

A NATIONAL CARE SERVICE FOR WALES

UNISON Cymru Wales has three key areas we believe should be prioritised during the next Senedd term. Social care is one of these areas.

We are calling for Member of Senedd (MS) candidates to commit to the principles of National Care Service for Wales.

Why are we calling for change?

The social care sector was in a precarious position before COVID19 as result of chronic underfunding, an unstable market, and workforce shortages. The pandemic has magnified these problems and highlighted a whole host more.

There was a systematic failure in the supply and distribution of PPE at the start of the pandemic; a lack of availability of testing; a devastating death rate in residential care; refusal from employers to pay sick pay when workers were isolating or had tested positive for COVID.

Social care is a sector in crisis.

UNISON's vision

As we emerge from the COVID crisis, we need to rebuild services that are fit for the future. Now is the time for a National Care Service for Wales.

Profit should never be prioritised ahead of people. An integrated, publicly delivered care system would benefit both service users and care workers, and this would be our longer-term aim. But National Care Service must at least guarantee that:

- The professional standards embedded in the sector in Wales to be reflected in the standards of pay
- A standard employment contract for care work – including sick pay, contracted hours and pay for all hours on duty, including 'sleep ins,' travel time and continued professional development
- Full funding provision
- Ongoing partnership working, collective bargaining and trade union representation within the sector.

The true worth of social care and social care workers can never be forgotten again and we must give the sector the priority it deserves as our communities recover from this crisis.

A national care service for Wales is the only way to ensure a high-quality resilient service that places the needs of the user first.

