

## Queen's Speech has a hollow ring on the issues of pensions and care

Britain's biggest pensioners organisation, the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) has claimed the words in today's Queen's Speech don't match what the government intends to do in the areas of pensions and care. The Queen announced that the the government would "reward people who work hard" and "support people who have saved for their retirement", yet the plans on both pensions and care do neither. Existing pensioners will not gain any benefit from a new single-tier state pension despite having worked hard and those with savings will be faced with a care bill of over £70,000 before they get any financial help.

On the proposal for a single-tier state pension, Dot Gibson NPC general secretary said: "The government's new single-tier state pension is actually going to cost less than the existing system and is really trying to con people into thinking they are going to get a better deal, when the reality is you will have to work longer, pay more and get less when you eventually retire. Millions of existing pensioners, particularly women will not see any improvement in their pensions and future generations of pensioners will find they actually get less than they would have done under the existing system. This plan will create a two-tier state pension, which rather than addressing the current unfairness in the system will simply prolong it and in some cases, make it worse. It's the sort of proposal that is the equivalent to something that fell off the back of a lorry."

On the proposal to reform the way in which long-term care is financed, Dot Gibson NPC general secretary said: "The government intends to ask anyone with assets or income above £118,000 to pay £72,000 in care costs before they receive any help from the state. This plan will help around one in 10 people – whilst the rest will never get any help at all. Despite what's been claimed, these plans will still result in people having to sell their homes as the only way of funding their care, and nothing at all has been said about how we desperately need to improve the quality and standards of care that people receive in the community. The social care system is in crisis, with further cuts on the way and yet these plans could be described as little more than tinkering at the edges. It's time we have a National Care Service, like the NHS that everyone pays into so that people can be properly cared for when they need it."

ENDS

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