

# More than half a billion pounds to help people return home from hospital

- £588 million will provide up to 6 weeks of funded care and support for people being discharged from hospital
- Funding could pay for additional support including domiciliary care, community nursing services or care home costs
- Assessments for those needing funded long-term care or support to resume from September

People needing additional follow-on care after being discharged from hospital – including older people and those with disabilities – will be supported by a £588 million fund to cover adult social care or the immediate costs of care in their own home.

From 1 September, the NHS will be able to access the funding in order to provide up to 6 weeks of additional support so people can receive ongoing help with their recovery and rehabilitation after they leave hospital. This could include support in their home or access to services such as physiotherapy.

NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC) assessments will also restart from September ensuring those with complex health needs can continue to access the care they need for free.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said:

We know for the majority of people the road to recovery can be quicker when they receive care and support in the comfort of their own home.

This funding will help ensure people can be safely discharged from hospital knowing they will get the vital follow-on care they need to recover fully from treatment.

We're also making sure those with complex health needs continue to receive the best support possible in the community.

Most people will be discharged back to their homes. However, it is anticipated that a very small proportion will need, and benefit from, short or long-term residential, nursing home or hospice care.

It remains the case that no one should be discharged from hospital directly

to a care home without the involvement of the local authority, and that all patients are required to be tested prior to discharge to a care home. No care home should be forced to admit an existing or new resident who has tested positive for coronavirus if the home would be unable to cope with the impact of their illness.

Councillor      Paulette Hamilton, Vice Chair of the Local Government Association's Community Wellbeing Board, said:

We are pleased to see this further injection of funding to ensure that people can leave hospital as soon as is safe and return home wherever possible. We are also reassured by the commitment that no one will go into a care home without having been tested for the virus. Local government has asked for these commitments and will continue to play a key role in making them happen.

New [guidance has been published](#) to help hospitals safely discharge patients into the appropriate setting to maximise their independence and ensure they can remain in their own homes as much as possible.

A comprehensive care and health assessment for any ongoing care needs, including determining funding eligibility, will take place within the first 6 weeks following discharge to make sure individuals have the support they need.

The funding can also be used for urgent community response support to prevent someone being admitted to hospital. This can include providing urgent domiciliary care or nursing support, like basic wound care, in someone's own home, rather than in hospital.

Case managers will ensure people are discharged safely, on time and that they have full information and advice about what is happening. This includes how individuals' needs will be assessed and any follow up support that may be required. This approach applies to anyone discharged from NHS community and acute beds.

The funding is part of the £3 billion provided to protect and prepare health and social care in the event of a second peak of COVID-19 during winter and follows £1.3 billion funding made available via the NHS to support the discharge process in March.

The government has expanded the ONS infection survey to provide extensive, weekly data on the spread of infection, supporting rapid testing and diagnosis of COVID-19 both nationally and in areas of concern.

The new guidance, [Hospital discharge service: policy and operating model](#), sets out the operating model for all NHS trusts, community interest companies, and private care providers of acute, community beds and community health services and social care staff in England. It replaces the hospital discharge service requirements issued on 19 March 2020 to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These new funding arrangements will apply up until 31 March 2021.

NHS CHC teams will work closely with community health and social care staff in supporting people on discharge pathways 1, 2 and 3, to ensure appropriate discussions and planning concerning a person's long-term care options happen as early as possible during the 6-week discharge pathway. This close working and communication will also ensure time is allowed for the CCG to undertake the full NHS CHC assessment and for local authority staff to undertake Care Act assessments where it is needed.

Further advice for measures to be taken if patients are discharged into the community is provided in [home care guidance](#) and [supported living guidance](#). These guidance documents state that:

- all people admitted to hospital to receive care will be tested for COVID-19, and hospitals should share care needs and COVID-19 status with relevant community partners planning the subsequent community care.
- as set out in the [COVID-19 adult social care action plan](#), any individual being taken on by a home care or supported living care provider should be cared for as possibly COVID-positive until a 14-day period has passed, within their home.
- if a care home provider does not feel they can provide the appropriate isolation for those coming out of hospital, the individual's local authority should secure alternative appropriate accommodation and care for the required isolation period. Costs of providing alternative accommodation are covered by discharge funding provided via the NHS