



Kirsty McHugh
CEO, Carers Trust
2-6 Boundary Row, London SE1 8HP
kmchugh@carers.org

Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP

Chancellor of the Exchequer

HM Treasury 1 Horse Guards Road Westminster London SW1A 2HQ

By email: rachel.reeves.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Chancellor,

Sustainability of local carer organisations following changes to Employer National Insurance contributions

We are writing to set out the dire consequences of proposed changes to employer National Insurance contributions on the 130 local carer services within the Carers Trust Network. Without an exemption, services that are essential to delivering statutory duties and supporting unpaid carers to be able to continue to underpin the NHS will be lost.

Together we reach more than a million unpaid carers across the UK each year, supporting them with vital services which allow them to continue in their caring role. These carer support services are an essential part of the local health and social care infrastructure, working hand in hand with local authorities and the NHS. With 70% of their funding coming from statutory contracts, and few avenues to expand and diversify income, these services are particularly vulnerable to additional costs.

These services are already struggling to meet soaring demand. Unpaid carers, disproportionately women, have been picking up the slack caused by social care services that have been cut to the bone. We provide desperately needed respite, hospital discharge services, young carer services, income maximisation services and dementia carer support. Without this support, local authorities would not be able to meet their statutory duties.

Half of our services have not had any funding uplift from local authorities or NHS contracts in recent years. As a result, many have been struggling financially and rationing services to carers in desperate need. Modelling of the employers' National Insurance increase shows the cost to our services will be upward of £3 million per year, sufficient to drive some services to closure. This is on top of a £4million cost of the increase to the National Living Wage. We therefore believe there is a strong case for local voluntary sector social care services, such as our own, to be given the same exemption as signalled to the NHS and public sector.

Failure to act to exempt voluntary sector social care services, including those for unpaid carers, will work directly against the Government's avowed aim to move NHS services from 'hospital to community'. The carers we support are the backbone of the community support that those with health conditions and disabilities rely on, whether through day to day support or through virtual



wards. And, unlike junior doctors or nurses, they do not go on strike and therefore might seem easy to ignore.

But in turn we need to give unpaid carers a fair deal. Our fear is that higher employer costs are going to lead to the end of services for unpaid carers in the community, which in turn will lead to an increased burden on the NHS. We therefore hope that as someone who has already proved herself a friend to unpaid carers through the changes to Carer's Allowance, that a way through to safeguard local carer services can be achieved.

Yours sincerely,

Kirsty McHugh - CEO Carers Trust

Alison Harries - CEO Carers Trust West Wales, and Wales Advisory Board representative

Alison Taylor - CEO Carers First, and South East Regional Network Chair

Allegra Lynch - CEO Carers Camden, and London Regional Network Co-Chair

Carl Tams – CEO Carers Support Centre, and South West Regional Network Co-Chair

Claire Dale – CEO Carers Trust Heart of England, and Central Regional Network Chair

Eglionna Treanor - CEO Wandsworth Carers Centre, and London Regional Network Co-Chair

Holly Hoskisson – CEO Carers Bucks and Carers Milton Keynes, and South East Regional Network Co-Chair

Ifor Glyn – CEO Swansea Carers Centre, and Wales Advisory Board representative

Jacqui Orchard – CEO Bath and North East Somerset Carers Centre, and South West Regional Network Co-Chair

Jennifer Twist - CEO Care for the Carers, and Carers Trust England Board member

Judith Hawcroft – Manager North Argyll Carers Centre, and Scotland Advisory Board representative

Kate Davis – CEO Crossroads Care Rotherham, and North Regional Network Co-Chair

Miriam Martin, CEO Caring Together, and Regulated Network Partners Forum Chair

Susanna Jones – CEO Swindon Carers Centre, and South West Regional Network Co-Chair

Vicky Keeley – CEO Sefton Carers Centre, and North Regional Network Co-Chair