



14 July 2021

Dear Colleague,

Extension of the Infection Control and Testing Fund

Throughout the pandemic, the care sector has continually shown commitment to service-users. The entire population is thankful for the compassion and dedication that has been shown during such challenging times.

As you will be aware, on 27 June it was announced that the Infection Control and Testing Fund has been extended until 30 September 2021, providing a further £251 million of support for the care sector. £142.5 million is being provided to support the implementation of infection prevention and control measures; while the remaining £108.8 million is to support the testing of staff and visitors in care settings, and for enabling close contact visiting where possible.

This means, that since it was first introduced in May 2020, the Infection Control Fund has provided £1.49 billion for infection prevention and control measures in adult social care, while we have provided £396 million to support rapid, regular testing of staff and visitors to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Alongside the £120 million Workforce Capacity Fund, this brings the total specific COVID-19 funding for the sector to over £2 billion.

Full details of the fund including allocations, measures and reporting requirements can be found in the published [Local Authority circular and accompanying guidance](#). There are a couple of changes to the design that I would like to flag:

- **Costs to avoid public transport and accommodation costs are no longer a use of the direct funding for providers.** These might well still play an important role in some areas and can therefore be used from the discretionary local authority funding, if local authorities agree that there is a likely benefit.
- **All testing costs (polymerase chain reaction and lateral flow) are to be met from the testing funding.** This means that in this grant, support to community care providers for costs associated with PCR testing are provided through the discretionary allocation of the testing funding, and we have asked local authorities to use this allocation to provide funding to community care providers for that purpose.

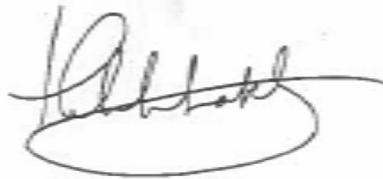
I would underline again the importance of the spending reports that providers submit to local authorities regarding their spending of this fund, and of completing the Capacity Tracker. These data have been, and continue to be, key in understanding the pressures that the sector is facing, ensuring we know how the funding is being used and informing future policy decisions.

I appreciate your efforts to provide this information accurately and in a timely manner. While overall data provision is very good, we have seen occasional dips in some organisation's or area's Capacity Tracker completion rates; and had feedback of cases where spending information has been provided

late. We are asking local authorities again to check grant conditions are being met before and after funding has been passed to providers.

This additional funding announced for social care shows our continued support for the care sector as you undertake the vital work to deliver effective infection prevention and control measures to stop the spread of COVID-19. We are also continuing to provide free PPE on demand to social care providers to meet their Covid needs. We will continue to monitor the pressures on the sector.

Once again, I would like to thank providers and their staff for their dedication during the pandemic and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Whately', with a large, sweeping underline that loops back under the first part of the name.

HELEN WHATELY