

Briefing Note on Better Care Fund

What is the Better Care Fund?

The Better Care Fund (previously referred to as the Integration Transformation Fund) was announced in June as part of the 2013 Spending Round. It provides an opportunity to transform local services so that people are provided with better integrated care and support.

The Fund is seen as an important enabler to take the integration agenda forward at scale and pace, acting as a significant catalyst for change with the aim of providing people with the right care, in the right place, at the right time, including through a significant expansion of care in community settings.

What is included in the Better Care Fund and what does it cover?

Nationally The Fund provides for £3.8 billion worth of funding in 2015/16 to be spent locally on health and care to drive closer integration and improve outcomes for patients and service users and carers. In 2014/15, in addition to the £900m transfer already planned from the NHS to adult social care, a further £200m will transfer to enable localities to prepare for the Better Care Fund in 2015/16.

Details of the ITF Fund

The June 2013 SR set out the following:	
2014/15	2015/16
An additional £200m transfer from the NHS to social care, in addition to the £900m transfer already planned	£3.8bn pooled budget to be deployed locally on health and social care through pooled budget arrangements
In 2015/16 the ITF will be created from the following:	
£1.9bn NHS funding	
£1.9bn based on existing funding in 2014/15 that is allocated across the health and wider care system. Composed of:	
• £130m Carers' Breaks funding	
• £300m CCG reablement funding	
• £354m capital funding (including c.£220m of Disabled Facilities Grant)	
• £1.1bn existing transfer from health to social care	

For Plymouth the BCF is made up of the following -

2013/14 Health for Social	£4.6m
2014/15 BCF	£1.1m
2014/15 Total	£5.7m

DFG	£1.1m
Social Care Capital Grant	£0.7m
2014/15 BCF	£5.7m
2015/16 new BCF	£12.0m
2015/16 BCF Total	£19.5m

Where does the money come from?

The fund does not in itself address the financial pressures faced by local authorities and CCGs in 2015/16, which remain very challenging. The £3.8bn pool brings together NHS and Local Government resources that are already committed to existing core activity. Councils and CCGs will, therefore, have to redirect funds from these activities to shared programmes that deliver better outcomes for individuals. It was also announced as part of the Spending Round that the Better Care Fund would include funding for costs to councils resulting from care and support reform.

What are the National Conditions?

The Spending Round established six national conditions for access to the Fund:

- Plans to be jointly agreed
- Protection for social care services (not spending)
- As part of agreed local plans, 7-day services in health and social care to support patients being discharged and prevent unnecessary admissions at weekends
- Better data sharing between health and social care, based on the NHS number
- Ensure a joint approach to assessments and care planning and ensure that, where funding is used for integrated packages of care, there will be an accountable professional
- Agreement on the consequential impact of changes in the acute sector

National and Local Performance Metrics

The national metrics underpinning the Fund will be:

- admissions to residential and care homes;
- effectiveness of reablement;
- delayed transfers of care;
- avoidable emergency admissions; and
- patient / service user experience.

In addition to the five national metrics, local areas should choose one additional indicator that will contribute to the payment-for-performance element of the Fund.

How will Councils and CCGs be rewarded for meeting goals?

The Spending Round indicated that £1bn of the £3.8bn would be linked to achieving outcomes. Half of the £1bn will be released in April 2015. £250m of this will depend on progress against four of the six national conditions and the other £250m will relate to performance against a number of national and locally determined metrics during 2014/15. The remainder (£500m) will be released in October 2015 and will relate to further progress against the national and locally determined metrics.

Governance and Approval of BCF

In 2015/16 the Fund will be allocated to local areas, where it will be put into pooled budgets under Section 75 joint governance arrangements between CCGs and councils. A condition of accessing the money in the Fund is that CCGs and councils must jointly agree plans for how the money will be spent, and these plans must meet certain requirements.

Each statutory Health and Wellbeing Board will sign off the plan. Health and Wellbeing Boards should provide the first cut of their completed Better Care Plan template, by **14 February 2014**. The revised version of the Better Care Plan should be submitted to NHS England, as an integral part of the constituent CCGs' Strategic and Operational Plans by **4 April 2014**.

Author: Craig McArdle and Paul O'Sullivan

Job Title: Head of Joint Strategic Commissioning and Managing Director (Partnerships)

Department: Adult Social Care, PCC and NEW Devon CCG

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