

Carers and Care Workers Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

CONTENTS

- 1 Publication and implementation of Care Workers Employment Strategy
- 2 Establishment of National Care Workers Council
- 3 Assessment of support available to unpaid carers
- 4 Expenditure
- 5 Extent, commencement and citation

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TO

Require the Secretary of State to publish and implement a Care Workers Employment Strategy, with the aim of improving the recruitment and retention of care workers; to establish an independent National Care Workers Council with responsibility for setting professional standards for care workers, for establishing a system of professional qualifications and accreditation for care workers, and for advising the Government on those matters; to require the Secretary of State to commission an independent assessment of the support available to unpaid carers, including financial support and employment rights; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the King’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Publication and implementation of Care Workers Employment Strategy

- (1) The Secretary of State must, within 12 months of the passing of this Act, publish and lay before Parliament a strategy (‘the strategy’) for improving the recruitment and retention of care workers in England.
- (2) The strategy must include—
 - (a) an assessment of the locations and sectors experiencing shortages of care workers, and the reasons for those shortages, 5
 - (b) an assessment of the causes of poor rates of retention and delays in the recruitment of care workers,
 - (c) an assessment of the adequacy of rates of pay for care workers, 10
 - (d) measures intended to improve rates of recruitment and retention of care workers.
- (3) The Secretary of State must—
 - (a) implement the strategy, and
 - (b) report annually to Parliament on the implementation. 15

2 Establishment of National Care Workers Council

- (1) The Secretary of State must by regulations establish an independent National Care Workers Council (‘the Council’) with responsibility in England for—

- (a) setting professional standards for care workers,
 - (b) establishing a system of professional qualifications and accreditation for care workers,
 - (c) advising His Majesty's Government on the matters in (a) and (b).
- (2) Regulations under subsection (1) may— 5
- (a) make provision about the membership, powers and duties of the Council,
 - (b) make transitional or saving provision,
 - (c) make provision that is consequential on this Act.
- (3) A statutory instrument containing regulations under this section may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament. 10
- (4) The Secretary of State must lay a draft statutory instrument containing regulations under this section within six months of the passing of this Act.
- 3 Assessment of support available to unpaid carers** 15
- (1) The Secretary of State must prepare an assessment of the support available to unpaid carers.
- (2) The assessment under subsection (1) must include—
- (a) an assessment of the adequacy of the financial support available to unpaid carers, 20
 - (b) an assessment of the appropriateness of the employment rights of unpaid carers,
 - (c) an assessment of the merits of increasing or extending the support available to unpaid carers.
- (3) In preparing the assessment under subsection (1), the Secretary of State must consult— 25
- (a) unpaid carers,
 - (b) people receiving care from unpaid carers,
 - (c) charities and civil society organisations.
- (4) The Secretary of State must lay their assessment before Parliament before the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the day on which this Act is passed. 30
- 4 Expenditure**
- There is to be paid out of money provided by Parliament —*
- (a) *any expenditure incurred under or by virtue of this Act; and* 35
 - (b) *any increase attributable to this Act in the sums payable under any other Act out of money so provided.*
- 5 Extent, commencement and citation**
- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

- (2) This Act comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Carers and Care Workers Act 2024.

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Presented by Helen Morgan

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