

Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP
First Minister
The Scottish Government

Your Reference: 202300389640

10 January 2024

Dear First Minister

Social Care Wage Uplift

Thank you for [your reply to the jointly signed CCPS letter](#), dated 22 December 2023, in response to [the sector's call for the Scottish Government](#) to rethink how social care staff are recognised and rewarded, and for that change to be reflected in the choices made for the 2024-25 Scottish Budget.

I am pleased to read of your ongoing support and gratitude for the hard work and dedication of all those working in our sector. Every day, colleagues throughout Carr Gomm are supporting vulnerable people, families and communities to thrive. You state that the high quality of support we provide, and the concomitant positive impact that we have, continues to be recognised by the Government, and I note your continued long-standing commitment to the principles of Fair Work for the social care sector.

I appreciate that the Scottish Government's policy ensures social care workers in Scotland are better paid than the Minimum Wage/ National Living Wage paid elsewhere in the UK, and that the Scottish Government is investing more than ever before in social care. But that does not mean that the investment is sufficient.

Since April 2017, the Scottish Government has invested in delivering its policy commitment to ensure all adult social care workers are paid at least the Scottish Living Wage/ Real Living Wage. More precisely, the wage has been funded at this minimum level, other than the short period from December 2021 to March 2022 during which a £0.52/hr supplement was added to align with the first point of the

NHS Band 2 pay scale¹. To be clear, the adult social care wage in 2024 only retains the same purchasing power that it had in 2017 in real terms.

The challenges in social care are well documented, including the difficulties providers have in recruiting and retaining skilled practitioners, and in having sufficient staff to support more people in their own homes, thereby releasing some of the pressure on the NHS. Continuing to fund the social care wage policy at the minimum level does nothing to address these well documented challenges.

Your Government's Fair Work agenda commits to closing the unjust pay gap between workers employed by commissioned providers like Carr Gomm, and equivalent workers employed by the public sector being paid materially more. However, since 2017, this unjust pay gap has widened.

The Scottish Government's Fair Work agenda fits clearly with your governing principles of equality, opportunity and community. The 2024-25 Scottish Budget provides the opportunity to transform Fair Work rhetoric into Fair Work reality; to start to close the unjust pay gap; and to implement Derek Feeley's recommendation to appropriately recognise the value to society of social care workers.

Now is the time to invest more in social care.

Now is your time to deliver Fair Work in social care.

Very best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Wren". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lucy Wren

Chief Executive

cc.

Mr Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care

¹ Whilst aligning the wage of skilled, qualified and experienced social care workers with unskilled, unqualified and inexperienced NHS Band 2 workers (including security officers, typists, drivers, and domestic workers) was clearly inappropriate, we felt the wage increase at least represented a step towards Fair Work in social care.

Mr Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy

Ms Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport

Ms Donna Bell, Director of Social Care and National Care Service Development

Ms Angie Wood, Director of Social Care Resilience and Improvement

Mr Ian Turner, Deputy Director of Adult Social Care Workforce and Fair Work