



Department of Health & Social Care

From the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

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To all MPs

Dear Colleagues,

Health and Care Act: Implementation

This week, many of the provisions in the Health and Care Act 2022 – one of the most significant reforms of the health and care system in a decade – come into effect.

From the 1st of July 2022, Integrated Care Boards and Integrated Care Partnerships, which along with other organisations form Integrated Care Systems, will be established across England. These 42 Integrated Care Systems span from Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to the North East and North Cumbria. They will enable the building of partnerships between the NHS, local government and other partners to tackle the biggest challenges in health and care.

Joining up care ensures people will get the support they need, in the right place and at the right time. This approach will enable those working in health and care to support people to retain their independence, health and wellbeing for longer. Integrated Care Systems remove barriers to joint working and empower local leaders to tackle the issues that matter most to the people in their area.

For many years, the health and care system has been on a journey to integrate more closely and to build strong, lasting partnerships that improve people's lives. The Health and Care Act 2022 has delivered on creating a framework for system leaders to work together and to continue this evolution.

It is with this legislative foundation that the system now has the tools to innovate and develop local solutions. We have seen huge successes in recent years that show the strength of our system, such as our world-beating vaccine rollout. We will continue to support local leaders to create a health and care system that meets the challenges of the future.

The Health and Care Act is not just about integration. Far from it. Alongside system changes, a raft of important provisions come into effect this week.

We are supporting parity of esteem between physical and mental health and strengthening duties on Integrated Care Boards and NHS England in relation to the reduction of health disparities. We are ensuring our health and social care workforce have the right skills and knowledge to provide safe, compassionate, and informed care to autistic people and people with a learning disability by making specialised training mandatory by law.

We are clarifying the existing NHS duty to commission palliative care, as we want people of all ages to benefit from high quality personalised palliative and end of life care if, and when, they need it.

We recognise the challenges facing the health and care workforce. That is why we have introduced a duty on government to publish a report detailing our workforce planning and our plan to deliver it. We have commissioned Health Education England to develop a long-term strategic framework, looking at trends across our workforce, and commissioned NHS England to develop a long-term workforce strategy.

We are also demonstrating the UK's leading role as an opponent of organ trafficking, by making it a criminal offence to give or receive payment for an organ overseas. We are committed to protecting and safeguarding vulnerable women and girls, which is why we are banning the harmful practices of virginity testing and hymenoplasty. We are taking strides to eradicate the use of goods or services tainted by slavery in the NHS - representing a significant step forward in the UK's mission to crack down on this evil practice wherever it is found.

Yet, there is still more to come. We are working to implement further changes set out in the Act. This includes important measures to improve patient safety, such as the regulations for a licencing regime for non-surgical cosmetic procedures and the creation of the Health Services Safety Investigations Body, as well as measures to improve outcomes such as the inclusion of cancer outcomes objectives in the mandate to NHS England.

This Act is a major step forward. It gives the health and care system the framework it needs, but we know that more needs to be done to tackle the deep rooted challenges in health and care, which this government is ambitious to address.

That is why, in March, I set out my vision for putting the healthcare system on a sustainable footing for the future. Our vision will prioritise prevention, offer more personalised care, deliver improvements in performance and back the people making a difference in our NHS.

I am grateful to colleagues in both Houses for the considered way they engaged with the Act through its development and I hope they will continue to do so throughout its implementation. I am grateful to my Bill Minister, Ed Argar MP, and Lord Kamall for their efforts in securing its passage through Parliament. Finally, and just as importantly, I am grateful to all the stakeholders who have helped to ensure this Act directly addresses their needs now and in the future.

Without the Health and Care Act 2022 we would simply not have the tools we need to create a world class health and care system. Thank you again for your support.

Yours ever,



RT HON SAJID JAVID MP