

# **Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality**

## **Final Ballot on Care**

### **Care**

6. To improve the terms and conditions of those in paid employment as carers (for children and adults):
  - (a) They should have a pay structure and benefits (including sick pay and pensions) that reward their level of skill and training, similar to those of teachers and nurses.
  - (b) They should have a career structure, including access to training and professional registration, which enables them to progress in their chosen area.
  
7. Reform Carers' Allowance by:
  - (a) Increasing the level of the income disregard.
  - (b) Reimbursing the costs associated with caring.
  - (c) Increasing the ceiling on the number of hours in paid work outside the home.
  - (d) Providing access to State employment and training programmes.
  
8. The State should develop an individualised pension solution for carers to ensure they have an adequate income once they reach retirement age.
  
9. Improve respite provision for carers by:
  - (a) Increasing the level of the Carers' Support Grant in the next Budget and keeping it under review to ensure it keeps pace with other increases in social protection payments.
  - (b) Providing adequate access to a range of respite services to meet individual needs.

**10. Ireland should:**

- (a) Over the next decade move to a publicly funded, accessible and regulated model of quality, affordable early years and out of hours childcare.
- (b) Increase the State share of GDP spent on childcare, from the current 0.37% of GDP to at least 1% by no later than 2030 in line with the UNICEF target.

**11. Paid Leave for parents should:**

- (a) Cover the first year of a child's life.
- (b) Be non-transferable to encourage sharing of childcare responsibility between parents.
- (c) Provide lone parents with the same total leave period as a couple.
- (d) Be incentivised by increasing payment levels to encourage increased take up.

**12. Older people and persons with disabilities should:**

- (a) Be actively supported and resourced to live independently.
- (b) Have access to person centred financial supports to serve their individual needs.
- (c) Be enabled to participate as fully as possible in decisions on their care needs, based on principles of fairness, respect, equality and dignity.
- (d) Be facilitated and resourced as much as possible if their choice is to be cared for at home.

**13. Provision for those who wish to be cared for at home should be improved by:**

- (a) Providing a statutory right for payment for home care packages as well as nursing care.
- (b) Increasing the annual home care budget to meet growing demand and reduce waiting lists.

**14.** Lifelong care for persons with disabilities who need it should be seamless and there should not be any break in services provided or need to reapply for support when a person turns 18.