new police officers, funding vocational education and the biggest ever cash increase to the National Living Wage.
- A Queen’s Speech was delivered on the 19 December 2019. The speech outlined the Government’s intentions over the next Parliament and sets out 29 bills.

Headline announcements include;

- Priority to expedite the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill - implement in domestic law the Withdrawal Agreement which has been agreed between the UK and the EU.
- Immigration and Social Co-ordination Bill - points-based immigration system.
- Increase in the National Insurance threshold and an increase in the National Living Wage.
- Serious Violence Bill - new duties will require schools, police, councils and health authorities to work together and have plans in place to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- Domestic Abuse Bill - will establish a statutory definition of domestic abuse, including emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour and economic abuse. New duty to provide support to victims of DA and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
- Publish a National Infrastructure Strategy and prioritise investment in infrastructure and world-leading science research and skills and increase tax credits for research and development, establishment of a National Skills Fund.
- Environmental Bill will enshrine in law environmental principles and legally-binding targets, including for air quality. Target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Measures relating to health and social care include:

**NHS Funding Bill and Long Term Plan**

- Multi-year funding settlement for the NHS with a £33.9 billion increase in cash terms by 2023-24.
- Continue completing aims laid out in the NHS Long Term Plan and accelerate progress.
- Additional support through delivering 50,000 more nurses, with non-repayable maintenance payments of at least £5,000 per year for nursing, midwifery and some allied health professional students, 6,000 more doctors and 6,000 more primary care professionals in general practice.

- 40 new hospitals to be funded and built over the next 10 years on top of 20 new hospital upgrades announced in the summer.
- The NHS People Plan will ensure that qualified doctors, nurses and allied health professionals with a job offer from the NHS, and who have been trained to a recognised standard, will be offered fast-track entry, reduced visa fees and dedicated support to come to the UK.
- Free hospital parking for those in greatest need.
- 50 million more appointments in GP surgeries every year.

### **Social Care Reform**

- Three-point plan for social care:
  - Additional £1 billion for adult and children's social care in every year of this Parliament. Consult on the 2 per cent precept that will enable councils to access a further £500 million for adult social care for 2020-21.
  - Cross party consensus on long term plan for social care reform
  - Nobody needing care will be forced to sell their home to pay for it.

### **Mental Health Reform**

- Modernise the Mental Health Act by giving patients more autonomy, allowing them to set their preferences about their care and treatment in advance.
- Act on the recommendations of the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act through a White Paper in the New Year to reform the process of detention; specifically, the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act.
- The Government will make it easier for people with learning disabilities and autism to be discharged and improve how they are treated in law.

### **Medicines and Medical Devices Bill**

- Making it simpler for NHS hospitals to manufacture and trial the most innovative new personalised and short life medicines.
- Removing unnecessary bureaucracy for the lowest risk clinical trials, to encourage rapid introduction of new medicines. Implementing scheme to combat falsified medicines entering supply chains.

### **Health Service Safety Investigations Bill**

- Will establish the Health Service Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB) with powers to conduct investigations into incidents that happen under the provision of the NHS.

### **National Disability Strategy**

- The Government will publish a National Strategy for Disabled People in 2020 to support disabled people in all aspects and phases of their life.

Further details on all measures announced in the Queen's Speech can be found [here](#).

## GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

**Department of Health and Social Care (18/12/2019)** [All nursing students on courses from September 2020 will receive a payment of at least £5,000 a year which they will not need to pay back.](#) Further details provided on the measures announced in the Queen's Speech (see above).

**Department of Health and Social Care (27/12/2019)** [Free hospital parking for thousands of patients, staff and carers.](#) Further details provided on the measures announced in the Queen's Speech (see above).


From April, all 206 hospital trusts in England will be expected to provide free car parking to groups that may be frequent hospital visitors, or those disproportionately impacted by daily or hourly charges for parking, including:

- blue badge holders
- frequent outpatients who have to attend regular appointments to manage long-term conditions

Free parking will also be offered at specific times of day to certain groups, including:

- parents of sick children staying in hospital overnight
- staff working night shifts

## OPEN CONSULTATIONS

Date of publication	Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee	 GOV
20 December	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. <a href="#">Provisional local government finance settlement 2020 to 2021</a> Closes 17 January 2020	Open consultation