

To: Care Home Providers

From: Better Care Support Team

Subject: changes to the Capacity Tracker – action required by 26th May 2020

This is a short update note on the new questions that have been added to the Capacity Tracker for completion by 26 May. The Better Care Support Team have been supporting the Department of Health and Social Care and Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government to implement the Care Home Support Plans that local authorities and health colleagues have been asked to submit by 29 May.

Support for care homes to keep their residents and staff safe during the COVID pandemic is a government priority. The Government's [Coronavirus support for care homes support package](#) sets out the support that you should all have available to you, including access to effective infection control training, clinical support and testing for asymptomatic residents and staff.

Local authorities are being asked to ensure that this support reaches you directly and to ensure this happens, which includes completing a template confirming that they have the measures in place across a range of activity.

In order to be clear on the delivery of support, and to avoid multiple requests for information, the capacity tracker is now collecting information on:

- Infection prevention and control measures
- Testing
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) and clinical equipment
- Workforce support
- Clinical support.

Your answers will help:

- local authorities to prioritise support to care homes to manage COVID-19 and
- local authorities, CCGs and local resilience forums to see where support is required and what is needed.
- the NHS to understand if you have been able to implement the guidance and access the support available

Please can you ensure you are completing all sections by 26th May 2020 and updated regularly thereafter. We know that there has been some concern that a care home may lose access to funding from the £600 million Infection Control Fund if it does not currently have some measures in place. **This will not be the case** and this process is about understanding whether you have the support to help put these

important measures are in place, and that support is reaching care homes. Some of the questions are about new processes and support which are still being rolled out and we would not expect all care homes to have yet been able to undertake the action but over time it will help systems understand how progress is being made. There is no circumstance under which you lose access to the funding if you answer no to any of the questions.

Grant determinations for this funding have not been issued but will be soon.

Departments are, however, very clear that all CQC registered residential and nursing homes must register on the Capacity Tracker and have indicated that not registering and updating information on the Capacity Tracker tool could result in a home not receiving payments from the Infection Control Fund. If you are not already registered then please make efforts to register as soon as possible, if this is not in time to update local authorities next week then please engage with them directly so that they can understand where support might be needed in order to complete the overall template.

Please direct any queries about how to respond and how to interpret the new questions to england.bettercaresupport@nhs.net. For any other queries about capacity tracker, including how to access the Capacity Tracker please contact the North of England Commissioning Support Unit (NECS) – who operate the capacity tracker – via <https://carehomes.necsu.nhs.uk/>.

We have placed short notes to help you understand what the new questions are seeking to establish. This is on the Capacity Tracker in the guidance section.

Matthew West

Better Care Support Team

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