Why is the Care Bill important?
The Care Bill aims to simplify and improve on existing legislation for adult social care in England. The requirements and implications of the Care Bill will impact all care and support organisations working in England, including local authorities, private and independent sector organisations. There are implications related to capping the cost and how people pay for care, there are changes expected to carer’s rights and how processes can prevent and reduce care needs.
A new rating system for hospitals and care organisations will be introduced to enable the public to make informed choices for their care, as well as introducing a new set of laws for those providing care. These radical and extensive changes will necessitate considerable learning and development across the whole care and support workforce in terms of knowledge and information; skills and behaviour; and culture and commitment (which is the part of the process that Skills for Care is involved in).

How do I learn more about the Care Bill and how it will affect my organisation?
We would recommend that all care and support organisations access the latest information about the Care Bill from the Government website. The Care Bill itself can be accessed here and to enable local authorities, care providers and support organisations to understand the wide reaching implications, the Government is producing a series of fact-sheets to provide more detailed understanding of specific parts of the new legislations and laws coming into effect in 2015.

What are the timescales related to the introduction of the Care Bill?
The Care Bill is being introduced from April 2015, with the first requirements related to duties on information and advice (including advice on paying for care), duty on market shaping, assessments (including carers’ assessments), national minimum threshold for eligibility, personal budgets and care and support plans, safeguarding, universal deferred payment agreements. From April 2016, additional requirements will include; extended means test, care accounts, capped charging system. Please note the separate timescales detailed below relating to Skills for Care’s focus on the related learning and development programme.
Will the Care Bill be a requirement for organisation who work in Scotland, Wales and Ireland?
The Care Bill relates to England only. Care organisation operating across the United Kingdom will need to comply with the Care Bill for their services and responsibilities being undertaken within England.

What is Skills for Care’s role in relation to the Care Bill?
Skills for Care is not leading implementation of the Care Bill itself. Our role is to look at the learning and development requirements of the social care workforce to meet the requirements of the Care Bill. Where existing training and qualifications will not meet this, we will be developing and providing access to resources that will help employers to develop their workforce.

Our work around this Care Bill’s learning and development programme will commence in March 2014 with a sector-wide consultation. Following this, we will focus on developing any new training resources needed by the sector to meet Care Bill requirements and introduce train the trainer workshops to prepare employers and learning providers. Employers will then need to utilise these resources and develop their workforce between October 2014 and March 2015 in preparation for the Care Bill becoming law.

Skills for Care will also be looking at associated workforce capability issues. We believe that the Care Bill will have major implications for the capability of the care and support workforce. This will include those involved in; providing preventative services, information, advice and advocacy, assessment and eligibility, care and support planning, personal budgets and direct payments, charging framework, quality and safety, transition for children to adult care and support.

How can care and support organisations learn more about our Care Bill learning and development programme?
Skills for Care recommends employers to keep regularly informed about the progress of this important work. We will be regularly refreshing our Care Bill webpage over the coming year and – for those who do not currently receive it – we would recommend employers sign-up to our fortnightly e-news by registering here.

When and how will employers be able to contribute to the consultation about the Care Bill’s learning and development programme?
This consultation will open on 03 March and close on 11 April 2014. Skills for Care will be promoting the consultation through our enews and website, as well as facilitating some events across the country to raise awareness with employers and encourage them to contribute. Please note that the consultation will only focus
learning and development requirements of the social care workforce relating to the Care Bill. The consultation will not provide the opportunity to comment on the Care Bill itself, as the Government concluded this process some time ago.

**How does the Care Bill learning and development programme relate to other changes related to care inductions, minimum standards and the Care Certificate?**

The forthcoming Care Certificate (expected early 2015) will look at ensuring that all those working in health and social care have a minimum level of training to ensure that they provide care, compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment in their roles. Skills for Care is working with Health Education England and Skills for Health on the Care Certificate which is expected to replace existing induction requirements. In contrast, the Care Bill learning and development programme will be focused on the knowledge and skills needed by the workforce that are required as a direct result of the new laws and legislation.

**If new training materials and guidance are being introduced, will these be available free of charge?**

Skills for Care aims to ensure that the free resources that are available to support employers to develop their workforce related to the Care Bill will be easily accessible. We will be looking at the most cost-effective ways for employers to access these resources. Further clarity around this will follow the public consultation.

**Will funding be available to learning provider and employers to support the training required?**

We currently expect that the train the trainer events expected to be delivered over the late summer will be free to attend, though places may be limited. Further work around the recommended training that follows between October 2014 and March 2015 will follow the public consultation, with decisions around how this training will be delivered agreed and communicated in the summer.

**What if employers have no capacity to develop their workforce to meet the needs?**

In order to comply with the requirements of the new Care Bill, Skills for Care believes all employers will need to prepare their workforce to meet these new laws and legislations. Whilst some employers may find only small changes are required to existing ways of working, the impact on other ways of working and the skills needed to achieve this are significant.
If you are looking at implications around standards and qualifications, should employers expect existing requirements to change?
This is something that we expect will be much clearer once the mapping work of roles related to the Care Bill requirements and consultation have been completed later in the spring. Where any changes are needed to wider standards and qualifications, Skills for Care will aim to introduce these in a timely manner to enable employers to prepare their workforce and develop new staff joining the organisation.

Will all training providers be able to deliver this programme to employers?
Skills for Care will be looking at how learning and development requirements relating to the Care Bill can be used widely across the sector. However, as it is important that the learning and development is delivered consistently and we believe quality assurance is an important part of the delivery process, these decisions will be made later in the process and following the consultation.

Will you be commissioning work to help the delivery of this programme?
Yes, this is anticipated. Further details will be available on the Skills for Care website later in the spring. We are not planning to discuss this opportunity with interested parties in advance of the opportunity to work with us being promoted.

What if we employers do not attend the train the trainer workshops, how will they be able to deliver the training that is needed?
Skills for Care is considering various options and opportunities to enable the learning from these forthcoming train the trainer workshops to be available. Further information will be announced in the summer to advise organisations and learning providers about how to engage with this part of the process.

How will Skills for Care and their partners ensure that the new learning and development programme will deliver consistency?
Quality assurance processes will be established to ensure that the Learning and Development Programme is delivered to a consistent standard across the country. Further details will be published once the system has been designed and agreed.

I am an individual employer, will this affect me and my personal assistants too?
Yes, individual employers and personal assistants will be affected by the new legislation in the same way as other employers and employees. We will ensure that the materials we produce are accessible to all adult social care workers and their employers.
Does the Care Bill relate also to child social care organisations?
The Bill relates primarily to adult social care but there are some provisions concerning the transition from children’s services to adult care and support and also young carers.