



The Care Workers' Charity: Monthly Briefing

Date: February 2025

Introduction

The Care Workers Charity (CWC) committed to support and advocate for care workers across the UK. Each month, we collate insights and updates from our advocacy efforts, the Care Worker Advisory Board, and data collected from crisis grants and online communications with care workers. This briefing aims to inform policymakers and stakeholders of the ongoing challenges for the care sector workforce and the collective action needed to address them.

1. Advocacy Work Updates

CWC continues to represent care worker voices at key stakeholder meetings, including:

- Workforce Strategy Oversight Executive Meeting Group for Skills for Care
- Workforce Advisory Group for DHSC
- Responsible Use of Generative AI Steering Committee (Oxford Project)
- IMPACT
- Centre for Care
- This month we also attended sector roundtables with CWC focused on the future of the CWC and advocated for care worker roundtables to feed into their plans moving forward. OUR CEO attended Task and Finish Group for The Fair Pay Agreement

2. Insights from the Care Worker Advisory Board

We held our first in-person meeting with The Care Worker Advisory Board and Champions at The British Library. The meeting covered a range of critical issues affecting care workers, including:

- **Training & Professional Development:** The need for transferable training (a 'training passport'), clearer delegation of healthcare-related tasks, and adequate, standardised training.
- **Mental Health & Wellbeing:** A call for structured workplace mental health support, particularly in handling grief and loss.



- **Workforce Protections & Conditions:** Concerns over exploitation of migrant care workers, whistleblowing protections, and the lack of physical, emotional, and sexual safety measures in some workplaces.
- **Recruitment, Retention & Pay:** Addressing care worker shortages, values-based recruitment, and the need to move away from hourly pay models.
- **Structural Challenges:** Issues such as lack of sick pay, unpaid travel time, inadequate pay for sleep-in shifts, and the need for improved working conditions and career progression pathways.
- **Systemic Issues:** Tackling sexism in care work, improving public understanding of the sector, and advocating for better relationships between care providers and regulatory bodies like the CQC.

As a group, we identified key objectives, including:

- Raising media awareness about the realities of care work and the use of AI in adult social care.
- Developing educational pathways for those entering the sector.
- Hosting webinars to inform care workers about the Fair Pay Agreement and stress management.
- Launching a "Know Your Rights" series to empower care workers.
- Helping employers support their staff through a 'Being the Best Employer' initiative.
- Campaigning for stricter regulations around international recruitment to prevent worker exploitation.
- Showcasing care workers' success stories and highlighting best practices.

A portion of the meeting was also attended by three representatives from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), who engaged in discussions about the Fair Pay Agreement and the Employment Rights Bill. Our members raised key concerns regarding how care workers will be considered in these discussions, emphasising the need for a dedicated roundtable with DHSC to ensure care workers' voices remain central to policy development.

Our first in-person meeting was a significant step in strengthening care workers' representation and advocacy. Moving forward, we will continue to build on these discussions to drive meaningful policy change and improve working conditions in the sector.



3. Themes Emerging from Crisis Grants

Our crisis grants programme provides valuable insight into the challenges faced by care workers:

- Total amount awarded – £25,578.00
- The majority of the grants were awarded via general crisis grants and Local Authority grants for Oxfordshire.
- High number of applications requested financial grant to help towards Daily Living costs (this includes utility bills, food shop day to day costs etc) followed by car repairs and household furnishings.
- There are still a number of care workers that are not able to afford basic living costs, and whose wages are being spent on back dating payments they have missed due to other essential costs which arose in the month.
- High number of care assistants applied for a financial grant followed by support workers.

Mental Health Wellbeing (MHWB)

Applications are closed until further funds are available.

4. Success Stories and Positive Outcomes

Eva began her career in care at 16, supporting a family friend with dementia, which inspired her to continue working in Adult Social Care. When she needed to replace her fridge/freezer unexpectedly, she struggled to cover household expenses and the additional cost. Seeing a Care Workers' Charity advert at work, she applied for a financial grant with encouragement from a colleague. While waiting for the grant, she worried about losing £100 worth of groceries due to having no fridge/freezer. The grant arrived just in time, allowing her to buy a new one, easing her financial and emotional burden.

“The small things like being able to afford a fridge/freezer – most people don’t understand how big of a deal that can be until you’re in that situation. I am just so grateful I was accepted for the grant.”

5. Calls to Action

We urge MPs and stakeholders to take the following actions:



- **Partner with Us** – Join us in delivering the *Know Your Rights* or *How to Be the Best Employer* series to empower and support care workers. Get in touch to collaborate.
- **Fair Pay for Participation** – Ensure care workers are included and compensated for their time in all policy discussions that impact their profession. We can help facilitate this process.
- **Support Staff Wellbeing** – Employers, how are you prioritising the mental health of your workforce? Contact us to explore *Mental Health First Aider* training and wellbeing support for your staff.
- **Financial Safety Nets for Employees** – Do you have a crisis fund in place to support staff facing financial hardship? Work with us to establish an *Employee Crisis Grant Programme* to provide vital financial assistance when it's needed most.
- **Support Our Advisory Board** – Can you offer *media training* or other skills development to our Advisory Board? If so, we'd love to hear from you.
- **Work With Our Advisory Board** – Our Advisory Board is made up of incredible care workers who bring valuable insight and lived experience. If you'd like to collaborate with them, get in touch.

For further information or to discuss any points raised, please contact us at keeley@thecwc.org.uk.