

During oral questions in the House of Lords today, Baroness Pitkeathley asked His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to reduce their £500 million investment in the social care workforce; and when they will publish their strategy for increasing the size of that workforce.

The Archbishop of York then asked a supplementary question:

My Lords, the report by the Archbishops' Commission on Reimagining Care was published in January. I am sure that the Minister is aware of this: in fact, I know that he is having a meeting later today with the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Carlisle, who co-chaired that commission. We argue for a very bold approach to social care, which puts at its heart the concept of a care covenant, with clear expectations on each of us of what we should give and expect in return, recognising that each of us is a carer and that most of us will need care one day.

I speak as someone representing a region. In the cities of Hull and Middlesbrough, which I serve, I see many people in need of care and not receiving it; I discover that recruitment and retention are appalling; and I find care workers having to use food banks so that they can feed their families. It gives me no pleasure to say that we are in a very distressing situation.

I realise that the Minister is not in a position where he can say much but, surely, at the heart of this, as the noble Baroness said, it is about valuing the care worker in the same way that we value others. Can he give us an assurance that this will be at the heart of what is proposed?

Lord Markham, The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care gave the following response:

Absolutely. I speak as an ex-carer myself. Caring is part of everyone's role, as has been quite rightly written about. Part of this is about the people we are employing. I am glad to say that we are managing to increase recruitment, which is not easy in the age of full employment. It is about the parts that you and I—all of us—can play in care in the community, and organising domiciliary care so that we can have a full wraparound service.

As reported in Hansard.

Read the debate in full on hansard.parliament.uk

The Archbishops' Reimagining Care Commission [launched](#) its final report on 24 January 2023

Read the report and learn more about the work of the Commission [here](#)

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