

Tory Health Ministers should be acting to address the challenges on the costs of care – Barbara Keeley

Barbara

Keeley, Labour's Shadow Cabinet Minister for Social Care, commenting on an investigation by the Health Service Journal and Disability United, which reveals that Clinical Commissioning Groups are drawing up new restrictions governing care for older and disabled people, said:

"It is deeply worrying that thousands of vulnerable people could be forced to move into care homes against their will just because that is a cheaper option than living at home.

"Evicting older or disabled people from their homes due to decisions about the cost of their care is unacceptable. This could also affect people who need care at home at the end of their lives.

"Tory Health Ministers should be acting to address the challenges on the costs of care. The Government must ensure that the NHS and social care has the funding it needs."

Notice: Downstream of Town Bridge, Peterborough to the Dog in a Doublet

When: 4 February 2017 between 9am and 3.30pm

What's happening: There is a rowing event taking place on the river Nene at the locations and times stated.

Notice: Doddington Lock and Islip Lock

When: 1 February 2017 between 10am and 2pm.

What's happening: There will be a power outage at the locks during the period stated.

Fighting impunity is the best way to protect Mexico's human rights defenders – UN expert

25 January 2017 – A United Nations rights expert expressed concern today about widespread impunity for crimes against human rights defenders in Mexico, noting that the situation is inducing more violations.

“The failure to investigate and sanction aggressors has signalled a dangerous message that there are no consequences for committing such crimes. This creates an environment conducive to repetition of violations,” warned Michel Forst, the UN Special Rapporteur with a mandate to monitor and report on the promotion and protection of defenders in the world.

Mr. Forst visited Mexico from 16 to 24 January 2017, crisscrossing from Mexico City to the states of Chihuahua, Guerrero, Oaxaca and State of Mexico. He met with more than 800 human rights defenders from 24 states, 60 per cent of whom were women.

Noting the “elevated levels of insecurity and violence facing them in the country” in the complex context of organized crime, corruption in the country, and State repression, he warned that “impunity has become both the cause and the effect of the overall insecurity of human rights defenders in Mexico.”

“Impunity feeds criminalization of defenders, which in turn fuels fear among broader civil society, undermining the general aspirations for human rights and the rule of law,” said Mr. Forst in a news release issued by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). “For human rights defenders, the best protection they could have is when justice is served and perpetrators are held accountable.”

On the final day of his visit, the expert delivered a preliminary report with a series of recommendations to the Mexican authorities and other actors to improve the protection of human rights defenders and enable their important work.

“Only by joining efforts will Mexico be able to overcome the serious situation in which defenders are carrying out their work, which is core to a democratic society,” he stressed.

Special Rapporteurs and independent experts are appointed by the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a specific human rights theme or a country situation. The positions are honorary and the experts are not UN staff, nor are they paid for their work.

[Press release: Zika virus, superbugs and arthritis targeted through £26 million fund](#)

Sixty seven projects will win a share of £26 million funding available through [Biomedical Catalyst 2016](#), which is run by Innovate UK and the [Medical Research Council](#), and aims to develop innovative healthcare technologies and processes.

For the first time, Scotland’s economic development agency [Scottish Enterprise](#) have also invested in projects. They have provided additional funding to seven Scottish companies, securing local support for nationally competitive innovations.

Funded projects

- Glasgow-based [SAW DX](#) will create ‘ultrasonic holograms’ to diagnose sexually transmitted infections much quicker than the current tests allow.
- The [Native Antigen Company](#) from Oxford are developing a quick and easy test for Zika virus, which differentiates the virus from Dengue Fever and hopes to provide reassurance to millions of mothers-to-be who live in tropical countries.
- Cambridge based [Cell Guidance Systems](#) have developed a way to use protein from silk worms to heal cartilage and potentially reduce the need for joint replacement in people with osteoarthritis.
- [Micropharm](#), from Newcastle Emlyn in West Wales are using antibodies produced by sheep to develop a treatment for antibiotic resistant ‘superbugs’, such as *Chlostridium difficle*.

Supporting the announcements, Chief Executive of Innovate UK Dr Ruth McKernan said:

Our biosciences sector, supported by the Biomedical Catalyst, is a fantastic example of the UK's joined-up innovation ecosystem in action. Our excellent researchers develop new and novel treatments and procedures that are then commercialised by our world-class businesses.

By becoming a co-funder in the Biomedical Catalyst, Scottish Enterprise will be helping to bring together Innovate UK's national expertise in innovation with their own specific local priorities to boost local and national economic growth.

Sir John Savill, Chief Executive of the Medical Research Council said:

The Biomedical Catalyst is an important collaboration between the Medical Research Council and Innovate UK and we are pleased with the impressive results from the initiative to date. This unique partnership is clearly valued by both academia and industry – as evidenced by this latest investment from Scottish Enterprise.

Julia Brown, Director of Life and Chemical Sciences at Scottish Enterprise added:

We're working hard to create more opportunities for Scottish businesses to secure business innovation funding. This first-of-its-kind partnership with Innovate UK and the Medical Research Council is just one way we're achieving this, while integrating our support with our partners to generate more impact for the Scottish economy.

I'm pleased to see seven Scottish life science companies winning funding to support their innovative healthcare products, which demonstrates Scotland's thriving life sciences industry and our long established reputation for creativity and business innovation.

The Biomedical Catalyst partnership between Innovate UK and the Medical Research Council has provided funding for 384 projects that have led to more than 60 first-in-human studies for innovative products. The programme has also helped bring more than £1 billion of additional investment into the UK bioscience sector.

In Autumn Statement 2016, the Chancellor Phillip Hammond announced £100 million of additional funding to extend and enhance the Biomedical Catalyst to support life science companies and translate cutting-edge medical technologies into commercial success.