

Infection Control Fund Grant

Dear Provider

The Council have received a number of enquiries regarding the Infection Control Fund. It is important to note that the Council is administering this grant on behalf of Central Government as is doing so in accordance with the funding conditions that were attached to the grant.

The grant conditions set by the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) can be found here:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Adult%20social%20care%20infection%20control%20fund%20-%20local%20authority%20circular%202022%20May%202020%20WEB.pdf>

Local authorities have expressed deep concern at the confusion that has been created by the development and roll-out of the Infection Control Fund by DHSC and understand that these concerns are echoed by you, the very people that the scheme was set up to support.

We have raised these concerns directly with Helen Whately MP - Minister of State for Care via the Directors of Adult Social Care Services, a copy of the letter can be found here:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/327/7041/43992142748.pdf>

The minister's response can be found here:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/327/7041/43992142911.pdf>

ADULT SOCIAL CARE INFECTION CONTROL FUND RING-FENCED GRANT 2020

Annex C – Grant Conditions

Local Authorities must ensure that 75% of the grant is allocated to support the following measures in respect of care homes:

[the six measures]

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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);
- 3) Limiting or cohorting staff to individual groups of residents or floors/wings, including segregation of COVID-19 positive residents;
- 4) 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.
- 5) 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 .
- 6) 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.

Full details of Department of Health and Social Care - Infection Control Fund Question and Answer can be found here:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/DHSC%20Infection%20Control%20Fund%20Question%20and%20Answer.pdf#page=4>

On 9th June DHSC published a document “About the Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund” <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-infection-control-fund/about-the-adult-social-care-infection-control-fund> which provides some further information which providers may find helpful.

This publication makes it clear that the funding cannot be used by providers to purchase PPE or to cover costs incurred prior to 13 May 2020.

Infection Control Fund Principles:

In view of the above and in the absence of more definitive guidance from Central Government, the Council have set out the following principles to assist you with your Infection Control Fund return (due on 22 June 2020):

Infection Control Fund Principles:

- The funding cannot be spent on PPE. Provider requests for support with exceptional PPE costs will continue to be considered by the Council outside of the Infection Control Fund.
- This funding cannot be used to address general financial pressures providers might be experiencing or to cover costs of activity completed before the fund was announced. The funding therefore cannot be used retrospectively to fund any expenditure which occurred before 13 May 2020.
- The funding must be fully spent by 30 September 2020. Providers must provide the Council with a statement certifying that they have spent the funding on the measures by 23 September.
- The first part of the funding must be committed by 22 June 2020. The Infection Control Fund return must evidence how this first allocation has or will be spent.
- The funding cannot be used to fund measures that have already been financially supported by the Council.
- Providers must ensure themselves that the Infection Control funding they have received has been allocated against one or more of the six grant measures (set out above). Providers must ensure that, if requested, they can provide evidence to support the information supplied in their Infection Control return. Providers are advised to keep detailed records.
- The Council will ordinarily only carry out audits on the use of the grant if instructed to do so by the Department of Health and Social Care.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Question	Answer	Detail
1. Can the funding be used to purchase PPE?	No	DHSC have confirmed that the funding allocation you have received cannot be used for this purpose.
2. What time frame does the grant cover and when must I have spent my funding?		<p>The grant terms and conditions require Cumbria County Council to submit a return no later than 30 September 2020 certifying that the grant has been used in line with the conditions.</p> <p>All funding must be spent by 30 September 2020.</p>
3. The Infection Control return is due on 22 June 2020. Does the return need to show what we WILL spend the money on or what we HAVE spent the money on?	WILL	<p>It may not be possible to spend your full allocation by 22 June 2020. At this stage we expect you to provide an indication of what you WILL spend the money on. If you have incurred expenditure at this date then your return should include actual costs.</p> <p>The Council have to make a final return to DHSC by 30 September 2020. When the second payment of grant is made we will include details on the reporting requirements for actual spend of the grant against the measures.</p>
4. Can I refurbish the fabric of the care home and update environments to reduce the spread of infection?	IF that spend is within the grant conditions and the six measures	<p>The grant conditions and the six measures the funding can be used as set out above. They are not clear on what you have suggested. If you think they are covered you will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider which of the six measures allows this usage; and consider how you will clearly demonstrate that fact if you are audited. <p>If you cannot give clear assurances on both questions then you are advised not to proceed.</p>
5. Can I claim for vacancies when I am not admitting new residents in order to reduce infection control risks.	No	On 22 May, the Minister for Health and Social Care wrote to all local authorities stating <i>“this funding should only pay for activity to help reduce the risk of infection and is not intended to be used to improve provider financial resilience.”</i>
6. Can I use the funding to purchase IT equipment such as tablets or mobile phones?	IF that spend is within the grant conditions and the six measures	<p>The grant conditions and the six measures set out what the funding can be used for.</p> <p>If you think they are covered you will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider which of the six measures allows your proposed usage; and consider how you will clearly demonstrate that fact if audited. <p>Providers are advised to keep detailed records.</p>