

*From the Head of Mental Health, Disability and
Older People*
Mr Mark Lee



BY EMAIL:
Care Homes

HSC Trust Chief Executives

Department of Health

C5.14

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ

Email:

mark.lee@health-ni.gov.uk

Date: 7 November 2020

Dear Colleagues

ADDITIONAL FUNDING PACKAGE FOR CARE HOMES

Can I firstly begin by thanking you all for the hard work undertaken by you and your staff in protecting care homes from infection while simultaneously meeting with compassion the needs of residents and their relatives.

You will be aware Minister recently announced that important support for care home staff will be sustained as a result of a planned new £27.3m funding package for the sector. This announcement was made on 22 October. The £27.3m funding package is in addition to previously announced support packages. Unused funds from previous packages will also be rolled forward, increasing the total financial support available.

The funding includes financial support for testing and visiting and to recognise some of the additional management time needed to respond to COVID-19.

£9m of the funding will therefore be paid directly to care homes to reflect the costs of:

- a) the rolling programme of testing for both residents and staff;
- b) the costs of overseeing safe visiting and setting up care partner arrangements; and
- c) the increased management time needed to oversee homes.

You do not need to apply for this funding which will be allocated based on the number of residents you have, with a set amount per home to recognise some of the additional management overheads. Trusts are currently working to start allocating this funding and will provide more details in due course.

We are also considering whether we can calculate average additional PPE costs per home (taking account of PPE provided by the Trust) and allocate funding in line with those

calculations. Should this be possible, funding will be allocated directly to homes without the need to apply. Otherwise, homes will be able to apply for funding with appropriate supporting evidence.

After any funds allocated directly to homes the remaining funds will be available for homes to apply for to address:

- a) Additional staff costs: related to the need for higher staffing levels (for instance, to support isolation of individuals, implement barrier nursing techniques or to reflect more acutely unwell residents who have needed a higher staffing ratio), as well as increased unit costs for staffing or additional training costs. Additional staff transport or staff accommodation costs. We also intend to support block booking of agency staff.
- b) Enhanced sick pay costs, in line with the previously supported approach. HSC Trusts recently wrote to care homes setting out the process for continuing to claim this support.
- c) Lost income from reduced Trust services (such as daycare services).
- d) IT and telecoms.
- e) Additional cleaning (in line with the previously supported approach) and cleaning equipment.
- f) Changes to physical infrastructure to support social distancing and allow for isolation units and safe visiting arrangements.
- g) Legal, insurance and professional fees and costs.
- h) Laundry and waste management.

Trusts will administer applications to this fund in a regionally coordinated and consistent way. There will be ongoing work with the sector to ensure there is clear guidance on what can be claimed and a streamlined and efficient process for administering applications. Further details will be provided by HSC Trusts about what can be claimed and the process for claiming.

Thanks you again for all your hard work and continued efforts in these very difficult times.

Yours sincerely,



MARK LEE

Director of Mental Health, Disability and Older People

Cc:

Working for a Healthier People

