**Social Care Follow Up Conference 13th December 2018**

The Reclaim Social Care Conference was held on the 13th December 2018 in Birmingham. This follow up Conference had a much reduced attendance to the original Conference with only 28 people in attendance.

 The meeting were presented with a list of points that were raised at the previous full Conference which were:

**A Common Platform**

Do we think we have the basis for a common platform for campaigning? Under this heading there were a number of sub headings that we discussed. These included questions as to whether profit making should be taken out of Social care? We also discussed what is social care as this can be so wide ranging? Should social services be fully nationally funded from taxation? On the question of taxation there was some discussion as to how this should be implemented, we need to be careful as to how we campaign on this issue as we do not want to have a campaign that can be taken apart by other people.

**Campaigning**

This session looked at how we need to improve campaigning on the ground. We looked at whether we should we get post cards printed for handing out to the public, events such as older people’s day on the 1st February. The winter crisis in A&E needs to be highlighted and the shortage of beds due to older people not being able to be discharged, which are due to the shocking lack of social care. These are just some of the items that need to be highlighted. It was also agreed that we need to try and arrange a meeting with the Shadow Care Minister to get information

**Getting the Market out of Social Care**.

The meeting looked at exposing the true cost of social care within the private care system. We should be pressing local councils to retain publicly run care services or to give contracts to not for profit providers of social care. This can be done by sharing examples of where this has worked when it comes to home care. Hackney Council has a policy of moving to in-source as many services as possible, but has been told by Hackney Commissioning Managers that it would be too difficult to bring social care totally back in house.

The conclusions of the Committee were as follows:

1.Social Care should be free at the point of use.

2.It should be fully funded through progressive taxation.

3.Publicly provided and accountable (ie no market, pool risk)

4. Have national standards re eligibility and entitlement and independent national oversight

5.Services should be locally provided, locally accountable and designed as far as possible by service users.

6.They should seek to address people’s aims and aspirations and lifestyle choices including independent living rooted in a holistic approach and not just a narrow notion of care “needs”.

7.Social care workers should have recognised training, qualifications, a career structure and decent pay.

8.Informal carers should be given sufficient personal and financial support including respite.

**How do we pursue a Campaign on Care where needed.**

1.Get a flier/postcard produced for early January which can be given out via our health campaigns – on stalls etc. at meetings of political parties, local campaign groups, social care orgs, universities etc.

2.Ask people to use this flier along with one from the National Pensioners Convention on Dignity Day 1st February 19 to draw attention to the neglect that passes for Social Care.

3.Highlight the issues around Social Care and our charter when campaigning locally around the predictable winter crisis in the NHS which will highlight the shortage of hospital beds, lack of rehab, home care support and good residential/nursing care for older people in particular.

4.Get articles posted on the HCT website and reports and information pieces for the HCT newspaper, particularly the next edition, which John will be putting together in early January. Information on the profits being made by private firms and the instability of the market system would be good.

5. Get the current Socialist Health Association motion on Social Care on the agenda at local LP Branch and Constituency Meetings

6.Seek a meeting with Labour Party Ministers and MPs, taking up Eleanor Smith’s offer of assistance.

7.Seek a meeting with Labour Party Ministers and MPs, taking up Eleanor Smith’s offer of assistance. NB should the Green Paper on Social Care be published in January 19 this may need to be a key focus.

8.Explore possibilities for closer working together with the National Pensioners Convention eg involvement in their Health and Social Care Forum, discussions with MPs, action on the ground etc.

Next Meeting to be held Thursday February 28th 2019: 1-4pm at Carrs Lane Conference Centre, Birmingham, B4 7SX. If you would like details how to register for the event please contact me for details.The current plan is to include a short presentation and discussion on how “free at the point of use , publicly provided” Social Care can be funded but should the Government’s Green Paper on Social Care which is due to be published before the February meeting so we may need to prioritise discussing the paper and planning a response/reaction.

**Rod Downing**

**Retired Members Secretary SE.No.5**