

Vulnerable people receive almost 13 million extra hours of home care

Vulnerable people across England received almost 13 million extra hours of home visits from social care workers last year as part of a £674 million government funding programme, new statistics show.

The Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) works to connect the NHS and local council care services so people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.

As well as increasing the number of home care hours, the funding provided in 2018 to 2019 also helped to support the social care market by enabling councils to increase the fees paid to social care providers by more than 4%.

This additional funding forms part of an additional £2 billion for councils to deliver adult social care from 2017 to 2020, announced at Spring Budget 2017.

Local Government Minister, Luke Hall MP, said:

Councils are on the frontline caring for some of the most vulnerable people in our society and we are determined to continue supporting them in this vital work.

We have listened to their feedback and I am delighted our funding has provided almost 13 million extra hours of care at home, improving people's quality of life and giving them greater independence.

Minister for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP, said:

We are determined to ensure people are able to access good quality, compassionate care by better joining up councils and health services.

The Improved Better Care Fund has had a huge impact on local communities ensuring more of our most vulnerable in society are getting the help and support they need to stay living at home for longer and ensuring the local care market stays sustainable.

The Improved Better Care Fund is:

- helping to keep people living independently at home
- reducing delayed discharges across the social care system
- achieving closer working between the NHS and social care services

Health and Wellbeing Boards, which coordinate the provision of social care in 150 areas in England, reported progress from money spent to meet adult social care needs, reducing pressure on the NHS, and support the social care market.

The Boards have reported that this year's funding has:

- paid for almost 75,000 extra home care packages (providing almost 13 million additional hours of home care)
- paid for over 15,500 additional care home placements
- enabled councils to increase fees paid to social care providers for home care, residential care and nursing care in 90% of Health and Wellbeing Board areas; resulting in home care fee rates increasing by 4.7%, residential by 4% and nursing home fee rates by 4.1% compared to 2017 to 2018
- helped to reduce pressures on the NHS by tackling delayed transfers of care – freeing up hospital beds – through supporting more people to be discharged from hospital when they are ready, with 122 projects last year

As announced at the Spending Round, next year local government will have access to an additional £1 billion grant for adults and children's social care, on top of existing social care funding (which includes the iBCF).

This government is also consulting on a 2% precept which would give councils access to a further £500 million for adult social care next year.

Adult social care provides support for older people and working age adults with personal and practical care needs, as well as support for their carers.

In England, adults may be cared for informally by family, friends and neighbours, or formally through services they or their local authority pay for.

Publicly funded adult social care is means-tested and primarily funded through local government; those with eligible needs, assets of less than £23,250 and low incomes can receive help towards care and support costs.

Ministers [previously confirmed](#) the renewal of the Better Care Fund for 2019 to 2020.