

**PE1533/A**

HH335/LB

7 November 2014

Petitions Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Dear Convener and the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Public Petitions Committee of the Scottish Parliament,

I am writing to you on behalf of Quarriers in full support of petition PE01533: Abolition of non-residential social care charges for older and disabled people.

Social Care is essential for many of the people Quarriers supports to participate fully in society and enjoy their human rights. Without it, many could not access independent living and would be denied freedom, choice, dignity and control at home, at work, and in the community. Social care is essential for a fair and equal society that respects, protects and fulfils the rights of all citizens. Care charging goes against these principles.

Local authorities care charges significantly reduce the income of disabled people and can prevent them from enjoying their right to independent living and to participate in the workplace and in their local communities. We are concerned about the widespread increases in care charges in the last 3 years and that there is no upper limit on what councils can charge for care. This means that some disabled people are charged 100% of their disposable income for the care they are entitled to. Some are being forced to go without essential care and support putting themselves at risk of harm or further deterioration of an illness or condition because they cannot afford it.

Quarriers further believes that the variations in the amount charged by different local authorities is unjust. There is a need to address this inequity and the effect it, and recent tightening of charging and eligibility criteria, has on people's ability to live well. Other services that are crucial to the rights of citizens e.g. the NHS, schools and cycle lanes etc. are not subject to charges but rather are paid for through taxation. We do not see why disabled people should continue to be expected to contribute to the cost of providing essential services in such a disproportionate, confusing and unfair way.

Yours Sincerely

Helen Hunter, Head of Change and Innovation