

Specific restrictions on the use of the funding

The purpose of this funding is to support adult social care providers, including those with whom the local authority does not have a contract, to reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission within and between care settings, in particular by helping to reduce the need for staff movements between sites. This funding must not be used to pay for activities that do not support the purpose of this fund.

Staff who are off sick with conditions other than COVID-19, furloughed or shielding

This funding cannot be used by providers to pay usual wages to staff who are off sick with conditions other than COVID-19, nor to top up the pay of staff who are furloughed or to pay the wages of staff who may be shielding (in line with government guidance). This funding can be used to pay usual wages of staff who are self-isolating with suspected COVID-19 symptoms (rather than only after a positive test), but those individuals must be seeking to confirm whether this is COVID through a test. In these circumstances, where a member of staff receives a negative test for COVID, a provider can still use this fund to pay usual wages where the symptoms were suspected to be COVID in line with government guidance.

The fund is specifically for supporting providers with the additional costs they will face in complying with the government guidance on infection prevention and control with respect to COVID-19, particularly workforce measures that restrict staff movement.

The department is content that this approach is important to ensure that staff who are isolating in line with government guidance on COVID-19 receive their normal wages while doing so. If providers have concerns, they should seek legal advice.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The 80% 'per bed'/'per user' allocation cannot be used by providers to pay for the cost of purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE).

Local authorities may use 20% of the grant on other COVID-19 infection control measures to support the care sector. This could include, for example, additional financial support for the purchase of PPE by providers or by the local authority directly (although not for costs already incurred).

However, the Adult Social Care Winter Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-coronavirus-covid-19-winter-plan-2020-to-2021/adult-social-care-our-covid-19-winter-plan-2020-to-2021>) set out the government's commitment to the provision of free PPE for COVID-19 needs for adult social care providers until March 2021. We expect this scheme to mean that this funding does not need to be routinely used to cover the cost of PPE.

Visiting

Providers should only use this funding to put in place extra measures to facilitate safe visiting (in line with government guidance) due to the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Interaction with Test and Trace

The government announced that people on low incomes would be eligible for support to self-isolate through the Test and Trace scheme (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-package-to-support-and-enforce-self-isolation>). This will be available to people on a low income, required to self-isolate who would otherwise lose income from not working.

The Infection Control Fund provides financial support to providers so they can continue to pay their staff their normal wages whilst self-isolating according to government guidelines. The fund aims to ensure that care workers do not lose income because they are self-isolating.

We expect the Infection Control Fund to be the primary way to support workers in social care to self-isolate, however, this does not exclude individuals from being eligible for the Test and Trace scheme in certain circumstances.

Retrospective costs

This funding cannot be used retrospectively to compensate for expenditure incurred before 1 October 2020. It can, however, be used by providers to cover the ongoing costs of activities consistent with the aforementioned IPC measures.

The grant must not be used to compensate for activities for which the local authority has already earmarked or allocated expenditure.

Financial pressures

This funding cannot be used to address general financial pressures that providers might be experiencing.