# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Charging for Non-residential Care and Support: the weekly maximum charge** |
| **DATE** | **19 February 2024** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan MS, Deputy Minister for Social Services** |

In December 2023, I informed Members in my [Written Statement](https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-national-care-service-initial-implementation-plan-publication) that we had published the [Initial implementation plan](https://www.gov.wales/towards-national-care-and-support-service-initial-implementation-plan) for our National Care Service in Wales. I would once again like to express our thanks to the Expert Group for their [recommendations report](https://www.gov.wales/establishing-national-care-and-support-service) outlining the steps we should take towards a National Care Service.

Whilst the initial implementation plan covers stage 1 of our 10-year plan, paying for care is a crucial aspect of our longer-term vision for a National Care Service, free at the point of need. We remain committed to ensuring individuals pay a fair and reasonable amount towards their care and support whilst we work towards that ambition, however, we cannot ignore the ongoing economic pressures relating to inflationary increases. Local authorities are under increasing pressure to meet the demand and associated costs of delivering care and support services, a situation not unique to Wales, with challenge seen across the health and social care sectors across the UK.

At present, when an adult undergoes a care needs assessment from their local authority and is considered eligible for non-residential care and support services, they undergo a financial means test. The local authority will carry out this means test to establish how much an adult should contribute towards the cost of the required services. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) 2014 Act, places a limit on the maximum weekly charge for non-residential care and support services local authorities can charge a person. This is currently set at £100 per week. It should be noted that in England, there is no cap on weekly costs for non-residential care and support.

In maintaining the current cap of £100 for the maximum weekly charge, it has had the effect of reducing the proportion of chargeable income a local authority can receive against the rising costs of providing care. In recognition of the need to help address the increasing financial pressures on local authorities, we have today launched a consultation to seek views on proposed changes to the weekly maximum charge for adult non-residential care and support services. [The consultation is available here](https://www.gov.wales/raising-weekly-maximum-charge-adult-non-residential-care-and-support).

We recognise that this proposal to raise the maximum weekly charge is a departure from our ambition of a National Care Service ‘free at the point of need’, however this still remains our longer-term goal for care services in Wales. , We will carefully review responses to ensure any decision taken strikes the balance between raising additional income for local authorities to help meet increasing cost pressures, and being fair and affordable for people who pay for the non-residential care and support services they receive.

We encourage all those with an interest to respond to our consultation so we can continue to work together to ensure our services can meet the well-being needs of people in the years to come.