



Information for adult social care providers

Covid-19 and Flu

Bulletin 142 – 12 May 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Community equipment loans service

The community equipment loans service has recently changed equipment provider from NRS to Medequip.

Despite intensive planning, the changeover has been a huge challenge, resulting in a backlog of orders and delays to people receiving their equipment.

A large number of outstanding orders, staff training, an increase in inbound calls, stock availability, an increase in same day and next day requests due to hospital discharges and prevention of hospital admission are factors that have affected service delivery.

The service understands that this has an impact on people's roles and on those who need equipment and asks for patience while Medequip resolve these issues.

International equipment shortages continue to be a challenge with a lack of steel for equipment framing and chemicals for making the foam for seating and mattresses, effected by the COVID issues in China and other producing countries. The increasing cost of transport and container shipping make it expensive to ship smaller equipment. Medequip is working hard to locate and secure deliveries and stock.

If service users have faults or damage to their equipment, or it is no longer required and needs collecting, please contact Medequip as soon as possible on 0116 216 8686. There will be a call divert from the NRS number for a few months.

National cleaning standards

The implications for the care home sector regarding the National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness are under review for the foreseeable future. Information will be provided to you when it becomes available.

Pop-up vaccination clinics

Further pop-up vaccination clinics have been confirmed for the next few days. Sometimes, opening times may change or clinics are stood down, so please check [the website](#) for the latest information.

Location	Address	Dates running (Fri–Sun unless specified)	Time	Doses offered
The Grove Community Hub	Cort Crescent, Leicester. LE3 1QZ	13/05/2022	10am – 2pm	Friday: 16+, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 1 st booster doses, and 2 nd booster with invite or proof of eligibility
Loughborough Market	Market Place, Loughborough. LE11 3EB	13/05/2022	10am – 3pm	Friday: 16+, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 1st booster doses, and 2nd booster with invite or proof of eligibility
			3pm – 4pm	Friday: 5+, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 1st booster doses, and 2nd booster with invite or proof of eligibility
		14/05/2022	10am – 4pm	Saturday: 5+, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 1st booster doses, and 2nd booster with invite or proof of eligibility

Infection Control and Testing Fund – Round 3 (ICTF3)

Payments are in progress for February and March ICTF3 claims. These payments will ensure that providers are issued with either the full direct payment allocated to them as outlined in the grant conditions or the full expenditure reported if that is lower.

Once payments have been made, the remaining funds will be used to pay providers that made late returns in respect of October and November, and December and January reports, and then reported overspends. There can be no payments made in relation to late final returns.

The funding allocated to Leicestershire of £4.2m has been fully deployed with no underspend reported back to the DHSC.

Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund (WRF)

Payments in relation to WRF are in progress for February and March claims, and for late returns in respect of October and November, and December and January reports. There can be no payments made in relation to late final returns.

The funding allocated to Leicestershire of £4.6m has been fully deployed with no underspend reported back to the DHSC.

Adult Social Care Winter Worker Retention Package for CQC registered providers

In December 2021 a health funded rewards package was announced for adult social care workers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) to support staff retention for CQC-registered providers over a challenging winter to come, to facilitate hospital discharge.

The scheme has now concluded and the vast majority of claims have been paid - some £6.8m has been distributed in Leicestershire. To support the evaluation of the package, providers were surveyed and the results of that survey are summarised here.

The package had two elements:

Winter retention bonus

Face-to-face support workers and ancillary staff of CQC registered providers were entitled to a one-off payment in March 2022 where they were employed continuously by their CQC-registered provider employer between 13 December 2021 and 28 February 2022.

The value of the one-off payment was:

- £500 (after tax) for an employee working 20 hours or more per week
- £250 (after tax) for an employee working under 20 hours per week

Early payment of enhanced National Living Wage

Each of the three local authorities channelled additional funds to identified providers from January 2022 which would enable them to pay enhanced National Living Wage rates earlier than the nationally mandated April 2022. In many cases this enabled a pay increase to be brought forward from April to January 2022.

Provider survey results

Feedback from 30 providers that responded to a survey about the package has been both positive and useful. The highlights from the feedback are:

- 87% of providers either agreed or strongly agreed that the package improved morale

- 70% of providers either agreed or strongly agreed that the package improved staff retention for the winter period.
- 70% of providers either agreed or strongly agreed that the package was easy to administer.
- 93% of providers either agreed or strongly agreed that overall, the package was worthwhile.

Providers' comments were also requested as part of the survey to obtain a fuller picture and inform our evaluation of the package.

Some issues were raised by providers in the feedback. For example, though the bonus was £500 or £250 after tax from the employee's perspective, there were some concerns about National Insurance and the impact on benefits. Other concerns included the inclusion in the scheme of those on long term sick leave, and completion of the claim template.

However, the vast majority of comments related to the positive impacts of the package, many referring to the value of the initiative in recognising staff commitment during the winter. Such comments included:

- *'Staff didn't leave and were retained'*
- *'The sickness and absence during the period was reduced and staff were boosted knowing that they were going to get a bonus, they said they felt valued'*

We will use these survey results to evaluate the benefits of the package and report to LLR health partners that funded the initiative.

Living with COVID-19: guidance and resources

The government recently released [guidance](#) which outlines the measures that should continue to be followed by the adult social care sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To support its implementation and answer any queries care colleagues may have, [webinars](#) chaired by the Chief Nurse for Social Care, Deborah Sturdy have been added to the Skills for Care guidance pages.

OTHER NEWS

Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care

A key element in the social care reforms announced in September 2021 relates to market sustainability and the fee paid by local authorities. Central government requires local authorities to:

- Undertake and cost of care exercise in the home care and residential care markets and to publish those reports.

- Based on the cost of care exercise, local authorities are also required to develop a market sustainability plan which explains how the gap between the current fees and the fair cost of care (median value) will be bridged between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with additional funding from central government.

Produce a spend report, setting out the financial implications.

The Council will use Care Analytics to complete the cost of care exercise in both markets and the cost of care returns required by the DHSC.

- For residential care, the survey of costs has been undertaken and we await the final report and DHSC returns.
- For home care, we anticipate the issue of the provider survey in early June.

For more information please read the [Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care 2022 – 2023: guidance](#).

Pathway 2 Discharge to Recover, Re-able and Assess: proposed model - survey

Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council are developing the arrangements for hospital discharges to care homes, which will be commissioned later this year. We would like to give you an opportunity to share your views on the proposed model. This will help us to develop the approach and make changes where needed. The proposed model features:

- 25 beds for reablement (building in option for high dependency res)
- 50 pathway assessment beds (on a framework so no guarantee)
- 5 beds high dependency
- 2 beds for those with bariatric needs

The survey will take approx. 10-15 minutes to complete and can be found [here](#). Following on from the email sent directly to care home providers earlier this week, this is a reminder to please submit your response by 17.00, Friday 13 May 2022.

If you would like to have a discussion about the project please call Diana Dorozkinaite, Business Change Commissioning Manager, Leicester City Council on 0116 454 4773.

Yours sincerely

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The archive of all previous COVID-19 provider bulletins released since March 2020 can be found at <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus>