V O D G
Voluntary Organisations Disability Group

The Rt Hon James Murray MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Via email only.

18 May 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

On behalf of our coalition of disability charities, we would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and introduce ourselves.

Together, our organisations employ over 85,000 people and support over a million disabled people of all ages, people with long-term conditions, unpaid carers and families across the country. Through advocacy, advice, care and support services, peer networks and community-based programmes, we see every day the difference that effective health and social care can make to people's independence, wellbeing and quality of life.

We are writing at an important moment for both the NHS and social care. While health services rightly receive significant attention, we believe it is essential that social care is recognised as an equal partner within your department's remit and across government. For disabled people, social care is not simply about crisis support or basic personal care; it is the foundation that enables people to live independently, participate in their communities, access education and employment, maintain relationships and live with dignity and choice.

When social care works well, it prevents escalating need, improves health outcomes and reduces pressure on the NHS and other public services. When it is underfunded, fragmented or inaccessible, disabled people face avoidable inequalities, poorer health, isolation and reduced opportunities to contribute fully to society.

As voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations rooted in communities, we play a vital role in delivering on the government's ambitions for prevention, integration and personalised care. Our organisations are often the most trusted partners for disabled people and families, reaching people who may

otherwise struggle to access support. We provide expertise, innovation and lived experience that can help shape more effective and inclusive policy and services.

Almost wholly funded via public sector contracts, we have a unique perspective on the system levers and reform needed to build on the value and impact we already deliver.

We look forward to continuing our work with Department colleagues and your Ministerial team to ensure disabled people's voices are heard in the development of future health and social care policy. In particular, we hope to see renewed focus on:

- achieving genuine parity between health and social care as the new DHSC operating framework is finalised and implemented;
- creating a sustainable and properly funded social care system;
- embedding co-production and disabled people's independence, choice and control at the heart of reform; and
- recognising the strategic contribution of the VCFSE sector as a delivery partner.

We invite you to visit and meet with our teams and the people we support. We look forward to working with you to build a health and social care system that enables disabled people to thrive, recognises the essential role of the care workforce and supports the social and economic value VCSFE organisations deliver.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Rhidian Hughes, Chief Executive, **Voluntary Organisations Disability Group**

Aisling Duffy, Chief Executive, **Certitude**

Stephen Veevers, Chief Executive, **Hft**

Jon Sparkes, Chief Exective, **Mencap**

Helen Engand, Chief Executive, **Brandon Trust**

Craig Crowley, Chief Executive, **Action Deafness**

Zoheb Shariff, Chief Executive, **Mosaic 1898**

Jim Kane, Chief Executive, **Community Integrated Care**

Chris Askew, Chief Executive, **Brainkind**

Caroline Stevens, Chief Executive, **National Autistic Society**

James Watson-O'Neill, Chief Executive, **Sense**

Robert Shanahan, Chief Executive, **Aspens**

Rachel Law, Chief Executive, **PossAbilities**

Ru Watkins, Chief Executive, **Hamlins**

Angela Murphy, Chief Executive, **Fitzroy**

Rachael Dodgson, Chief Executive, **Dimensions**

Lucy Warnes, Chief Executive, **SignHealth**

Lisa Hopkins, Chief Executive, **SeeAbility**

Mark Wheatley, Chief Executive, **Royal Association for Deaf People**

Naomi Dickson, Chief Executive, **Norwood**

Maria Mills, Chief Executive, **Active Prospects**

Gill Bryant, Chief Executive, **EveryStory**

Sarah Burslem, Chief Executive, **MacIntyre**

Gabby Machell, Chief Executive, **Learning Disability Network London**

Jo Howell, Chief Executive, **The Northram Care Trust**

Angela Duce, Chief Executive, **Harpenden Mencap**

Jeff Skipp, Chief Executive, **Ability Housing Association**

Ray Booth, Chief Executive, **Barnet Mencap**

Hilary Crowhurst, Chief Executive, **Milsetones Trust**

Kirsty Farrand, Chief Executive, **VoiceAbility**

Sally Daniels, Chief Executive, **Henshaws**

Alison Cooper, Executive Director, **Parity for Disability**

Kerry Dearden, Chief Executive, **Affinity Trust**

Lisa Wimborne, Chief Executive, **Jewish Blind & Disabled**

Ruth Gorman, Chief Executive, **Imagine, Act and Succeed**

Alex Brooks Johnson, Chief Executive, **Aldingbourne Trust**

Diane Hesketh, Chief Executive, **Natural Breaks**

Denise Largin, Chief Executive, **Pursuing Independent Paths**

Azra Kirkby, Chief Executive, **St Anne's Community Services**

Rachel Peacock, Chief Executive, **Making Space**

Emma Morris, Chief Executive, **Stockdales**

Zoe Richardson, Chief Executive, **Muscular Dystrophy Support Centre**

Anna Lewis, Chief Executive, **Centre 404**

John Verge, Chief Executive, **Golden Lane Housing**

John Heritage, Chief Executive, **David Lewis**

Louise Parrott-Bates, Chief Executive, **Pure Innovations**

Angie Kemp, Chief Executive, **Autism Together**

Dawn Wood, Chief Executive, **Mencap Kirklees**

Suzi Henderson, Chief Executive, **Cloverleaf**

Holly Dagnall, Director, **NCHA Homes and Wellbeing**

Anna Lunts, Chief Executive, **Creative Support**

Julie Doyle, Chief Executive, **Amplius**

Les Warren, Managing Director, **RWP**

Jill Rankin, Chief Executive, **St Elizabeths**

Melanie Dunn, Chief Executive, **Together Trust**

Kathryn Courtenay-Evans, Chief Executive, **Guideposts Trust**

Alison Beachim, Chief Executive, **New Outlook and Vision Homes**

Jill Sheldrake, Chief Executive, **PSS**

Ian Pritchard, Chief Executive, **Alternative Futures**

Richard Franklin, Chief Executive, **Kisharon Langdon**

Jo Land, Chief Executive, **Avenues Group**

Paul McCay, Chief Executive, **The Wilf Ward Family Trust**

Lynette Barrett, Chief Executive, **National Star**

Kevin Peacock, Chief Executive, **Options for Supported Living**

Stephen Nichols, Chief Executive, **Rossendale Trust**

Victoria Neish, Chief Executive, **Coquet Trust**

Valerie Waby, Chief Executive, **Linkage Community Trust**

Jo Adshead, Executive Director, **Link-Ability**

Sarah Butcher, Chief Executive, **Autism at Kingwood**

Sue Pemberton, Chief Executive, **Integrate (Preston & Chorley) Ltd**

Julie Bass, Chief Executive, **Turning Point**

Louise Moss, Group Chief Executive, **Disability Direct**

Andrew Beland, Chief Executive, **Choice Support**

Dr Rhidian Hughes | Chief Executive
rhidian.hughes@vodg.org.uk
07931 131724 | 0330 043 1273
@RhidianHughes | @VODGmembership