

Queen's Speech

8th May 2013

This briefing outlines the key parts of the Queen's Speech as relates to carers. It further summarises Bills which may be of interest to carers' organisations.

The Queen's Speech included the Care Bill which aims to consolidate and improve legislation concerning carers' rights. The Children and Families Bill which could provide the opportunity for new rights for young carers', has been carried over from the previous Parliamentary Session and is at the Report stage.

Care Bill

The Care Bill aims to consolidate and improve legislation concerning carers and adults with care and support needs. The Bill, now known as the Care Bill, is the final version of the Draft Care and Support Bill which has been amended following scrutiny in Parliament by the Joint Select Committee. Carers Trust, Dr Moira Fraser, gave evidence to the Committee, which can be viewed [here](#).

Crucially the Bill will introduce new rights for carers. Local Authorities will have a duty to assess a carer who 'may' have need for support and to provide them with the support that they need. This means that carers will have the same rights as those that they care for. The Bill will also introduce a cap on caring costs to ensure that no one need sell their home.

A full briefing on the Care Bill and what it means for carers will shortly be available on www.carers.org

Children & Families Bill

This Bill aims to reform legislation relating to adoption, children with Special Educational Needs and child care arrangements. Despite the focus on vulnerable children the Bill does not include new rights for young carers. Without the consolidation and improvement of legislation for young carers, the rights of adult and young carers will be unequal. The Bill is now at Report stage and the date is expected to be announced shortly.

Implication of Bills for Carers

Whilst Carers Trust is delighted with the new rights for adult carers we are concerned about the lack of provisions for young carers and parent carers.

The National Young Carers Association has been lobbying MPs to amend the Children & Families Bill. These amendments were debated in the final sitting of the Committee Stage in the House of Commons. To read the proposed new clauses to the Children & Families Bill concerning young carers click [here](#).

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Other Bills which may be of interest

Local Audit & Accountability Bill

The Bill plans to create a more transparent local audit system with the closure of the Audit Commission. There will be safeguards to account for effective and efficient spending by local authorities to Parliament and to the public. For more information please click [here](#).

Pensions Bill

The draft bill was published in January 2013 and has been subject to pre-legislative scrutiny with a report expected May 2013. The Bill sets to reform the pensions system (introduction of a single tier pension to replace the current two component system), state pension age, bereavement benefits and private pensions. This Bill will now be introduced in Parliament. For more information please click [here](#).

Anti-social behaviour Bill

This Bill aims to give victims and local communities a greater say in dealing with anti-social behaviour in their community. The Bill gives victims and local communities the right to require authorities to intervene and a say in the punishment of offenders. A considerable number of victims are vulnerable individuals. For more information please click [here](#).

Energy Bill

The Energy Bill is at the Report Stage in the House of Commons having been carried over from the last session. The Bill aims to meet the Government's environmental aims with the least cost to the consumer. It is expected to include Ofgem powers to make energy companies pay compensation if they fail to meet standards of conduct. For more information regarding this Bill please click [here](#).

For any further information please contact Harriet Adams, Policy and Parliamentary Intern at Carers Trust: hadams@carers.org

Glossary

- **Draft Bill** - a Bill which has not yet been introduced at Parliament- it's an opportunity to scrutinise and provide feedback.
- **Carried over**- Bills which have started the process through Parliament can be carried over to the next Parliamentary session through a vote ensuring a Bill can continue.
- **Committee Stage**- Each clause of a Bill is scrutinised and debated.
- **Report Stage**- Opportunity to consider amendments made in Committee Stage to a Bill.

For more information about the passage of a Bill:
<http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/passage-bill/>