



24 September 2025

Agenda Item: 9

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND
HEALTH**

BETTER CARE FUND (BCF) 2025/26: QUARTER 1 REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. For the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board to:
 - a) ratify the completed Nottinghamshire Better Care Fund (BCF) Quarter 1 reporting template submitted to NHS England on 15 August 2025 (**Appendix 1**).

Information

2. The Better Care Fund (BCF) was established in 2015 to pool budgets between the NHS and local authorities, aiming to reduce the barriers often created by separate funding streams. Through pooling budgets, the BCF enables the commissioning of person-centred health and social care services which supports aims to improve outcomes, tackle inequalities, enhance productivity and value for money. It also supports broader social and economic development.
3. The BCF plan is owned by the Health and Wellbeing Board and governed under section 75 of the NHS Act (2006). Systems are required to submit annual BCF plans to NHS England in line with national deadlines, provide quarterly updates on those plans and an end of year report.
4. Through strong collaboration with NHS bodies, the voluntary sector, and people who have experience of care, their families and carers, the BCF is used to address the aligned two national objectives for 2025/26:
 - a. Reform to support the shift from tackling sickness to prevention
 - b. Reform to support people living independently and the shift from hospital to home.
5. For the year 2025/26, the BCF has a total value of £128,128,275 which consists of the following grants:
 - a. Disabled Facilities Grant - £9,786,028
 - b. NHS Minimum Contribution - £80,196,936
 - c. Local Authority Better Care Grant - £38,145,311

6. For 2025/26, the Additional Discharge Grant, which was previously shown as a separate grant, is incorporated into the wider pooled budget. It is used to support hospital discharge, fund health and social care staff and care delivery, staffing of Transfer of Care Hubs and urgent care co-ordination to avoid hospital admissions.
7. The three national metrics complement existing Pathway 1 output monitoring:
 - a. Emergency admissions to hospital for people aged 65+ per 100,000 population
 - b. Average length of discharge delay for all acute adult patients
 - c. Long-term support needs of older people (aged 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 population.
8. The 2025/26 BCF plan was submitted on 31 March 2025 following delegated decision approval to comply with the NHS England submission time scale. It has been developed as a tool to support future integrated commissioning across the Integrated Care System (ICS), with the annual BCF planning process now including a review of all scheme-areas to find opportunities for joint or better aligned commissioning.
9. The plan has since been approved by the East Midlands Assurance Panel and endorsed by the Regional Director. Feedback noted the progress and continuation of many 2024/25 schemes and improvements alongside further innovations planned for 2025/26 and set an intention to explore how best to share learning with other Health and Wellbeing Boards.
10. **The BCF National 2025/26 Quarter 1 Reporting Template** asks systems to update on the completion of the section 75 agreement. There are changes to the content describing 2025/26 expenditure and lead commissioner arrangements, including a new section to describe Carers Shorts Breaks. Work is ongoing to reach a final version ready for approval and signature.
11. The quarterly update on performance against the national performance metrics (**Appendix 1, tab 4**) is listed below with exception reporting where targets were not met:

Table 1: Performance against Q1 national BCF metrics

Metric	Target	Exception Reporting
Emergency admissions: <i>to hospital for people aged 65+ per 100,000 population</i>	On track	N/A
Discharge delays: <i>percentage of people, resident in the Health and Wellbeing Board area, who are discharged from acute hospital to their normal place of residence.</i>	Off Track	Local data indicates this metric will be slightly off target at 82% against the 83% target. There are several issues which impact on this metric. Work to improve internal hospital processes around arrangements for Pathway 1 transport and take-home medication, and addressing delays at ward level, will support performance. Local pressures relating to Pathway 2 bed infection closures are closely monitored. Nottinghamshire County Council has reduced the use of spot purchased support which contributed to its over-delivery against

		Pathway 1 discharge targets in 2024/25, as the unfunded expenditure was not sustainable.
Residential admissions: <i>long-term support needs of older people (age 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population.</i>	On track	

12. The return requires updated outputs and expenditure to be reported (**Appendix 1, tab 5**). No issues have been raised against the plan and expenditure is reported overall as on track.

Other Options Considered

13. Not applicable.

Reason for Recommendations

14. To ensure the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board has oversight of the Better Care Fund and can discharge its national obligations.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

16. The BCF pooled budget has been agreed as £128,128,275 in 2025/26.

Human Resources Implications

17. A large proportion of the discharge grant is spent on employing temporary staff to support the discharge pathway. Some existing staff from the previous grant allocations have been employed on permanent contracts however the funding for this will be managed through natural attrition within teams during 2025/26.

RECOMMENDATION

The Health and Wellbeing Board to:

- 1) ratify the completed Nottinghamshire Better Care Fund 2025/26 Quarter 1 reporting template submitted to NHS England on 15 August 2025, (**Appendix 1**)

**GUY VAN DICHELE
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Constitutional Comments (CM 08/09/2025)

18. The Health and Wellbeing Board is the appropriate body to consider this report. The Better Care Fund policy framework provides for the quarterly reporting of data and the Board has responsibility under its terms of reference to oversee the Better Care Fund.

Financial Comments (PD 12/09/2025)

19. There are no new direct financial implications arising from this report.

20. Spend against the BCF pooled budget is monitored closely and will be contained within the 2025/26 allocation of £128,128,275.

21. There are no implications for Local Government Reform arising from this report.

HR Comments (WI 08/09/2025)

22. All roles established using BCF funding have been and will continue to be recruited to in line with the Council's employment rules and procedures.

23. Due note will be taken where staff who are employed in BCF funded roles accrue various employment rights due to their length of service and the appropriate terms & conditions, policies and procedures will be adhered to in managing these individuals.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- [2023-25 Better Care Fund Planning Requirements - report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 13 September 2023](#)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All