

Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport
Maree Todd MSP
Ministear airson Cùram Sòisealta, Sunnd Inntinn is
Spòrs
Maree Todd BPA



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

T: 0300 244 4000
E: MinisterforSCMWS@gov.scot

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The Scottish Government remains committed to the plans for a National Care Service. That work involves careful consideration of the views of people who use and work in social care services, the wider public, stakeholders, and political parties.

The Scottish Government wants to take the time that is needed to fully reflect those views in our approach to Stage 2 of the Bill. It is crucial that we get this right for the people of Scotland.

To allow us to do that, I do not intend to start Stage 2 consideration of the National Care Service Bill on 26 November and have asked for more time to allow us to address the outstanding issues.

New Stage 2 dates will be agreed between the Minister for Parliamentary Business and the Scottish Parliament in due course, and we will update you as soon as we can.

We all know the social care system in Scotland needs to improve. Work to progress reform as quickly and effectively as possible continues, whilst making sure we take the time to get this right for everyone.

Delivering a strong and sustainable social care sector in Scotland is a priority for this government and we are absolutely committed to delivering positive changes for people.

Yours sincerely,

MAREE TODD

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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Taigh Naomh Anndrais, Rathad Regent, Dùn Èideann EH1 3DG
St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



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