

Adult Social Care

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Provider bulletin

January 2025

To all our colleagues working in adult social care in Slough

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their hard work and dedication throughout another challenging year. You have made an immense contribution to ensure that people we support are achieving better outcomes and receiving quality services.

Your compassion, determination, and your dedication to the people you support does not go unnoticed and we are extremely grateful for all your efforts.

We will continue to work closely with you in the coming year; our relationships will be as important as ever as together we ensure we can do the best we can within our means and meet the challenges that we collectively face.

I hope you all had a chance to have a break over the festive season and we look forward to working with you during 2025.

Lynn Johnson

Interim Head of Market Management

Training

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) - The new Learning and Development Support Scheme (Information for all providers)

The DHSC has published a new guidance document on the funding available for learning and development for the adult social care workforce. This fund is called the Learning and Development Support Scheme.

[Learning and Development Support Scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers - GOV.UK](#)

The Learning and Development Support Scheme is administered via a new digital online claims service that allows adult social care employers to claim funding for certain training courses and qualifications on behalf of eligible care staff. Funding is available for eligible courses and qualifications that have been both paid for and started between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 (inclusive).

In order to manage the roll-out, for the first few months access to the service will be via invite only but providers can complete an expression of interest form to be onboarded onto the new system, see below:

[Adult Social Care Development Support Scheme - Private Beta Onboarding](#)

If you have questions about the Learning and Development Support Scheme you can get in touch with the team by emailing ascreimbursement@dhsc.gov.uk

Skills for Care – Virtual Session - Learning Exchange for Delegated Healthcare Activities - Tuesday 21 January 2025 (Information for all Providers)

A delegated healthcare activity is an activity that a regulated healthcare professional, such as a nurse, nursing associate, occupational therapist or speech and language therapist, delegates to a care worker or personal assistant. The guiding principles for delegated healthcare activities have been revised and can be found here

[Delegated healthcare activities](#)

This virtual session will continue to explore practical approaches to care planning and accountability. This is a key theme which has been identified from previous learning exchanges. The session will be an opportunity to connect with others and dig deep into the challenges, share solutions and best practice. The session will be structured to mix in smaller groups.

[National learning exchange for delegated healthcare activities #5](#)

National updates

Care Quality Commission (CQC) update for adult social care providers – Scam warning (Information for all Providers)

The CQC are aware of a scam where a company that claims to be CQC is emailing registered providers selling in-house training for staff on CQC inspections and how to get a rating of outstanding.

The email includes information copied from the CQC website and a fake CQC logo.

The CQC never charge a fee for any guidance, webinars and other face-to-face engagement events and they do not offer training for staff.

If you are considering investing in training for your staff, you should make sure the training provider is advertised as independent from CQC and let the CQC know of any examples of training companies that claim otherwise.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) update for adult social care providers – Share for Better Care Week (Information for all Providers)

Get ready to make a difference from 24 February 2025 as the CQC launch Share for Better Care Week, a national week of action about helping more people have a stronger voice in their care.

Mark your calendars and sign up for the Share for Better Care briefing call on 21 January to find out how you can support their campaign! Let's come together and ask our communities, "Will you share for better care?".

[Share for Better Care campaign briefing Tickets, Tue, Jan 21, 2025 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Capacity tracker

New infection control question added to Home Care Capacity Tracker

A new question regarding Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) has been added to the Resources and Training section of the ASC Home Care Collection page: 'Have all your staff received up to date Infection Prevention and Control Training?'

This question has also been added to the Home Care Bulk Template.

More information on the IPC question can be found [here](#) along with resources to support IPC training.

Further information has also been added to the Capacity Tracker log-in page which can be found [here](#).

Public Health

REMINDER UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) - Increased Norovirus Risk in Care Homes (Information for all Care Homes)

The 2024/2025 season has seen a high level of norovirus activity, which began earlier than usual. This is expected to result in increased outbreaks in care homes this winter.

A letter from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) outlines the implications and recommendations for care homes.

[Letter regarding norovirus in care homes](#)

This includes information on infection and prevention control (IPC), reporting outbreaks to Health Protection Teams, supporting resident health and wellbeing and guidance for supported living settings.

Reminder - When and how to use face masks

Care workers and visitors to care homes do not routinely need to wear a face mask

in care settings or when providing care in people's own homes.

However, Type IIR fluid-repellent surgical masks should be worn:

- if the person being cared for has symptoms of ARI
- when cleaning the room of a person with symptoms of ARI
- if there is an outbreak of ARI in a care home and the local risk assessment favours the introduction of universal masking as one of the outbreak control measures
- if the person being cared for would prefer staff or visitors to wear a mask while providing them with care or visiting

[NHS England » National infection prevention and control](#)

Spring 2025 COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

NHS England have confirmed details of the COVID-19 vaccination programme for 2025. They are in the process of planning a spring campaign, with the following cohorts expected to be eligible for a seasonal vaccine:

- Adults aged 75 years and over
- Residents in a care home for older adults
- Individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

The spring campaign will run from the 1st of April 2025 and end on 17th June 2025. A minimum of 3 months is still required between doses of the vaccine.

NHS England have asked that priority be given to older adult care homes and eligible housebound patients.

Local resources

Infection Prevention and Control Team

The team supports Social Care across the whole of the Frimley ICB, covering Ascot, Bracknell, Farnham, NE Hampshire, RBWM, Slough and Surrey Heath.

They can support you and your team with a range of concerns.

- MRSA
- C.diff
- Influenza
- Norovirus

And many more

If you have an outbreak of any kind or query about an individual, please do not hesitate to contact them:

Vanessa Mobile: 07785469880

Josephine Mobile: 07769286224

Email: frimleyicb.ipcteam@nhs.net

Please also contact UK Health Security Agency if you are experiencing any outbreaks

In and out of hours: 0344 225 3861

Email (for PII):

Hampshire and Isle of Wight HPT phe.hiow@nhs.net

Surrey and Sussex HPT phe.sshpu@nhs.net

Thames Valley HPT phe.thamesvalley@nhs.net

Other updates

Care Connected Provider forum

Strengthening Partnerships in 2025 - thank you for your active participation in our recent December Care Connected forums which also touched upon 25/26 fee uplifts.

We will be arranging bespoke sessions for each market sector later in January in the New Year

We encourage providers to update their contact details (especially email addresses) with the Market Management Team as we use these details to communicate with providers.

It is very important that we reach the correct person in your organisation and do not want you to miss out on any opportunities. Please ensure we have your most recent email address – contact us on ASC.ContractManagement@slough.gov.uk

Contract Workbooks (Homecare and Supported Living)

As part of a renewed focus on contract performance now that the ASC Contracts Management team is up to full strength, officers are currently reviewing and redesigning workbooks that will help Slough Borough Council collect meaningful performance related data included in contracts with providers.

These are currently being finalised and will be shared with you shortly.

Should you have any questions/queries regarding , please contact:

ASC.ContractManagement@slough.gov.uk

Health and safety building compliance forms

The Contracts Management team reports on H&S building compliance every month to the council. Compliance will centre around the following:

- Asbestos
- Fire
- Electrics
- Gas (including Carbon Monoxide)
- Legionella
- Lifts / Lifting Equipment
- Building Safety
- Damp and Mould
- Electronic Gates

Providers must email their certificates and reports as and when checks are completed to ASC.ContractManagement@slough.gov.uk to ensure they are recorded as compliant.

Contact us

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future items for this newsletter – please get in touch via ASC.ContractManagement@slough.gov.uk

Information provided in this bulletin is correct at time of issuing.