

Adult Care Services
Director: Chris Badger



Management Board
Adult Care Services
Hertfordshire County Council

To:
All CQC Commissioned Care Providers
in Hertfordshire

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Date: 28th March 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Re: HCC Adult Social Care Support Fund Care Providers – April 2022

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your teams for your continued commitment to Hertfordshire's residents. The compassion, empathy and skills shown by your teams have shone through in what has been the most challenging time. We, at the County Council, continue to try to do everything we can to support you as best we can to enable you to continue to help us to protect and support as many people as possible.

Over the last two years, the government have provided us with various funding streams to support care providers with additional costs associated with the implementation of infection control measures to reduce the impact of the epidemic. We have worked hard to pass all of this funding out to providers as quickly as possible and to provide support to providers through the work of the outbreak cell and HCPA through a dedicated hotline.

We have not yet had confirmation from government but we are currently assuming that the government funding streams through the [Infection Control and Testing Fund \(round 3\)](#) , [Workforce Recruitment and Retention Funds](#)^{1 &2} and the [Omicron Support Fund](#) will all come to an end on 31st March 2022. In addition, the funding put in place from HCC is also due to end on that date. However, we are aware of the considerable pressure that care providers across Hertfordshire are under and in particular the significant challenges that are being faced with staff isolating due to covid. We have therefore been working hard to try to provide what support additional we can. In the budget we invested over £18m in care provider uplifts to support care worker pay and care providers and you should have received your inflationary uplift letters from ACS commissioners detailing what that means for you. However, we are aware that over the next few weeks there is a particular additional challenge with staffing as cases of Covid continue to rise, ahead of what we think a peak will be in the week or so.

We have limited funds and so our ability to support you is constrained by that. However, we have managed to secure some of our reserves to put aside a limited pot to continue to support commissioned care providers over the month of April. We will also continue to run the outbreak cell and fund the dedicated provider support helpline, hosted by HCPA and Adult Care Service commissioners, to help you. Please be aware that without further funding from

the government we will not be able to provide any further funding and this will be the final funding allocation.

I can also confirm that all care providers are still eligible to receive free PPE through the Government portal until March 31st 2023. More information can be found on the Government website [Free PPE for frontline extended for another year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

I am expecting further changes to guidance over the next few weeks as the Government looks to move towards Living with COVID. I want to continue to support providers to implement the guidance. The dedicated provider support helpline, hosted by HCPA and Adult Care Service commissioners is available to answer your questions by calling 01707 708 108 or emailing assistance@hcpa.co.uk. We will also be setting up sector specific webinars over the next couple of weeks, the dates will be advertised through the HCPA website shortly.

I am now in a position to be able to invite care providers to claim financial support for staff costs associated with staff isolation under the following conditions;

HCC Covid Funding Support – April 2022 - Conditions

Providers can use this funding to pay for the continuation of infection prevention and control measures they may have already taken if they are in line with the following measures:

- ensuring that staff who are isolating in line with government guidance receive their normal wages and do not lose income while doing so
- paying for temporary cover for staff who are unable to work because they are unwell due to COVID-19 and/or are isolating in line with government guidance, in order to maintain safe workforce capacity in care services
- paying for temporary staffing (overtime or agency) to maintain safe staffing levels
- limiting staff movement between settings in line with the latest guidance, to help reduce the spread of infection – this includes staff who work for one provider across several settings, staff that work on a part-time basis for multiple employers and agency staff
- limiting or cohorting staff to individual groups of people receiving care, including segregation of COVID-19 positive residents in care homes
- steps to limit the use of public transport by members of staff
- providing accommodation for staff who proactively choose to stay separate from their families in order to limit social interaction outside work

Agency or hourly rates to staff must not be inflated in order to spend the grant – normal rates must apply. This could be checked by the council.

All direct funding for providers from this allocation must be spent on COVID-19 response and providers receiving require that:

- the provider will return any grant amount to the local authority that is not spent on those measures
- if requested to do so, the care provider should provide the local authority receipts or such other information as they request to evidence that the funding has been spent in accordance with the measures above
- if requested to do so, the care provider should provide the local authority with an explanation of any matter relating to funding and its use by the recipient as they think necessary or expedient for the purposes of being assured that the money has been used in an appropriate way in respect of those measures

Claiming the Adult Social Care HCC Covid Funding Support – April 2022

This funding will be paid in one instalment and can be used to cover expenditure from **1st April 2022 and 30th April 2022**. All funding must be spent by 30th April 2022,

By the 15th May I invite all CQC registered care providers in Hertfordshire to claim any eligible expenditure using the attached spend tracker Please send your completed spend tracker to ACS.CarePayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk .

The six conditions to receive this funding are:

1. That the funds are to be spent on Adult Social Care Covid Support– in line with the grant conditions summarised above
2. That providers will return any grant amount to the local authority that is not spent on those measures
3. If requested to do so, the care provider should provide the local authority with receipts or such other information as they request to evidence that the funding has been spent in accordance with the measures above
4. That care providers must have complied with the grant conditions from the previous Infection Control and Workforce funds and must have completed the Capacity Tracker at least twice (2 consecutive weeks) and continue to complete the NHS Capacity Tracker at least weekly from 1st April 2022 and commit to continue to do so weekly until 30th April 2022 before funding can be released.

Support available to you

Our dedicated provider support hotline hosted by HCPA and ACS commissioners will be able to help you. The hotline can answer queries for all organisations that support people with care needs (phone number – 01707 708 108 or assistance@hcpa.co.uk).

My thanks again to you and your staff teams for your continued work during this pandemic.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Badger
Director of Adult Care Services