

NHS England
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

27 October 2017

To: *(by email)*
Cllr Peter Miller
Sarah Norman
Paul Maubach

Chair, Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board
Chief Executive, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Chief Executive, NHS Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group

Dear Colleagues

BETTER CARE FUND 2017-19

Thank you for submitting your Better Care Fund (BCF) plan for regional assurance. We know that the BCF has again presented challenges in preparing plans at pace and we are grateful for your commitment in providing your agreed plan. The Better Care Fund is the only mandatory policy to facilitate integration of health and social care and the continuation of the BCF itself. It brings together health and social care funding, with a major injection of social care money announced at Spring Budget 2017. For the first time, this policy framework for the Fund covers two financial years to align with NHS planning timetables and to give areas the opportunity to plan more strategically.

Your plan has been assessed in accordance with the process set out in the *Better Care Fund 2017-19: Guide to Assurance of Plans*.

In determining and exercising further powers in connection with your application, NHS England has had regard to the extent to which there is a need for the provision of health services; health-related services (within the meaning given in section 14Z1 of the NHS Act 2006); and social care services.

I am delighted to let you know that, following the regional assurance process, your plan has been classified as '**Approved**'. In summary, the assurance team recognises your plan has been agreed by all parties (local authority, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and your Health and Wellbeing Board), and the plan submitted meets all requirements and the focus should now be on delivery.

Your BCF funding can therefore now be released subject to the funding being used in accordance with your final approved plan, and the funding being transferred into pooled funds under a section 75 agreement.

High quality care for all, now and for future generations

These conditions have been imposed through NHS England's powers under sections 223G and 223GA of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Care Act 2014). These sections allow NHS England to make payment of the BCF funding subject to conditions. If the conditions are not complied with, NHS England is able to withhold or recover funding, or direct the CCG(s) in your Health and Wellbeing Board area as to the use of the funding.

Amounts payable to the CCG in respect of the BCF are subject to the following conditions under section 223GA of the NHS Act 2006:

1. That the CCG will meet the performance objectives specified in its BCF plan; and
2. That the CCG will meet any additional performance objectives specified by NHS England from time to time.

If the CCG fails to meet those objectives, NHS England may withhold the funds (in so far as they have not already been paid to the CCG) or recover payments already made; and may direct the CCG as to the use of the amounts payable in respect of the BCF.

In addition to the BCF funding, the Spring Budget 2017 increased funding via the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) for adult social care in 2017-19. This has been pooled into the local BCF. The new IBCF grant (and as previously the Disabled Facilities Grant) will be paid directly to local authorities via a Section 31 grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The Government has attached a set of conditions to the Section 31 grant, to ensure it is included in the BCF at local level and will be spent on adult social care.

You should now progress with your plans for implementation. Ongoing support and oversight with your BCF plan will be led by your local better care manager.

Once again, thank you for your work and best wishes with implementation and delivery.

Yours faithfully,



Simon Weldon
**Director of NHS Operations and Delivery and SRO for the Better Care Fund
NHS England**

Copy (by email) to:

OFFICIAL

Tony Oakman Director of Adult Social Services, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Neill Bucktin Better Care Fund Lead, NHS Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group
Matt Bowsher Chief Officer, Adult Social Care, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Jo Farrar Director General, Department for Communities & Local Government
Jonathan Marron Director General, Department of Health
Sarah Pickup Deputy Chief Executive, Local Government Association

NHS England Midlands and East

Paul Watson Regional Director
Alison Tonge Director of Commissioning Operations
Alastair McIntyre Locality Director
Nigel Littlewood Regional Lead
Steve Corton Better Care Manager

Better Care Support team

Anthony Kealy Head of Integration Delivery
Rosie Seymour Deputy Director