

Rt Hon Liz Truss

10 Downing St,

London,

SW1A 2AA

1/9/2022

Dear Prime Minister,

As a Conservative Party member, please allow me to commend you on your election. I wish you all the best in your new position as our Prime Minister.

I am the Chief Executive of one of the UK's leading social care providers, Healthcare Management Solutions, with more than 20 years of experience in the sector. We operate more than 60 care homes across the UK.

While I appreciate there are major issues facing you, I hope that health and social care will be high on your agenda.

I write to you in the hope that you will consider some of my proposals, which I think would go some of the way towards relieving the pressure being placed on UK social care providers and the economy.

Nip energy inflation in the bud

Energy is one of the key drivers of high inflation in the UK. Any subsidising of end user energy bills is not going to help bring down the increases we're seeing – it will just funnel more money into the pockets of predatory suppliers. Instead, I propose a subsidy of the wholesale market, so that suppliers purchase cheaper energy, and a review of the price cap as a result. I expect that this will bring down costs to domestic homes, care homes and other businesses thus bearing down on inflation across the economy.

There can be no doubt that without some drastic action ahead of October, many care homes in the UK will be forced to close due to rampant energy price increases – in some instances of up to 1,400%. A £5,000 a year bill becomes £70,000 overnight, wiping out any hope of making already squeezed care homes profitable for the owners.

Centralised Funding for Social Care

Centralise social care funding and use the Health and Social Care Levy to fund it more effectively. It is a Conservative principal that everyone should have access to the same opportunity, no matter where they live. It is right and proper that this

extends to the care they receive in older age. Social care could help alleviate pressure on the NHS by freeing up beds, thus reducing bed blocking; a major cause of extending waiting times.

Improve the Pipeline of Social Care Workers Through Easier Migration and Funded Training

Social care is facing a staffing crisis. We simply do not have the people willing or qualified to work in care homes. We have found hiring from abroad is prohibitively expensive with our last calculation of cost for recruiting from overseas running to £9,000 plus per person dependent upon salary and with no guarantee of them staying once here. The system needs urgent review to make it cost-effective and streamlined so it is easier to bring in carers and qualified nurses.

Even then, bringing in overseas support is not a long-term solution. What we desperately need is to develop a pipeline of homegrown nurses. Currently qualifying as a nurse requires tens of thousands of pounds of debt and hours of unpaid work. Instead, I propose using some of the funding from the Health and Social Care Levy to alleviate the financial burden on student nurses. It will take a few years for them to qualify, but we can be sure that an investment now will pay dividends in the medium to long-term.

Next steps

It has been many years since our nation has faced times as turbulent as these, and not since the end of the Second World War has there been the need for urgent, radical reform to social care.

I trust you will consider the points made. I am of course at the disposal of you and the Department of Health and Social Care should you wish to explore these ideas further.

Yours Sincerely,

Tony Stein,

CEO, Health Care Management Solutions