COVID-19 AND SOCIAL CARE

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ND LABOUR NOTES THAT:

1. research from Public Health England has shown that people with learning disabilities are six times more likely to die from Covid-19 than the general population, with those aged 18-34 thirty times as likely to die.
2. a significant number of autistic and otherwise neurodivergent people live in care homes, which have seen shocking levels of infection and death during the pandemic.
3. many support services for neurodivergent people have been forced to close or reduce their service provision due to the pandemic.
4. the Coronavirus Act allows local councils to implement ‘easements’, reducing the level of care they offer to people who need it.

ND LABOUR BELIEVES THAT:

1. the government has put care home residents and others at unnecessary risk by failing to guarantee full sick and isolation pay for workers, leading to people who may be infectious having to attend work because they can not afford not to.
2. the government (and local councils) have systematically underfunded, fragmented and privatised the care system, with many homes now run by private companies which prioritise profit over safety and care quality.
3. pay, conditions and job security for care workers are deplorably low.

ND LABOUR FURTHER NOTES THAT:

1. the economic consequences of the pandemic are leading to a wave of bankruptcies, job losses and cuts in workers’ pay and conditions.
2. schemes to help neurodivergent people into employment (for example, TfL’s Steps Into Work), have been suspended or scaled down due to the pandemic.

ND LABOUR FURTHER BELIEVES THAT those workers who are already disadvantaged by barriers in employment, including neurodivergent people, will be particularly vulnerable to loss of job security.

ND LABOUR RESOLVES TO:

1. campaign for the care sector to be returned to public ownership and control, properly funded and staffed by workers with decent pay, conditions and job security.
2. campaign to restore services to neurodivergent people, provided in a Covid-safe way.
3. support and publicise the work of Safe and Equal, which campaign for full sick and isolation pay.
4. support campaigns and industrial action to defend jobs.