



Dear Nicola Sturgeon

Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland

I write to you as leader of the Scottish National Party, following the publication of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care, about GMB Scotland's 'Fight for Fifteen' campaign - a £15 an hour minimum wage for workers in our social care sector.

Responding to the review, we said, "*Scotland has a once in a generation opportunity to transform social care, if the recommendations of this report are underpinned by proper value for the workers who will deliver it.*" It should be the starting point for significant improvements to the working lives of the people who deliver care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has surfaced the underlying and long-standing challenges surrounding the proper value of our care workers. This is a workforce of predominantly low-paid women on precarious contracts of employment, working excessive hours, and underpinned by statutory minimum conditions. Economic and emotional exploitation is common.

Last year, in our own report, '*Show You Care: Voices from the frontline of Scotland's broken social care sector*', GMB members highlighted how the existing approach has failed and in doing so the issue of value emerges time and again from their testimonies. For your information, a copy of the report is provided below:
<https://tinyurl.com/yyt6hdc2>

Proper value and pay go hand in hand. We are pleased the review specifically references the call for a £15 an hour social care minimum wage and in the context of the 2020/21 Living Wage going up to £9.50 an hour, which many workers in the social care sector are paid. The prevalence of the Living Wage as the basic rate of pay in care should be a point of concern for all of us and certainly not a point of congratulation because it exists to help keep workers out of working poverty and no more.

We can do much better than this. The review's findings are clear that if government and the industry invest properly in the sector and its people, the economic multiplier effects of social care spending could have transformative effects not just for workers' pay and the quality of care, but for the equalities agenda and the prosperity of the wider economy. The fact that for every £1 spent on social care, more than £2 is generated in other sectors demonstrates we will get back and more from what we put in to care.

That means we need to value social care and its workers in the same way we value the services we traditionally cherish and champion as a society, like the NHS and education. After the crises and tragedies of the last year, with tough times still ahead



of us, and an increasing demographic demand for care, we have an opportunity to get this right.

Now is the time to be bold and that's why we are asking you to show your support for the proper value and respect of our key workers in social care. Back our 'Fight for Fifteen' campaign – a £15 an hour basic minimum for workers in Scotland's carers, and associated wage rises for other occupations in the sector.

I look forward to your response and should you have any questions at all about our response to the Independent Review, the 'Fight for Fifteen' campaign, or our work across the social care sector, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Wolfson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rhea Wolfson
GMB Scotland Women's Campaign Unit