

Request:

1. Please explain the process and provide key dates for engaging with care home providers between now and March 2023 to discuss, review and understand the findings of the Fair Cost of Care exercise and to take providers through the response submitted to the DHSC on the 14th October 2022.
2. Care England is happy to support all local authorities to engage with providers and to meet the openness and transparency obligations of both parties as stated in the Market Sustainability Guidance and will continue to lobby central government for the funding needed for all local authorities to meet its Care Act obligations. Please state any support you feel Care England can offer your authority to assist care home providers this winter to accept new referrals from the local authority and NHS.
3. Please detail how the local authority share of the £162m allocated to the fair cost of care process issued with this year's local authority funding settlement for 2022/23 was spent, or will be spent, during the period 2022/23. Please state the amount received and what funds were allocated to, or will be allocated/paid to 65+ care homes.
4. Care England collects annual average care home fees for residential and nursing care on an annual basis. Please provide the average 2021/22 external provider fee rates for 65+ care homes with and without nursing per resident per week. For ease, Care England will accept the same values or calculation methodology as reported in [Annex A of the Fair Cost of Care template](#) (row 136) as submitted to the DHSC on 14 October 2022 to make provision easier for the local authority.
5. Please provide the average 2022/23 external provider fee rates for 65+ care homes with and without nursing per resident per week so far, for this financial year. For ease, Care England will accept the same values or calculation methodology as reported in [Annex A of the Fair Cost of Care template](#) (row 137) as submitted to the DHSC on 14 October 2022 to make provision easier for the local authority.
6. Care England wish to understand the authority's current cost of care assumptions and would ask for the latest cost of care data to be provided. For ease, Care England will accept the total fair cost of care median values for 65+ Residential, Residential Enhanced, Nursing and Nursing Enhanced as at April 2022 as reported on [Annex A of the Fair Cost of Care template](#) (row 71) as submitted to the DHSC on the 14th October 2022 to make provision easier for the local authority.

Response:

1. The Authority will continue to engage with care home providers between now and March 2023. We are awaiting feedback from the Department of Health and Social Care on the submission of our cost of care exercise and also the market sustainability plan. We are also awaiting details of the local government finance settlement which is due later this month.

We are committed to engagement generally as part of the Council's budget setting exercise and clearly will extend this to care home providers (and other social care providers).

We do not have specific dates as yet but can mobilise an engagement plan once we have more information to hand. Alongside this we will be engaging on cost increases from April 2023.

2. Thank you for the offer. It is noted and we will let our care home providers and local care association know about this as we undertake the next stage of engagement.
3. The amount we received is in the public domain. A small amount of this was used to cover consultant's costs with undertaking the care home and home care cost of care exercises. The remainder was fully passed on to care home and home care providers as part of the fee increases put in place from April 2023. In both circumstances, the increases were above the normal cost increase calculation process we have used in previous years. This met the criteria set out in the guidance.
4. The Department of Health and Social Care has indicated there is a process of validation of the Local Authority's submission. As at the date of the response to this FOI, we have not had any feedback from the DHSC on our submission or indeed any notification to publish the required information.

Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a qualified exemption, where information held by the Local Authority is held with a view to "future publication" at a future date.

The Local Authority views this information request under this section to be in line with this exemption. It would neither be reasonable nor in the public interest to provide this information before validation and publication.

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Reference: FOI-234

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