

Shaping the future of care together



Why change?

As it is, the government thinks that the current social care system is just not good enough. It's an old system that grew bit by bit, usually with too little thought about the way people actually want to live.

This system needs to change pretty radically, mostly because we're living a lot longer and so we're affected by age-related health problems that people who started the current system in the 1950s couldn't even begin to imagine.

the new system

The government would like to set up a new system, one that measures everyone's needs properly, that lets you decide how you get cared for, or care for yourself, and that's flexible, so you don't have to get reassessed all the time.

This means that the benefits system we know now would be replaced almost entirely by new benefits. The government doesn't give any examples of how much money people would get in this new system, compared to what you get now.

You can ask them to give you examples.

They want you to tell them what your experiences of the current system are, what you like, what you don't, how much you think you need to live on, what kind of services would make your life that much easier.

The more data they have, the better the new system can be.

what will the new system do for me?

The paper doesn't explain in great detail what the new system will look like. The government does say this, though:

- We should set up an **independent organisation** to work out what's good and bad about social care, and how to get the best value for money. They will advise the government.
- Your **local authority** will have a big role in making sure you get your social care needs
- If you **can't afford** to pay for yourself, you will get **state support**
- If you have **worked** all your life and have good **savings**, you **shouldn't have to pay** for everything
- **Everyone's needs** should be worked out at a **national level** so you're entitled to the level of care you need wherever you live, and you don't have to go through the process all over again if you move
- Once you are assessed you will get a **personal budget**, and all the help you need to manage it. You can give the budget to your **carers** if you want.

- **Information** about the new system should be **freely available**, easy to **understand** and **access**
- You should be given **help** much **earlier** so you stay **independent** for longer and help prevent your condition getting worse.
- You should be given **support** and **advice** on how to live life the way you want to, including training, family planning, work, volunteering and social opportunities.
- We need to **involve** all sorts of **organisations** to get the **best value** and the **best services**: councils, charities, national and local businesses.

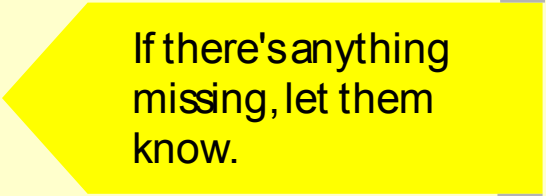
what the system won't do

- The government expects people to pay for their own **accommodation** and **food**. They say this is the same as it's ever been and people on low incomes will get support, as always.

your ideal system?

Tell them **what the system would look like** that lets you do all these things, and feel **valued** and **independent**.

If you think any of these things will be **difficult** to achieve, say **why**, and what your experiences have been in the past that make you **sceptical**.



If there's anything missing, let them know.

paying for it

There is a catch - **money**. If the government is going to do this right, they say that the new system will need much more money than we spend at the moment. It's important that we work out how we're going to pay for it.

Care in old age

Paying for high quality age-related health and social care is not going to be easy and the government's come up with some options they'd like you to help them explore:

Option 1 - you get a set amount, for example, a quarter or a third of your basic care and support costs paid for by the state. If you're less well-off you would get more care and support paid for, for example, two-thirds. If you are very poor, you would keep getting all your care and support for free.

Option 2 – This combines **option 1** with an insurance system. If you have the money, you would pay around £20-25,000 in insurance payments instead, and get all the care you need. The average cost of care for someone over 65 is about £30,000.

Option 3 - Everyone over retirement age who had enough money would have to pay into a state insurance scheme which would pay for everyone's age-related social care.

For all of these options, you would get the chance to delay payment until after your death, so you would get to keep your house and other assets while you can use them.

If none of these systems sound any good to you, what would?

paying for it

Care for young adults

Most of these options will work really well for age-related care. However, paying for high quality life-time care for the young disabled is going to be even more difficult.

The government admits they don't have a good plan that doesn't involve **increasing taxes**, and they want to know what you think the options could be.

**tell the government
what you think!**

The consultation closes on 31 October 2009.

- **[Go to their website](#)** and leave your feedback.
- Email **careandsupport@dh.gsi.gov.uk**
- Write to the:

Care and Support Team

Room 149
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A2NS

A message from Simply Understand

Occasionally I get asked to translate papers that are quite controversial.

There are a lot of strong feelings about this paper, so please don't take this translation as the full story.

If you're worried about what affect this system is going to have on your life, please respond to the consultation!

[Read my guide on how to respond effectively.](#)