

New funding for local authorities to prepare for charging reform

- £15.5 million will help local authorities prepare for adult social care charging reform in October 2023
- Adult social care reforms will change how social care is paid for and will protect people from unpredictable care costs across England
- Charging reform forms part of the wider social care reform which will reduce pressure on the NHS, helping the government continue to tackle the Covid backlogs

More than £15 million will be given to local authorities across England today (Wednesday 15 June) to help them implement new social care charging reforms to bring an end to the unpredictable cost of care for the public.

The introduction of charging reform, which will include a cap on the cost of care and a more generous means test, will result in an increase in demand for additional assessments and will require local authorities to upgrade IT systems to record and maintain care accounts.

The £15.5 million will be shared by local authorities to hire additional staff, prepare their workforce, and recruit dedicated IT staff to oversee the implementation of the care accounts.

This is the first portion of funding for local authorities, and further support will be made available later to strengthen capacity and to support implementation of technology that can support charging reform.

An additional £2.9 million of funding will also be distributed across trailblazer local authorities to cover the costs of implementing charging reform early. The trailblazing authorities are areas that have been selected to ensure any insight, evidence and lessons learned from this initiative will be useful to providers and authorities to support the rollout in all parts of England.

Social care staff worked incredibly hard during the pandemic and wider social care reforms will bolster staff numbers, enabling them to provide greater support in the community – keeping people out of hospitals and reducing pressure on the NHS.

Wider social care reforms will better integrate the health and care systems, supporting earlier discharge from hospitals into the community and free up hospital beds to increase NHS capacity and tackle the Covid backlogs.

Minister for Care, Gillian Keegan said:

Our charging reforms will mean no one will have to face unpredictable and often catastrophic care costs and this new funding will help local authorities to implement these vital

changes.

We're committed to fair and high-quality care, and this is the beginning of our journey of reform, creating the next step in making our ambitious plans a reality.

We're working closely with local authorities, providers and care receivers to deliver a smooth transition into the new system to end unpredictable cost of care for the public.

The Health and Social Care Levy will raise more than £5.4 billion for adult social care reforms which includes £3.6 billion to reform the way people pay for their social care charging reform to ensure the new system is fair and responsible, balancing government support and the need for people to be responsible for their future care needs.

This is part of wider reforms backed by £39 billion to clear the Covid backlogs and reform social care, helping people to access care when they need it in the community and reducing pressure on the NHS.

Adult social care charging reform includes a new lifetime cap of £86,000 on the amount anyone in England will need to spend on their personal care, alongside a more generous means test for local authority financial support.

The transformed social care charging system, which includes a significant increase in state support, will apply to people in both residential and at-home care. This will ensure adult social care is fair and accessible to all those who need it, and will protect people from unpredictable care costs.

From October 2023 no-one starting to receive care will pay more than £86,000 over their lifetime, and no-one with assets of less than £20,000 will have to make any contribution from their savings or housing wealth – up from £14,250. Anyone with assets between £20,000 and £100,000 will be eligible for some means-tested support with the upper limit more than four times the current limit.