# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Update about the Work of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Paying for Social Care**  |
| **DATE**  | **17 July 2019** |
| **BY**  | **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Ahead of summer recess, I am updating Members about the work of the Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) on Paying for Social Care, which was set up to consider how we respond to the increasing need – and cost – for social care.

The group was explicitly set up to explore the feasibility of introducing a levy, or alternative, to raise additional funding in the medium to long term to help meet the growing demand, using Professor Gerry Holtham’s idea for a levy as a basis. The group will also look at how we deliver the social care services we aspire to in *A Healthier Wales*.

I chair the IMG, which includes the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, the Minister for Housing and Local Government and the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, supported by relevant policy officials. It will undertake an initial assessment by early 2020 of the viability and effectiveness of introducing a levy or an alternative, as a means of raising a contribution to the additional funding social care will require.

Over the course of the last six months, the IMG has commissioned three pieces of research to provide a strong evidence base to inform its decisions.

The first was to include a series of questions about social care in the periodic omnibus survey, which the Welsh Government undertakes.

The results showed that although the majority (70%) of people interviewed were concerned about the social care they may need in the future – its cost, quality and availability – fewer than half (42%) were making any provision for their old age. The survey of 1,000 people also showed more than 70% believed people should make provision for their old age when they are young and in work but only 27% were actually saving for future social care they may need.

Finally, the survey found only a quarter of people (27%) felt they knew a great deal about the social care system in Wales. These results reaffirm that there is a need to improve people’s understanding of social care in Wales and to encourage people to plan for the care they may need in the future.

The results of the survey are available at: <https://gov.wales/paying-care-research-march-2019>

The second piece of research will identify and quantify the overall demand and funding pressures on social care in the short to medium term. This will be available to the IMG later this summer and will inform its work in the interim while it considers the options for the future.

The third piece of research will analyse health and social care spending over the medium to long term and the relationship between the two.

Over the next six months, the priorities for the IMG will include raising the profile and understanding of social care and further work to consider and refine the options for a levy or alternative funding mechanism to pay for social care.

Caring for an ageing population is a challenge, which faces all nations throughout the world. It is important we start the conversation now and work together to explore what a future social care model will look like in Wales.

I will update Members further in the autumn as the IMG work progresses.