

Adult Care Services
Director: Chris Badger



Management Board
Adult Care Services
Hertfordshire County Council

To:
All CQC Registered Care Home
providers in Hertfordshire

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Date: 8th March 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Re: Infection Control Fund Additional Allocation — Care Home Providers

Further to my letter of the 7th October 2020, concerning the national Social Care Infection Control Fund, which set out the grant conditions and process for claiming your allocation for the grant, I am now in a position to be able to invite care home providers to claim a further allocation of the Infection Control Fund. The formal grant conditions and reporting requirements remain unchanged and I have asked HCPA to lodge a copy of the government letters and grant conditions on their website at www.hcpa.info/Covid-19. For your information I have repeated the conditions and process in an Appendix to this letter.

As stated before, Hertfordshire County Council is obliged to comply with the various provisions and conditions as set out in the Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund: local authority circular and the accompanying guidance. As a recipient of the grant, you will also be obliged to comply with the same provisions and conditions (as if they were set out in full in this letter) and I would advise you to read them on the HCPA website and be confident you can comply. I have set out some of the key considerations in the remainder of this letter.

Claiming this additional instalment of the Infection Control Fund

This additional grant allocation for the Infection Control Fund is part of the 20% discretionary element of the grant for Hertfordshire which has not been claimed and so is now available for us to distribute. To reflect the impact of infection control costs on the care market we have decided to allocate an additional allocation of funding to all care providers. This additional allocation will be distributed to residential care providers and CQC registered community care providers on a 'per beds' / 'per user' basis.

This means that I am now in a position to invite CQC registered care home providers in the county to immediately invoice Hertfordshire County Council for £200 per registered CQC bed / service user. Invoices should be sent to ACS.CarePayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk

The three conditions to receive this instalment are:

1. That the funds are to be spent on infection control – in line with the grant conditions summarised below
2. That care providers must continue to complete the NHS Capacity Tracker at least weekly from 1st October 2020 and commit to continue to do so weekly until 31st March 2021.
3. That care providers must continue to complete the ICF Spend Tracker and return it on a monthly basis (15th of each month) to ACS.CarePayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

I encourage you all to apply for your funding entitlement now.

Clarification on the use of the Infection Control Grant

The guidance that accompanies the grant allocations details precisely what is meant by 'infection control'. This is largely about the additional staffing costs and any associated accommodation or transport costs incurred because of measures put in place by care providers to prevent transmission of the virus between care homes and the community through staff. The grant conditions have also recently been extended to also cover the additional staff costs associated with vaccinations and testing. The guidance states:

“The purpose of this funding is to support adult social care providers to reduce the rate of Covid-19 transmission within and between care settings, in particular helping to reduce the need for staff movements between sites.....The Infection Control Fund provides financial support to providers so they can continue to pay staff their normal wages whilst self-isolating according to government guidelines. The fund aims to ensure that care workers do not lose income because they are self-isolating.”

Details of specific measures that the funding supports are included in Appendix 1.

Preparing to claim for the Additional Allocation of Infection Control Fund

As previously stated, the monitoring requirements for the grant require us to complete a government return, on how the funding is being spent on a monthly basis, we are asking providers to complete the Infection Control Fund Spend Tracker. This needs to be completed on a monthly basis and returned each month by the **15th of the following month**. This will detail the proposed spending of the grant and show actual spend to date. Completion and return of the spend tracker will be required in order to ensure that we do not need to reclaim any of the funding allocation from you. If you cannot demonstrate that you have spent the first and second instalment totals on the measures listed, do not submit a claim until you can.

Actions for you if you have received this letter:

1. Today: please ensure you continue to complete the NHS Capacity Tracker on a weekly basis
2. Today: claim the additional instalment of the infection control fund, please do so by invoicing HCC for £200 per registered bed to acs.carepayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk
3. Continue to complete the ICF spend tracker and return it to us by the 15th each month, please continue to send your completed spend trackers to acs.carepayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk :
4. By the 15th April 2021, please send one further completed copy of the ICF Spend Tracker, stating how you have spent the total allocation of the Infection Control Fund in line with grant conditions to acs.carepayments@hertfordshire.gov.uk :

Support available to you

We realise these grants have been announced at different times and this can lead to confusion about how and when to claim. 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.info).

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

APPENDIX 1 - Extract from Annex C: Extension of Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund 2 Grant Conditions and Reporting Requirements

Annex C of the grant conditions specify what measures can be supported by the grant and these are shown below:

“Local Authorities must ensure that the grant is allocated to care homes and CQC regulated community care providers on a ‘per bed’ and ‘per user’ basis in order to support the following specific measures:

For care homes

- *Ensuring that staff who are isolating in line with government guidance receive their normal wages while doing so. At the time of issuing the grant circular, this includes;*
 - *staff with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 waiting for a test*
 - *where a member of the staff’s household has suspected symptoms of COVID-19 and are waiting for a test*
 - *where a member of the staff’s household has tested positive for COVID-19 and is therefore self-isolating*
 - *any staff member for a period of at least 10 days following a positive test*
 - *if a member of staff is required to quarantine prior to receiving certain NHS procedures (generally people do not need to self-isolate prior to a procedure or surgery unless their consultant or care team specifically asks them to)*
- *limiting all staff movement between settings unless absolutely necessary, to help reduce the spread of infection.*
- *limiting or cohorting staff to individual groups of residents or floors/wings, including segregation of COVID-19 positive residents*
- *to support active recruitment of additional staff (and volunteers) if they are needed to enable staff to work in only one care home or to work only with an assigned group of residents or only in specified areas of a care home*
- *steps to limit the use of public transport by members of staff (taking into account current government guidance on the safe use of other types of transport by members of staff)*
- *providing accommodation for staff who proactively choose to stay separately from their families in order to limit social interaction outside work.*
- *supporting safe visiting in care homes, such as dedicated staff to support and facilitate visits, additional IPC cleaning in between visits, and capital-based alterations to allow safe visiting such as altering a dedicated space*
- *ensuring that staff who need to attend work for the purposes of being tested (or potentially in the future, vaccinated) for COVID-19 are paid their usual wages to do so*

The conditions do also specify that 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.

By definition, this also means that any costs associated with deep cleaning (except those associated with visiting detailed above) or PPE are not to be met from this grant.