

NHS England
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27 October 2017

To: *(by email)*

Martin Tett

Rachael Shimmin

Sheila Norris

Louise Patten

Leader, Buckinghamshire County Council and Chair,
Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board
Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire County Council
Managing Director, Communities, Health and Adult Social
Care, Buckinghamshire County Council
Chief Officer, NHS Aylesbury Vale and Chiltern Clinical
Commissioning Groups

Dear Colleagues

BETTER CARE FUND 2017-19

Thank you for submitting your Better Care Fund (BCF) plan for regional assurance. We know that the BCF has again presented challenges in preparing plans at pace and we are grateful for your commitment in providing your agreed plan. The Better Care Fund is the only mandatory policy to facilitate integration of health and social care and the continuation of the BCF itself. It brings together health and social care funding, with a major injection of social care money announced at Spring Budget 2017. For the first time, this policy framework for the Fund covers two financial years to align with NHS planning timetables and to give areas the opportunity to plan more strategically.

Your plan has been assessed in accordance with the process set out in the *Better Care Fund 2017-19: Guide to Assurance of Plans*.

In determining and exercising further powers in connection with your application, NHS England has had regard to the extent to which there is a need for the provision of health services; health-related services (within the meaning given in section 14Z1 of the NHS Act 2006); and social care services.

I am delighted to let you know that, following the regional assurance process, your plan has been classified as '**Approved**'. In summary, the assurance team recognises your plan has been agreed by all parties (local authority(s), Clinical Commissioning Group(s) (CCGs), and your Health and Wellbeing Board), and the plan submitted meets all requirements and the focus should now be on delivery.

High quality care for all, now and for future generations

Your BCF funding can therefore now be released subject to the funding being used in accordance with your final approved plan, and the funding being transferred into pooled funds under a section 75 agreement.

These conditions have been imposed through NHS England's powers under sections 223G and 223GA of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Care Act 2014). These sections allow NHS England to make payment of the BCF funding subject to conditions. If the conditions are not complied with, NHS England is able to withhold or recover funding, or direct the CCG(s) in your Health and Wellbeing Board area as to the use of the funding.

Amounts payable to the CCG in respect of the BCF are subject to the following conditions under section 223GA of the NHS Act 2006:

1. That the CCG will meet the performance objectives specified in its BCF plan; and
2. That the CCG will meet any additional performance objectives specified by NHS England from time to time.

If the CCG fails to meet those objectives, NHS England may withhold the funds (in so far as they have not already been paid to the CCG) or recover payments already made; and may direct the CCG as to the use of the amounts payable in respect of the BCF.

In addition to the BCF funding, the Spring Budget 2017 increased funding via the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) for adult social care in 2017-19. This has been pooled into the local BCF. The new IBCF grant (and as previously the Disabled Facilities Grant) will be paid directly to local authorities via a Section 31 grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The Government has attached a set of conditions to the Section 31 grant, to ensure it is included in the BCF at local level and will be spent on adult social care.

You should now progress with your plans for implementation. Ongoing support and oversight with your BCF plan will be led by your local better care manager.

Once again, thank you for your work and best wishes with implementation and delivery.

Yours faithfully,



Simon Weldon
**Director of NHS Operations and Delivery and SRO for the Better Care Fund
NHS England**

Copy (by email) to:

Rajni Cairns	Programme Manager for Integrated Care, Buckinghamshire County Council
Debbie Richards	Director of Commissioning and Delivery, NHS Aylesbury Vale and Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Groups
Jane Bowie	Director of Joint Commissioning, Buckinghamshire County Council
Jo Farrar	Director General, Department for Communities & Local Government
Jonathan Marron	Director General, Department of Health
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Anne Eden	Regional Director
David Radbourne	Director of Commissioning Operations
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