

*Adults' Health and Care
3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court West
Sussex Street
Winchester
Hampshire SO23 8UQ*

Enquiries to ProviderC19Q@hants.gov.uk

My reference

Direct Line

Your reference

Date 1st April 2020

E-mail ProviderC19Q@hants.gov.uk

Dear Provider,

COVID-19 Pandemic Response – Residential and Nursing Payment Arrangements and Request for Offers of Additional Service Provision

We are working in unprecedented times and the coming weeks are going to be especially uncertain and challenging for us all. Thank you for all that you are doing to flex the way you work, for your increasingly responsive support to the COVID-19 response and for the ongoing quality of the help you are giving to some of Hampshire's most vulnerable residents.

Given the fast changing situation we are all having to contend with, this brief letter sets out Hampshire County Council's approach to how we will pay you, at least for the period up to 31st July 2020, for the critical services you provide to vulnerable residents on our behalf. The letter also confirms that it will be business as usual in terms of new packages of care and lastly but very importantly the letter is also seeking offers of support from you where you believe you can provide additional services for us over the coming weeks and months in order that we can respond as best we can to the inevitable surge in service demand that is already beginning to present itself.

Firstly, I would like to reassure you that you will continue to receive payments from us in the usual ways and in a timely manner. Paying you properly and promptly has never been more important.

We are acutely aware that you will be concerned about incurring additional business costs to enable you to execute your business both safely and at the levels of operation demanded of you. These additional costs will clearly include PPE outlay and the hiring of additional agency/locum staff to cover for higher levels of staff absence, necessary periods of self-isolation etc.

Director of Adults' Health and Care
Graham Allen

In order to better support you for the immediate period up to 31st July 2020 we will:

- make an **ongoing additional payment of 10%** to **all** monthly payments commencing in April.
- We will also **bring forward the May payment to the 1st of the month** to help support you with cash flow challenges.
- Thereafter, **we will continue to reimburse you on the 1st of the month** to ensure regularity of payments and we will do this through the period of the COVID 19 response. Once the current situation is over, we will review the timing of payments and consult with you thereafter.
- We undertake to keep the above arrangements under review and **will announce our payment intentions for August and beyond prior to the beginning of July.**

Per above, part of the additional payments we are agreeing to are being provided to help you meet the costs of staff sickness absence and staff self-isolation. They will be made to you on the understanding that you will continue to pay staff their full salary during any period of absence.

These measures are also conditional upon you agreeing to act and operate on an open book basis and making data available (if or as requested) to us to ensure transparency whilst working together with the Council.

Part of the additional payment, again per above, is to support the need to purchase additional PPE equipment, (outside of the national arrangements) or to help with the costs of enhanced infection control for example. We are working hard with NHS and Local Authority colleagues across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to secure a regular and appropriate supply of PPE recognising the critical importance of safeguarding our front-line staff as well as we possibly can.

Please note that if you have any on-going concerns over the supply of PPE, there is now a dedicated national helpline for you:

The National Supply Disruption line

Tel: 0800 915 9964

Email: supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

If during the next 4 months, and despite the additional support package we are able to put in place, your organisation experiences financial strain, then you should consider seeking assistance from the central government support mechanisms. Further information about support for business can be found at the link below and includes guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, reclaiming statutory sick pay costs, deferring VAT and Income Tax payments, the Small Business Grant Scheme, as well as the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid19>

Secondly, as things stand, we will continue to operate our usual business processes for commissioning new/additional residential and nursing care placements (through our centralised Brokerage function). You will be able to bid for new work in the same way as you do now and where you are successful, the above payment arrangements will be honoured at least until the end of July.

As new, faster, slicker hospital discharge arrangements are implemented over the coming days, patients who are deemed medically fit will be discharged to any number of new community settings that are being established at pace to provide safe places for vulnerable people to receive on-going help and support and/or to continue their recovery. A number of those discharged will require an onward residential or nursing care package. This will result in you taking on new clients direct from these interim facilities further to the standard brokerage process.

Thirdly, and lastly, I would like to conclude by seeking any extra help and support that you believe you might be able to provide over the coming weeks. We are expecting significant increases in service demand levels and as part of this, we are working tirelessly with NHS and other partners to secure additional bedded and staffing capacity input wherever we can. Per above, and the move to new speedier discharge arrangements, we are also looking at alternative service provision arrangements including but not limited to staffing hotels, leisure centres and field hospitals with a range of professional inputs that we would welcome and need Providers of Residential and Nursing Care to help with please.

If you feel able to offer additional input from your organisation and would like to help us to better cope with the developing crisis then please can you contact the HCC Commissioning Team at ProviderC19Q@hants.gov.uk with an initial indication of what you might be able to provide and ideally at what location(s) and we will get back to you within 48 hours of your contact to discuss the opportunity further. Based on the escalating situation, we are going to need all the help we can possibly muster so anything you can do to assist us will be greatly appreciated.

In closing, **thank you again for all that you are doing in these deeply troubled times.** I hope that what I have set out above will help settle any concerns you may have regarding your financial security and I also hope that you might be able to come forward with an offer of help so that we can throw everything conceivable at trying to help the masses of Hampshire residents who are going to need supporting over the coming weeks and months.

Yours faithfully



Graham Allen
Director of Adults' Health & Care