

# Press release: Commission for Countering Extremism launches call for evidence on extremism in England and Wales

The independent Commission for Countering Extremism (CCE) has today (Thursday 22 November) called on the public to share their views, experience and evidence on extremism and its impact for a first-of-a-kind study.

The Commission, announced by the Prime Minister after the terror attacks of 2017, has launched a 10-week [Call for Evidence](#), inviting firsthand accounts of the harms extremists inflict on individuals, communities and our society.

The evidence, which will be treated sensitively and in the strictest of confidence, will feed into a wide-ranging study of extremism to be published in spring 2019.

The aim of the study is to build understanding of extremism, in all its forms, in our country and give people the confidence to challenge it. The Commission's mission is to help everyone do more to challenge extremism.

The Commission wants to hear from all those concerned about rising extremism – including charities working with communities affected by extremism, academics studying the issue and those who work on the frontline to counter extremism.

The Commission is asking crucial questions as part of the online consultation, including how Government can strengthen its response to extremism, what the scale of the problem is and how social media plays a role in spreading extremist ideas and activities.

The Call for Evidence comes after eight months in which the Commission has visited 13 towns and cities across England and Wales, begun a review of academic literature on extremism and met more than 400 counter-extremism experts and activists.

These experts and activists – often unsung heroes who receive more abuse than support – have raised concerns about the impact of extremism on individuals, communities and wider society, and revealed that British extremists are adopting increasingly sophisticated tactics, including co-opting anti-racism and free speech, to corrupt vulnerable minds.

Sara Khan, Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism, said:

Extremism is thriving in some parts of our country, but we do not know the true scale of the problem and the full impact it is having on our society – what we do know is very likely to be just the tip

of the iceberg.

I know from meeting more than 400 experts and activists in 13 towns and cities across England and Wales over the last six months that extremism is affecting not just individuals but also our communities and the very fabric our society.

It is weakening trust in the very institutions we cherish, is undermining our democratic values and is inciting violence, hatred and hostility.

Extremists appear increasingly professional and we have heard how they deliberately employ anti-racist and pro-free speech arguments, try to intimidate and promote a warped us vs them mentality to shut down debate and spread hateful ideologies. They rely on social media to normalise conspiracy theories and disinformation. Brave counter-extremists who take them on suffer horrific abuse both online and offline.

Despite the threat of growing extremism, we still lack a full picture of it in our country; and how best to counter it. Extremism is a complex and multi-faceted issue. It is a whole society problem and requires a whole society response.

It is imperative that we develop a pro-active and proportionate response. The first step however is to improve our understanding of extremism and to give everyone the confidence to challenge it.

That's why my Commission is calling on NGOs, academics, all those who work in counter-extremism and everyone concerned about this growing threat to take part in our Call for Evidence.

It is essential we defend our fundamental freedoms and rights from those who seek to undermine them. All of us – families, communities, schools, civil society, academia and government have a part to play in defeating extremist ideas and activities and my Commission will support society to do this.

As part of the Call for Evidence, the Commission is asking for:

- Personal accounts of extremism
- People's views on the Government's definition of extremism
- Insight into the objectives and tactics of extremists and the scale of extremism in England and Wales
- Evidence of the harms extremists cause to individuals, communities and society at large
- How government should strengthen its response to extremism
- Social media's role in spreading extremism

The public consultation is the latest milestone as the Commission works towards a first-of-its-kind Study into all forms of extremism.

The Commission will also:

- Write to Government departments asking them to share information about extremism (as agreed in the Commission's Charter)
- Commission new research on the Far Right and Islamist extremism from leading experts
- Seek testimony from victims of extremism and those countering extremism
- Commission a nationally representative survey to gauge the public's views on extremist ideas and behaviour

The [Commission](#), which is led by Sara Khan, was launched as an independent body in March. In September the CCE published a [document](#) setting out its engagement so far and the questions it would look to answer as part of the Study.

---

## **[Press release: Record NHS funding to give patients a better alternative to hospital](#)**

New funding for primary and community healthcare by 2023/4 under the NHS Long Term Plan.

---

## **[Press release: Record NHS funding to give patients a better alternative to hospital](#)**

More NHS patients will be cared for at home and in their community to avoid them going into or staying in hospital unnecessarily, Theresa May announced today.

Ahead of a visit to a north London health centre she pledged to cut needless hospital admissions and help inpatients return home sooner – through community-based rapid response teams and dedicated support for care home residents.

The 24/7 rapid response teams are made up of doctors, nurses and physiotherapists and will provide urgent care and support in the community as an alternative to hospital. This includes emergency treatment as well as

support to help patients recover closer to home, which will help people stay healthy and independent for longer.

The Prime Minister set out a major new investment in primary and community healthcare – worth £3.5 billion a year in real terms by 2023/4 – which builds on the existing NHS budget for these services.

This represents a historic commitment to ensure a growing share of overall NHS spending for primary medical and community healthcare.

Today's announcement forms a key part of the Long Term Plan for the NHS – which is the biggest ever cash boost for the health service. We can make this commitment, which was fully funded at the Budget, because of our strong public finances –and the fact we will no longer be sending an annual membership subscription to the EU.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Too often people end up in hospital not because it's the best place to meet their needs but because the support that would allow them to be treated or recover in their own home just isn't available.

Many of us might assume that hospital is the safest place to be – but in reality many patients would be much better off being cared for in the community.

And the longer a patient stays in hospital the more it costs the NHS and the more pressure is put on its hardworking staff. This needs to change.

That's why I'm announcing a major boost in funding for community healthcare, which will give more patients a genuine and high-quality alternative to hospital.

The new approach we're setting out today will mean more people can leave hospital quicker, or avoid being admitted in the first place – which is better for patients and better for the health service.

Leaving the EU means taking back control of our money as we will no longer be sending vast sums to Brussels. This helps our public finances and means we have more money to spend on domestic priorities like our NHS. And we've been able to fully fund this historic commitment without raising taxes.

As many as a third of people in hospital stay longer than they need to, often because they can't get treatment close to home.

As well as the pressure it puts on the health service, staying in hospital can be bad for patients' health. The evidence shows that for older people, ten days in a hospital bed leads to the equivalent of ten years of muscle ageing – risking their health and reducing their independence.

Analysis suggests that over a third of hospital admissions from care homes are avoidable.

The Prime Minister has set out a further measure today that will help care home residents get more personalised, convenient and timely care where they live.

She announced the national roll-out of a successful pilot that sees healthcare professionals assigned to care homes where they get to know individual residents' needs and can provide tailored treatment and support. The teams include pharmacists and GPs who can also offer emergency care out of hours.

Offering an alternative to hospital and caring for people at home instead is better for patients and the health service.

Community healthcare can improve patients' health, reduce costs for the NHS, ease pressure on staff, free up much-needed beds and help cut waiting times by allowing hospitals to focus their resources where they are needed most – such as elective surgery.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

GPs are the bedrock of the NHS. To make the NHS sustainable for the long term we need more prevention as well as cure. So we will back our GPs, primary and community healthcare to help keep people healthy and out of hospital in the first place. Every patient deserves to receive care tailored to their needs. Yet too often our hospitals become the only place to turn for older people, often to the detriment of their health – but no longer.

The Prime Minister and I are determined to ensure more people are able to receive care in their communities or at home, taking the pressure of our hard working NHS staff.

This additional funding of £3.5 billion a year by 2023/24 demonstrates our commitment to primary and community healthcare, capable of relieving the burden on our hospitals over the coming years and revolutionising the way high-quality care is delivered for our most vulnerable patients.

Simon Stevens, chief executive of NHS England, said:

Everyone can see that to future-proof the NHS we need to radically redesign how primary and community health services work together. For community health services this means quick response to help people who don't need to be in hospital, as well as dissolving the 70 year old boundary between GP practices and community nursing.

But to will the end is to will the means. That's why – as part of

the NHS Long Term Plan – for the first time we're going to guarantee that these services get a growing share of the growing NHS budget.

---

## [News story: Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report outlines stepped up support for military community](#)

The annual [Armed Forces Covenant Report](#), published today, sets out the Government's achievements in fulfilling its duty to ensure the military community is treated fairly, and not disadvantaged by their service.

It also highlights the new commitments made by the UK Government and its partners in the devolved administrations, local government and the charitable sector and how, through collaboration, they are able to deliver effective support.

Key accomplishments include:

- £23 million of Service Pupil Premium payments made to support 76,000 service children in 10,000 primary and secondary schools across England
- The launch of the Armed Forces Flexible Working Act, enhancing service personnel's ability to serve part-time, should personal circumstances change
- Plans to launch the Defence Transition Policy shortly, improving the holistic support available to service personnel and their families when leaving the services and returning to civilian life
- Over 3,000 businesses and organisations have now signed the Armed Forces Covenant, pledging to support and empower former and current service personnel and their families
- The launch of the first UK-wide 'Strategy for our Veterans', to improve the delivery of support to those who have served

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Minister Tobias Ellwood said:

This year, we have stepped up support across Government for those who have served our country, those who continue to serve, and their loved ones.

Today's report shows the fantastic progress that has been made, promoting mental fitness across the military community, supporting service families, and reaching the 3,000th signing of the Covenant.

But it also sets out the work still to be done to ensure our armed forces are given every opportunity to thrive, throughout their careers, and as they transition into civilian life. As we look forward to 2019, we will continue to provide the best care possible for our people.

Further support delivered this year includes:

### **Service families**

- The MOD has allocated £5 million to the Education Support Fund, extending it for two years
- £2.5 million was awarded by the Covenant Fund Trust to projects that support military families, under the 'Families in Stress' programme
- £68 million was invested in the improvement of service family accommodation

### **Health and wellbeing**

- The MOD increased its spending on mental health for service personnel to £22 million a year
- A new 24-hour mental health helpline for serving personnel, operated by Combat Stress was launched
- £10 million was awarded to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, to support mental fitness among veterans
- The launch of NHS England's Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service

---

## **[Press release: New appointments to the Seafish board](#)**

Deputy Chair and two new members appointed to the board of the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish).