

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



NEWS

Reality of Covid-19 for older people

Survey reveals isolation and loss of confidence
PAGE 5



NEWS

'Rethink children's social care review'

Letter of concern sent to education secretary
PAGE 6



IN FOCUS

'People come and people go'

Care experienced children speak out
PAGE 18



IN FOCUS

My mother, dementia and Covid

From hospital to care home restrictions
PAGE 22



VIEWPOINT

'Decolonise social work education'

Diana Katoto and Omar Mohamed's call for action
PAGE 32



AT THE BACK

Disability during Covid is life-threatening

Jodie McLoughlin on the danger of DNR orders
PAGE 35

From the Editor
SHAHID NAQVI



Covid shows us there is such a thing as society

With a roadmap to take us out of lockdown, there is hope as we enter spring. But tempting as it might be to believe the struggle is over, that sadly is likely to be far from the truth.

For the reality is the pandemic has cast a long shadow that will take years to cast off. Indeed, it will probably only be in retrospect that we come to realise just what a big impact it has had.

Social workers already know much about this in terms of stored up troubles among children and adults and within families; the often devastating impact on mental and physical health, the traumatic experiences of loss, isolation, the anger and frustration felt by many at the ingrained social inequalities underscored by Covid-19.

And yet, there is cause for hope, in the acts of kindness, compassion, care and sacrifice that have also been the hallmarks of the pandemic.

There is hope too that we will rebuild a fairer and more equitable society out of the shadow of Covid. Perhaps one along the lines of this year's theme of World Social Work Day – ubuntu, a Southern African concept that recognises the inter-connectiveness of us all.

And maybe then we will banish for good the hollow echo of Margaret Thatcher's pronouncement that there's no such thing as society...

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