

Hearing loss and dementia

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<p><u>EDM 477</u></p> <p><u>Primary Sponsor: Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP (Liberal Democrat, North Norfolk)</u></p>	<p>Early Day Motion (EDM) 477 refers to the recent study in the Lancet which showed associations between hearing loss and dementia.</p> <p>Action on Hearing Loss recently met with Norman Lamb MP to discuss our work. The following EDM was tabled following this interaction.</p> <p>EDM 477 said:</p> <p><i>“That this House acknowledges that hearing loss is the largest potentially modifiable risk factor for dementia, as confirmed in the recent report of the Lancet Commission on dementia prevention, intervention and care, which found that mid-life hearing loss is responsible for nine per cent of the risk of dementia; recognises that action to minimise hearing loss in people aged 55 and over could therefore lead to a significant reduction in dementia cases; notes that the evidence suggests that hearing aids can help to prevent or slow deterioration in cognitive function, and could prevent or delay dementia; welcomes the Government’s Action Plan on Hearing Loss, which identified the growing prevalence of hearing loss and recognised a fivefold increase in the risk of developing dementia for over 60 year olds with severe hearing loss; is concerned that the aims of this guidance are undermined by proposals from clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to restrict the provision of hearing aids to patients with mild and moderate hearing loss; further notes that the three year patient pathway for hearing aids costs the NHS just £370, and that any short-term savings achieved through the rationing of hearing aids will therefore be outweighed by avoidable costs in the health and social care system further down the line; and calls on the Government to safeguard the continued provision of free NHS hearing aids by working to disseminate to CCGs the evidence on the clinical and cost benefits of hearings aids.”</i></p>
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Employment

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<p><u>Written question on what steps the Government will take to publish an annual report on the disability employment gap</u></p>	<p>Jim Cunningham MP (Labour, Coventry South) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will take steps to publish an annual report on the disability employment gap as part of the national employment statistics.”</i></p> <p><i>“The employment rate of disabled people, according to the Labour Force Survey, is available at the following link. These figures are updated on a quarterly basis. https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08</i></p> <p><i>The Government is committed to improving employment outcomes for disabled people. The manifesto commitment underpins this with a clear and time-bound goal to see 1 million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years.</i></p> <p><i>We know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. In October 2016, we published <i>Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper</i>, which set out the action we plan to take and consulted on proposals for wider reform. We are working towards a publication later this year, which will provide an update on the recent work we’ve been doing, respond to the consultation, and set out our next steps.”</i></p>
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Social care

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<p><u>Written question on the funding of care homes</u></p>	<p>Dan Jarvis MP (Labour, Barnsley Central) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to change the funding of care homes.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price MP (Conservatives, Thurrock) said:</p> <p><i>“We will work to address the challenges of social care for our ageing population, bringing forward proposals for consultation to build widespread support.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation will set out options to improve the social care system and to put it on a more secure financial footing, supporting people, families and communities to prepare for old age, and address issues related to the quality of care and variation in practice. Further information on this will be made available shortly.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what guidance the Government offers local authorities on the minimum number of residential care homes authorities are required to offer</u></p>	<p>Jared O’Mara MP (Labour, Sheffield Hallam) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance the Government offers to local authorities on the effect of the provisions in the Care Act 2014 on the minimum number of residential care homes such authorities are required to offer.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price MP (Conservatives, Thurrock) said:</p> <p><i>“The Care Act 2014 does not specify the minimum number of residential care homes authorities are required to offer.</i></p>

	<p><i>The Care Act 2014 placed a duty on local authorities in England to promote a diverse, sustainable, high quality market of care and support providers for people in their local area.</i></p> <p><i>We have given local authorities in England an extra £2 billion over the next three years to maintain access for our growing aging population and allow councils to sustain a diverse care market including care home places.</i></p> <p><i>In addition the Government has announced we will consult on plans to improve the social care system and to put it on a more secure financial footing.”</i></p>
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Disability benefits

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<p><u>Social Security Written Statement on Personal Independence Payments: Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt MP (Conservatives, Portsmouth North)</u></p>	<p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt MP (Conservatives, Portsmouth North) made the following written statement:</p> <p><i>“Today I am publishing an updated version of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Assessment Guide which provides guidance for Health Professionals carrying out PIP assessments on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. The department routinely updates the Guide to further clarify the policy intent and to bring it in line with legislative requirements...</i></p> <p><i>The updated guidance will reflect binding case law following an Upper Tribunal judgment handed down on 9th March 2017 on how DWP considers a claimant to be carrying out an activity safely and whether they need supervision to do so. This will increase entitlement for a number of both new and existing claimants, largely those with conditions such as epilepsy, which affect consciousness. The Department estimates approximately 10,000 claims will benefit by £70 - £90 per week in 2022/2023...</i></p> <p><i>Also, following consultation with stakeholders, and to more clearly communicate existing case law, the guidance has also been changed to add clarity for Health Professionals around assessing claimants with sensory difficulties. These changes will ensure that the needs of those with sensory difficulties are properly taken into account within activity 9 (engaging with others face to face) and mobility activity 1 (planning and following a journey).”</i></p> <p>To read this statement in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Written question on what steps the Government is taking to ensure the assessment criteria for personal independence payments do</u></p>	<p>Andrew Rosindell MP (Conservatives, Romford) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that assessment criteria for personal independence payments do not prevent people with disabilities from receiving sufficient payments for their needs.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt MP’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The purpose of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is to provide a tax-free, cash contribution of up to £141.10 a week towards the additional cost which</i></p>

<p><u>not prevent people with disabilities receiving sufficient payments</u></p>	<p><i>disabled people face. PIP is a part of the wide range of other financial and practical support that may be available depending on individual circumstances. To date, there is a higher proportion of people on the top rates of Personal Independence Payment than there were on DLA – 29 per cent vs 15 per cent. We will continue to closely monitor developments across the health and disability landscape and engage with stakeholders to improve the service we provide. We are committed to ensuring that the PIP reassessment process works effectively across the spectrum of disabilities and health conditions.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on whether the Government will list examples of co-operation between the Department for Work and Pensions and charitable or private sector providers on personal independence payments or employment and support allowance</u></p>	<p>Ian C. Lucas MP has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will list examples of co-operation between his Department and charitable or private sector providers on personal independence payments or employment and support allowance by parliamentary constituency.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The Department works with many charitable and private sector providers. Examples within each parliamentary constituency could only be provided at disproportionate costs.”</i></p>

Accessibility

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<p><u>Written question on what assessment has been made of the levels of accessibility for disabled people planned for Crossrail stations</u></p>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Labour, East Ham) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the levels of accessibility for disabled people planned for Crossrail stations.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, Paul Maynard MP’s response(Conservatives, Blackpool North and Cleveleys):</p> <p><i>“When fully open from December 2019, all of the stations on the Elizabeth line will be step-free to platform level with clear signage and information to ensure that all passengers can get around the stations quickly and easily.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on whether proposed statutory guidance on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing will</u></p>	<p>Cat Smith MP (Labour, Lancaster and Fleetwood) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Transport, whether proposed statutory guidance on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing will include a requirement for all drivers to undertake disability equality training.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Transport, John Hayes MP’s response (Conservatives, South Holland and the Deepings):</p> <p><i>“The draft Accessibility Action Plan is currently being consulted upon, the Department will review and consult on best practice guidance for taxi and PHV</i></p>

<p><u>include a requirement for drivers to undertake disability equality training</u></p>	<p><i>licensing authorities, which will include strengthened recommendations on supporting accessible services.</i></p> <p><i>The statutory guidance issued under section 177 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 will not include a requirement for all taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers to undertake disability equality training as this is beyond the scope of the legislation which is to “protect children, and vulnerable individuals who are 18 or over, from harm.”</i></p>
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Equalities

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<p><u>Written question on whether the Minister for Women and Equalities has been made aware of proposals to abolish the position of Disability Commissioner</u></p>	<p>Philip Davies MP (Conservatives, Shipley) has asked <i>“the Minister for Women and Equalities, when she was first made aware of proposals by the Equality and Human Rights Commissioner to abolish the position of Disability Commissioner.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Education, Nick Gibb MP’s response (Conservatives, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton):</p> <p><i>“The position of ‘Disability Commissioner’ was not a statutory one, and there was no requirement for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to put proposals about discontinuing it to Ministers. Following a period of consideration and discussion and the winding up of the statutory Disability Committee on 31 March 2017 under the Equality Act 2006 (Dissolution of the Disability Committee) Order 2014 (SI No.406), the Board of the EHRC decided to abolish the role of ‘Disability Commissioner’ at its meeting on 11 May 2017. We will, however, ensure that disabled people continue to be represented on the EHRC.”</i></p>
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NHS Sustainability

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<p><u>Oral evidence: Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt MP (Conservatives, South West Surrey) to Health Select Committee</u></p>	<p>Chair of the Health Select Committee, Sarah Wollaston MP (Conservatives, Totnes) asked the Secretary of State for Health <i>“whether you have read the House of Lords report on the long-term sustainability of the NHS and social care?”</i></p> <p>The Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP responded <i>“I have read a summary of it.”</i></p> <p>Sarah Wollaston MP went on to say <i>“Yes. You may have noticed that one core criticism is that they see there is a culture of short-termism within the Department of Health and express great concern that there is a lack of long-term planning. They specifically recommend that there should be an office for health and care sustainability. Would you agree with that?”</i></p> <p>Jeremy Hunt MP replied <i>“In some areas, it is a fair criticism, but in others I think we have raised our game. The area where I have felt the biggest lack of long-term planning has been around workforce needs and the failure to understand—over many years really—the lead times necessary to increase capacity in the system because of the time it takes to train new doctors and nurses. If we want to improve the NHS, it is not just a question of funding,</i></p>
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although that is very important, but the need to have the capacity in the system. That is an area over the last couple of years where I have tried to put in place much longer-term planning in the fundamental capacity of the system to deliver the doctors and nurses that we need in the future.”

To read the evidence in full, please click on the link on the left

Parliamentary terms

Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands almost no chance of becoming law