

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

I thank my co-Chair for the dedicated work that he has put into this joint report, as well as all members of both Committees and our wonderful supporting Committee teams. Like him, I thank not only all those who took part in the citizens' assembly and those who advised and supported them, but the very many people, and their loved ones, who depend on social care, who wrote to us and whom we visited on our Committee visit. They told us moving stories about the level of unmet need and the consequences, both for themselves and their families.

The situation could not be more stark. As we approach the 70th anniversary of the NHS next week, would my hon. Friend say more about the impact on the NHS if we fail to address the unmet need in social care?

Clive Betts Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

I thank the hon. Lady, the Chair of the Health Committee—I think on this occasion, my hon. Friend, because we have worked on a friendly basis on this inquiry. She is absolutely right. One of the important recommendations is about trying to extend the scope of care provision to include those with moderate needs. If we provide care for them, it is quite likely that we will stop them from getting into the substantial and critical phase and ending up in hospital in the first place. In terms of the NHS, it is about stopping people getting into hospital by getting them proper care and having care available for people in hospital, so that they do not have delayed discharges. In those two ways, that can be beneficial. Of course, we can also join up services. Can the NHS district nurse who goes into someone's home and looks at their needs not assess their care needs at the same time? Can we not get that sort of joined-up approach?

It was remiss of me not to thank the staff, as the hon. Lady did, and I will name Laura and Tamsin. The work they did on this was exceptional. To produce a report of this quality in the time available was absolutely first-class, and we should congratulate them on it.