

In Focus

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As the Brexit plan emerges we must get the fundamentals right



It would be fair to say that the past two weeks have been the most bizarre in political history in my lifetime. The uncertainty of the outcome of the EU referendum has seen the ending of careers and the emergence of raw ambition. In amongst all the in-fighting at Westminster we have been fed some glimmers of hope, in individuals who could lead and policies which may create real pathways to hope.

The uncertainty left no-one at the helm at first, to steer us through the turbulent waters, which was destabilising for the business world.

The result will have many consequences, good and not so good, but for the social care world the two issues that stand out will be the impact on public finances, and the free movement of staff.

Both these are fundamental, as the sector we operate in had been trying to resolve these issues before the vote and it feels this is now a much more difficult issue.

At the heart of all that we do are the people we care for. They are people we promised to care for from

'cradle to grave' when the NHS was set up and in order to do this a social care option was developed to support people once their acute care needs had been met and/or were no longer needed.

Social care remains the most effective service to support people at their most vulnerable when the acute care needs have been exhausted, or completed.

It is the service which completes the NHS promise and latterly we have heard from NHS leaders acknowledging it, but sadly the funding of it remains one of the greatest challenges we face.

What we know is that we need a robust and sustainable social care market to deliver the promise and in order to do that we have to have a competent and confident workforce to deliver it.

If that workforce is not available in the UK, we have to be able to draw it from abroad, otherwise we will fail the people we care for.

Deliverability of this essential service is also reliant on a confident investment pathway for providers at a time when an ageing population demands it.

There has to be clear recognition that the 74% of investors in the sector are small to medium sized entrepreneurs who are keen to meet the needs of their customers, be they commissioners or private individuals. In meeting those needs they need to develop businesses that are the best they can be and they have to be sustainable.

At this stage none of us know what path lies ahead as the Brexit plan emerges, but what we do know is that democracy demands that the will of the majority is carried out in a way that secures the future for a Britain that remains Great.