

SCVO Media Release

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For immediate release



Organisations call for independent review of Brexit's impact on health and social care

Politicians are set to consider plans for an independent review of Brexit's impact on health and social care.

Brendan O'Hara MP introduced a Private Member's Bill at the House of Commons last week (14 November 2018) in response to concerns raised by those in the third sector.

Organisations from across the UK fear that potential changes in rules, as a result of Brexit, related to the EU workforce, medicines research and funding could affect the provision of support and services to disabled people, people living with long term conditions, children and young people and unpaid carers.

So far, 50 organisations have backed the calls for an independent assessment including the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland and Camphill Scotland. The bill has also gained cross-party support from the Liberal Democrats, Labour, the Greens and Plaid Cymru.

The European Union Withdrawal (Evaluation of Effects on Health and Social Care Sectors) Bill was introduced to the chamber by the SNP member for Argyll and Bute, who is hoping for other members to show their support for staff in the health and social care sector.

"The unfolding shambles that is Brexit means that two years after the referendum, we still have no idea what the consequences will be for some of the most vulnerable people in the UK," Mr O'Hara said.

"Individuals, charities and organisations are all, understandably, extremely worried that the poorest and those least able to defend themselves, will be hardest hit by Brexit.

"My Private Members Bill seeks to provide a safety-net as well as degree of reassurance whereby no later than one year after the UK has left the European Union, the Secretary of State will undertake an independent evaluation of the effect Brexit has had on the health and social care sectors across the United Kingdom.

"The UK Government has nothing to fear from my bill. It simply seeks to provide transparency about how those likely to be hardest hit by Brexit are actually faring. I think it is informative and un-contentious, while providing a necessary safeguard to inform both the government and the public as to the reality of Brexit. "

Anna Fowlie, Chief Executive of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), said: "If there's one thing that's clear about Brexit, it's the potentially devastating impact on Scotland's voluntary sector. SCVO's members operating in social care and health have been very vocal on the need for contingency plans based on a proper analysis.

“We are walking blind into a situation which affect medical research, the rights of disabled people and others, early access to medicines, EU nationals in our workforce and volunteering pool, all of which are vital to our communities.

"The chaos that has unfolded over the last week means it is more important than ever to know what Brexit means for health and social care delivery. Mr O'Hara's bill would be a real step forward in ensuring these crucial matters are subject to proper scrutiny and allow us to take all necessary action to ensure we are able to provide care, support and dignity for all."

Dr Neil Henery, Director of Camphill Scotland, said: “The contribution of EU nationals to Camphill communities in Scotland cannot be over-estimated. Without them we could not provide essential education, care and support for people with learning disabilities and other support needs.

“Any future restrictions on the ability of EU workers to make this contribution could have devastating consequences for Camphill and for the health and social care sectors across the UK.

“Brendan O'Hara MP's Private Member's Bill would require the UK Government to make arrangements for an independent evaluation of the impact of Brexit on the health and social care sectors. This evaluation is essential if we are to safeguard the long term future of the health and social care sectors across the UK post-Brexit.”

Professor Ian Welsh OBE, Chief Executive, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE), said: “ALLIANCE members have expressed concerns about the post-Brexit future for charities and communities, specifically relating to funding, the health and social care workforce, access to medicines, employment and human rights.

“The combined impact of these issues has created an urgent need for evaluation of Brexit's impact on health and social care systems across the UK to ensure these issues are well considered and unintended consequences mitigated.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations is the national body representing the interests of charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. The Scottish third sector turns over £5.4 billion a year and employs 110,000 people in over 45,000 organisations. For more on SCVO see www.scvo.org.uk
2. A briefing which further details the bill is attached to this email.
3. A short video of Mr O'Hara presenting the bill can be viewed at <https://twitter.com/BrendanOHaraSNP/status/1062743989328191494>
4. Organisations that have backed the bill to date: The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE); Camphill Scotland; Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO); Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS); Disability Wales; Inclusion Scotland; The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA); Scottish Care; ACVO; Action on Hearing Loss Scotland; Advocard; Angus Cardiac Group; C-Change Scotland; Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland; COPE Scotland; Disability Equality Scotland; Disability Information Scotland; ECAS; ENABLE Scotland; Energy Action Scotland; Engender; Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS); Human Rights Consortium Scotland; International Voluntary Service; L'Arche; Leonard Cheshire Scotland; Mentor UK; MND Scotland; Multiple

Sclerosis Centre, Mid Argyll; Nourish Scotland; One Parent Families Scotland; Parenting Across Scotland; Parkinson's UK in Scotland; RNIB Scotland; Royal Blind; Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh; Scotland's National Carers Organisations (Carers Scotland, Carers Trust Scotland, Coalition of Carers in Scotland, Crossroads Caring Scotland, MECOP (Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project), Shared Care Scotland and The Scottish Young Carers Service Alliance); Scottish Association of Social Work; Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA); Scottish Personal Assistant Employers' Network (SPAEN); Scottish Youth Parliament; Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS); West Dunbartonshire Access Panel; Western Isles Carers, Users and Supporters Network (WICUSN)

5. MPs who have backed the bill: Brendan O'Hara, Argyll and Bute, SNP (lead); Neil Gray, Airdrie & Shotts, SNP, Stephen Gethins, North East Fife, SNP; Joanna Cherry, Edinburgh South West, SNP; Martyn Day, Linlithgow and East Falkirk, SNP; Tommy Shephard, Edinburgh East, SNP; Caroline Lucas, Brighton Pavillion, Green; Liz Saville-Roberts, Dwyfor Meirionnydd, Plaid Cymru; Ben Lake, Ceredigion, Plaid Cymru; Christine Jardine, Edinburgh West, Lib Dems; Layla Moran, Oxford West & Abington, Lib Dems; Tom Brake, Carshalton and Wallington, Lib Dems; Ian Murray, Edinburgh South, Labour
6. For more information contact Gareth Jones, Communications Officer at gareth.jones@scvo.org.uk or phone 0131 524 7285