



21 May 2020

**To: All care home managers in England**

Dear colleagues

**Support to care homes from local health services**

Care homes have been in the news a great deal recently, and a lot of information has been issued by the Government, Public Health England and NHS England.

It's probably too much for many of you to read right now. As the Care Provider Alliance, we thought that you might find it useful to have a quick summary of what has been said about the local support care homes should be able to expect, particularly from your local NHS health services. Special thanks to the [Registered Nursing Home Association](#) and [National Care Forum](#) for helping to compile this information.

We strongly recommend that you take a proactive approach to working with your local authority and NHS colleagues to ensure the needs of your residents, staff and services are central to all discussions and plans.

If you have not been contacted about this support, you should actively seek engagement. If you face challenges or need support and advice on how to manage any negotiations, contact colleagues in other care homes, or – if you are a member - contact your local or national care provider association. [You can find details of the ten national associations within the Care Provider Alliance on our website.](#)

We also encourage you to respond to the [CPA business continuity survey](#) (deadline 26 May 2020), so that we can get a sector-wide view of the issues affecting you.

**Care home support package - including £600m infection control fund**

The Government has published a [care home support package, a Ministerial letter to all council leaders and a reporting template for local authorities.](#)

The Minister's letter of 14 May 2020 to council leaders sets out how Government will work with local authorities to reduce infection. It also includes the following annexes:

- Local Care Home Support plan: guidance for local authorities and system partners
- Emergency support – including who to contact at local or national level and when
- Evidence review and international comparisons
- Links to key guidance

Some of the key elements of the plan are outlined below.

- CCG **infection control** nurses are “training the trainers” in care homes.

- **Local Resilience Forums have PPE supplies** if you have urgent shortages. If the LRF cannot meet your urgent need, please contact the National Supply Disruption Response
- **The new £600 million infection control fund**, which is being made available to care homes via local authorities, is intended to help pay for additional staff and /or maintain the normal wages of staff who, in order to reduce the spread of infection need to reduce the number of establishments in which they work, reduce the number of hours they work, or self-isolate.
- All patients being **discharged from hospital to care homes will be tested** prior to discharge.
- Local authorities should ensure that there is sufficient alternative accommodation as required to **quarantine and isolate residents**, if needed, before returning to their care home from hospital. Costs of providing this accommodation are covered by the £1.3 billion COVID-19 discharge funding via the NHS.

### ***Infection control fund***

The package includes an additional £600 million to support infection control, to be allocated by local authorities to homes on the basis of the number of CQC registered beds per home. [Allocations by local authority are available in this document.](#)

**Care homes must provide information via Capacity Tracker by 26 May, in order to access funding.** CQC is updating Capacity Tracker to enable it to collect the required information.

It is expected that 75 per cent of the funding will be allocated to care homes, based on bed numbers. The remaining 25 per cent must also be used for infection control measures, however local authorities are able to allocate based on need. This may involve support for domiciliary care and workforce measures.

The funding is available to all care home settings – with and without nursing, and for all groups including people with physical or sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health issues, and older people.

The timetable for managing the fund is currently as follows:

26 May 2020 - Deadline for care homes to update [Capacity Tracker](#) – including number of beds

29 May 2020 – Deadline for local authorities to submit [care home support plans](#) to MHCLG

June 2020 – First payment to care homes from Infection Control Fund

July 2020 – Second payment to care homes from Infection control fund

**Further information on the support package is available here:**

[Government's press release](#)

[Care home support package, Minister's letter of Council Leaders, and template for local authorities.](#)

[Webinar presentation and recording on COVID-19 Care Home Support: Local Planning Returns webinar on Resilience Actions for Care Homes:](#) Please note, this information is

available on the [Better Care Exchange](#). This is a closed collaboration platform across health, social care and housing – if you are not a member and would like to join, please email [england.bettercareexchange@nhs.net](mailto:england.bettercareexchange@nhs.net)

## **Stepping up NHS clinical support to care homes**

Primary care and community health services are key to ensuring care homes have the clinical support they need. NHS England has committed that all care homes will be supported via primary and community support, by 15 May 2020.

The CPA has produced a briefing note to help you and your staff to make the most of the scheme. You should be working in equal partnership with health services who are providing the enhanced support. If your local primary care network or CCG has not been in contact about the roll out – you should proactively contact them. [Read the CPA briefing note on Stepping up NHS clinical support to care homes.](#)

The support is based on the [Enhanced Health in Care Homes](#) initiative, which has been up and running in some areas for a number of years. It's a way of working where GPs and other community health services provide proactive, ongoing support to care home residents and staff, rather than waiting until someone is unwell to get involved. It's been very successful and is available to all adults in all care home settings – regardless of whether they are self-funders or not. All residents are entitled to the same NHS services.

Because of COVID-19, additional clinical support will be provided, along the lines of the Enhanced Health for Care Homes initiative. Roll out has been brought forward from October 2020 to May 2020. You can access useful [learning and implementation resources from the early phases of the initiative on the CPA website.](#)

## **Testing**

Testing is obviously a very important issue, and arrangements are changing on a regular basis. You can find the latest information on [how to arrange tests for staff and residents on the GOV.UK website.](#)

## **PPE**

You will probably have seen the latest guidance on the use of PPE in care homes, but in case you haven't, you can read [How to work safely in care homes.](#)

You can also access information about [PPE supplies and suppliers on the CPA website.](#)

We hope that this quick summary is useful and if you should have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact [your CPA member association.](#)

You can access a wide range of [guidance and advice on managing the coronavirus pandemic on the CPA website.](#)

In the meantime, our best wishes and a huge thank you for all that you are doing to support the people you care for at such a challenging time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LLS' followed by a flourish and a period.

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*This letter is also being published on the [CPA website](#).*