

# All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Adult Social Care

Co-Chairs: David Warburton MP, Helen Hayes MP & Baroness Greengross

Web: [www.adultsocialcareappg.com](http://www.adultsocialcareappg.com) Twitter: @ASCAPPG

Secretariat:

PB Consulting, 17 Swan Court, 9 Tanner Street, London, SE1 3LE



## The Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP

The Secretary of State for Health & Social Care  
The Department for Health & Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU

15 May 2020

Dear Secretary of State for Health & Social Care,

### **Concerns Raised By Members of the Working Group of the APPG on Adult Social Care Re: Testing**

As the Co-Chairs of the APPG on Adult Social Care we have been attending and/or receiving regular updates from the weekly conference calls with the APPG's Working Group, a group of adult social care stakeholders widely drawn from the social care sector, representing large and small providers of care homes and domiciliary care and people who receive care.

At each of our conference calls since the start of the pandemic, the issue of testing has been raised. As you will be aware, no testing was available to care homes for staff or residents in the early weeks of the pandemic, and many reported that hospitals were discharging patients from Covid positive wards into care homes without testing.

The impacts of Covid-19 are now being experienced more acutely in our care homes than anywhere else in our communities and deaths in care homes now account for around 40% of all Covid-19 deaths. Our care homes desperately need regular, comprehensive testing to enable them to stop the spread of Covid-19 and prevent further deaths.

Much less discussed in the public domain are the serious issues facing people who receive care at home. Members of the APPG's Working Group report that many people are so fearful of contracting Covid-19 that they have stopped their Personal Assistants from visiting them at home, and are often living in dire circumstances without essential support as a consequence. Regular, frequent testing for Personal Assistants would also give confidence to people who rely on PA support to manage the risk while also accessing the support that they need.

Members of the APPG Working Group are clear that weekly Covid-19 testing for all care home staff and residents, and all domiciliary care workers is essential for the effective isolation of anyone in a care setting who is carrying Covid-19 in order to reduce the spread of the disease and keep people safe. Testing must also lead to results being provided rapidly so that positive test results can be acted upon immediately.

Members of the APPG Working Group have also raised concerns about significant difficulties testing residents living with Dementia because it is distressing for these residents in particular to be approached by staff in full PPE and because the test itself is invasive and uncomfortable. We are aware that there are saliva tests available which avoid the need for invasive swabbing. Please could you ensure that every effort is made to bring forward this test for approved use in the UK as soon as possible for use in settings where invasive swabbing is distressing for people living with Dementia.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the various points raised in this correspondence. If you think it would be helpful, we would be willing to facilitate a conference call with the Minister for Social Care and the APPG's Members and Working Group, to discuss matters further. If you have any queries on this matter please contact the Secretariat of the APPG. Email: [ASCAPPG@mailpbconsulting.com](mailto:ASCAPPG@mailpbconsulting.com)

Yours sincerely,



**David Warburton MP**



**Helen Hayes MP**

***Co-Chairs of the APPG for Adult Social Care***

***Sally Greengross***

**Baroness Sally Greengross**

cc Members of the APPG's Working Group – National Care Forum, Think Local Act Personal (TLAP), Home Group, Methodist Homes, Skills for Care, Anchor Hanover, Choice Care Group, Care Tech, Dimensions, Four Seasons Healthcare & CIC.