

Guidance to providers re: Infection Control Fund 11 June 2020

Following on from the first Infection Control payment which has been made to your organisation under the Infection Control Fund, the Council has developed some additional guidance for providers. A portion of this guidance reiterates the government guidance set out in the Council's letter of 1 June 2020 regarding how the funding needs to be spent. As part of this guidance, no further Infection Control payments will be able to be made unless certain conditions are met, including the Council being satisfied that the funding is being used for infection control purposes as described in the government guidance and the Infection Control Grant Agreement being signed and returned. The Council will be able to reclaim funding from providers where this is not the case and providers will need to repay any amounts not used for infection control measures.

The areas funding should cover are:

- Ensuring that staff who are isolating in line with government guidance receive their normal wages while doing so. At the time of issuing this grant determination this included staff with suspected symptoms of Covid 19 awaiting a test, or any staff member for a period following a positive test. We are aware that several providers have already committed to this but stress this would be expected of all;
- Ensuring, so far as possible, that members of staff work in only one care home. This includes staff who work for one provider across several homes or staff that work on a part time basis for multiple employers and includes agency staff. The principle being that the fewer locations that members of staff work the better;
- Limiting or cohorting staff to individual groups of residents or floors/wings, including segregation of COVID-19 positive residents;
- Existing individual employees should not be financially disadvantaged by the approach in respect of reducing the number of homes that they work in, limiting or cohorting staff within homes. Individual staff members should continue to receive their normal pay;
- To support active recruitment of additional staff 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, including by using and paying for staff who have chosen to temporarily return to practice, including those returning through the NHS returners programme. These staff can provide vital additional support to homes and underpin effective infection control while permanent staff are isolating or recovering from Covid-19.
- Steps to limit the use of public transport by members of staff. Where they do not have their own private vehicles this could include encouraging walking and cycling to and from work and supporting this with the provision of changing facilities and rooms and secure bike storage or use of local taxi firms.

- Providing accommodation for staff who proactively choose to stay separately from their families in order to limit social interaction outside work. This may be provision on site or in partnership with local hotels.

It is a condition of the payments that the cost of any specific infection control measures are met by providers on the basis that:

- there is no increase in any relevant rates (except those relating to hourly rates of pay to ensure staff movement from one care home to another care home is minimised) from the existing rates
- third party charges (for example, of costs to avoid the use of public transport) are paid at the normal market rates and
- in no circumstances is any element of profit or mark-up applied to any costs or charges incurred.

The Council must ensure that funding which we allocate for a measure described above is allocated on condition that the recipient provider:

- completes the NHS Capacity Tracker (<https://carehomes.necsu.nhs.uk/home>) regularly
- use the funding for those measures outlined above only
- will provide the Council with statements certifying that they have spent the funding on those measures
- if requested to do so will provide the Council or Department for Health and Social Care with receipts or such other information as they request to evidence that the funding has been so spent
- provide the Department for Health and Social Care or the Council 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
- will return any amounts which are not spent on those measures

In respect of the Infection Control Grant please could you use the following template to evidence the amounts you have spent in the following categories for approval by the Council:

Infection Control money element	Monies spent in these areas (from 13 May 2020)	Detail and evidence of spending
Measures to isolate residents within their own care homes		
Actions to restrict staff movement within care homes		
Paying staff full wages while isolating following a positive test		

Other (within the scope of the guidance given; please indicate below)		
Please list other infection control measures your allocation of the Infection Control Fund has been used for.		

Please complete these returns and send through to Jonathan Wilmot (Jonathan.Wilmot@stockport.gov.uk; SMBC Contract and Commissioning Manager) in the first instance by Friday 19 June 2020.

Infection Control Funding Period

This initial funding is to cover the period starting 13 May 2020,

There will be a further payment to be made in July 2020, aligned to the grant conditions provided within the Infection Control letter you will have received. This is on condition that providers have satisfied the Council that the first payment has been spent in line with the conditions outlined above.

Additional Funding and COVID-19 Claims

Providers can continue to submit initial claims to the ASC funding panel of costs incurred due to COVID-19 up to and including the 12th May, this will be funded from the Councils COVID-19 funding allocation.

Alongside this has been communication to Providers with regards to an offer of occupancy protection funded from the Councils COVID-19 allocation, where providers have been impacted more significantly by COVID-19.

A summary of the current funding package is outlined below:

- COVID-19 claims up to and including the 12th May
- Infection Control Grant Funding
- Occupancy Protection (for those providers who accept the Council offer)

It is anticipated that the two instalments of Infection Control funding will give financial support to providers into mid-August 2020.

If Providers are incurring further costs due to the COVID-19 outbreak, that are not covered within the package above, then they should submit a further claim to the ASC funding panel. These are expected to be in more exceptional circumstances.

The Council will regularly review this position and continues to ask Providers to engage with the Council where further financial support may be required.