

More than £500 million for social care to reduce coronavirus transmission over winter

- The Infection Control Fund has been extended to ensure providers have the resources they need to halt transmission of COVID-19 throughout winter
- The fund can be used to pay staff wages for those self-isolating and hire more staff to restrict movement between homes

Care providers in England will benefit from over half a billion pounds extra funding to reduce COVID-19 transmission and help protect residents and staff throughout winter.

The Infection Control Fund, set up in May, has now been extended until March 2021, with an extra £546 million to help the care sector restrict the movement of staff between care homes to stop the spread of the virus.

The fund will help care providers pay staff full wages when they are self-isolating, and enable staff to work in only one care home, reducing the risk of spreading the infection.

This brings the total funding for infection control measures in care homes to over £1.1 billion and underlines the government's commitment to ensure adult social care has the resources it needs to keep residents and staff safe.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock said:

From the very beginning we have done everything possible to make sure our social care system is protected and has the resources it needs to keep our brilliant workforce and those they care for safe.

This new funding of over half a billion pounds will support not only care home residents, but also some of the most vulnerable in society living at home and in supported living.

I know this will give peace of mind to so many, and we will set out further detail in our Adult Social Care Winter Plan this week.

Data published by DHSC in July showed the funding has helped providers to take key steps to improve infection prevention and control in care settings, including restricting staff movement in care homes and paying staff to self-isolate.

Minister for Care, Helen Whately said:

I know just how hard social care staff have been working over the last 6 months to provide compassionate care for our loved ones and keep them safe in the face of this global threat. I am committed to ensuring the social care system has everything they need for the winter months ahead.

Today we have set out additional funding to bolster infection prevention and protect our loved ones receiving care.

From the start of the pandemic the government has been doing everything it can to ensure care home residents and staff are protected.

This includes testing all residents at least every month and staff weekly since July, providing 208 million items of PPE, and making a further £3.7 billion available to councils to address pressures caused by the pandemic – including in adult social care.

The government has also ring-fenced a total of £1.1 billion of funding specifically for social care providers to support infection prevention and control, on top of billions of pounds more in local authority funding which also covers social care.