



## Baroness Casey speech: Care England briefing for providers

Baroness Louise Casey delivered her first major speech as Chair of the Independent Commission into Adult Social Care at the Nuffield Trust Summit on 5 March. The speech sets out an early diagnosis of the current social care system and begins what she described as a national conversation about the future of care in England.

### The speech at a glance:

#### 1. Social care described as Beveridge's "sixth giant"

Baroness Casey framed the challenge of supporting an ageing population as a major national issue, comparable to the challenges addressed by the creation of the welfare state. Her argument is that Britain now faces a new challenge: how to support people living longer lives with more complex health and care needs.

#### 2. A public conversation about what social care should be

Casey asserted the next step is for a national conversation about what people expect from social care, who should be entitled to support and how the system should be funded. Casey suggested that unlike the NHS, social care has never had a defining national settlement.

#### 3. Relationship between health and social care

Casey highlighted the divide between the NHS and social care, noting that many people move between the two systems. She argued that the public often does not see the distinction between health and care in the way policymakers do.

#### 4. Hospitals and deconditioning

Casey referenced concerns about the impact hospital stays can have on older people, particularly the loss of mobility and independence that can occur during prolonged admission. Deconditioning is increasingly recognised across health and care systems, and social care services play an important role in supporting recovery and maintaining independence.

#### 5. Dementia highlighted as a major challenge

Dementia was a major focus of the speech. Casey noted that dementia is now the leading cause of death in the UK and called for increased research activity and stronger national leadership on dementia.



## 6. Safeguarding recommendation

Casey proposed the creation of a national safeguarding board for adults, similar to the arrangements that exist for children's safeguarding. The proposal aims to strengthen national oversight of safeguarding issues affecting vulnerable adults.

## 7. Immediate policy proposals

Casey outlined three immediate proposals she has written to the Secretary of State about:

- Creation of a national adult safeguarding board
- Greater focus and leadership on dementia
- A fast-track support pathway for people diagnosed with motor neurone disease

## Next Steps

This speech marks the beginning of the Commission's work rather than its final conclusions. The Commission will continue gathering evidence before publishing recommendations on the future of adult social care.

Care England will continue engaging with the Commission to ensure provider experience is reflected in the discussion.

Link to the speech:

[Baroness-Caseys-speech-to-the-Nuffield-Trust-Summit---5-March-2026-.pdf](#)

Link to the Sec of State's response:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-the-secretary-of-state-for-health-and-social-care-to-baroness-casey/letter-from-the-secretary-of-state-for-health-and-social-care-to-baroness-casey-of-blackstock-dbe-cb>