



**Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust**

Contracts Department

2nd Floor Administration Building
Knockbracken Healthcare Park
Saintfield Road
BELFAST
BT8 8BH

Tel: 028 9504 6341

18th April 2024

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Care Home Provider,

Re: Independent Sector Care Home Tariff –Interim Uplift 2024/25

I am writing to set out, as advised by the Department of Health (DoH) via Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), the uplift to be applied, from 1st April 2024, to the Independent Sector Care Home Tariff to take account of the National Living Wage (NLW) increase.

It is recognised that, while the DoH budget has not been confirmed, there is an urgent need to provide clarity to the Independent Care Home Sector in respect of an uplift to support at minimum the increase in the National Living Wage (NLW) from 1st April 2024 (from £10.42 to £11.44 per hour).

It is important to note interim tariffs remain in place for 2023/24 while we await formal confirmation of the 2023/24 HSC Agenda for Change (AfC) pay award along with the associated funding. In light of this, and given that weekly tariff rates are cumulatively calculated, the SPPG has taken the pragmatic step of assuming 'indicative final' 2023/24 tariffs (as outlined in Annex A), upon which to base the 2024/25 tariff rates as set out below. These 'indicative final' 2023/24 tariffs, incorporate an assumption for a 2023/24 AfC pay award at 5%.

The application of this indicative AfC pay award of 5% to the current interim 2023/24 tariffs should not be considered as any indication that this AfC pay award for 2023/24 has been finalised in advance of due process with Trade Unions and their members. Should the agreed AfC pay award for 2023/24, and therefore the final tariff rate, differ when finalised, there will be an onward impact to the interim 2024/25 tariff rates set out in this letter and also a retrospective application to the 2023/24 rates.

The SPPG has assessed, and the Minister of Health has approved, the following in respect of the Independent Sector Care Homes' tariff uplift for 2024/25:

- An interim uplift of 4.66% to be applied to the indicative final 2023/24 independent nursing care home tariff rates; and,
- An interim uplift of 6.75% to be applied to the indicative final 2023/24 independent residential care home tariff rates.

The 'indicative final' 2023/24 tariff rates are outlined in **Annex A**. As noted above, these will not be applied for payment at this point, but are for illustrative purposes only to set out how the interim 2024/25 tariffs have been derived.

Unfortunately, whilst it is necessary to provide uplifts to 2024/25 funding to allow employers to meet NLW requirements, the SPPG is unable to increase for a further non-pay uplift for 2024/25 at this time. It is appreciated that the sector may be experiencing inflationary pressures, however, in the absence of a formalised DoH Budget for 2024/25, the SPPG has advised that it is not possible at this point to provide any annual non-pay inflationary uplift for the 2024/25 year. It should therefore be noted that these interim tariffs may need to be revisited in line with the elements of the tariff which track non-pay uplifts and the HSC AfC pay award for 2024/25.

The revised 2024/25 interim tariffs, noted at **Annex A**, are effective from 1st April 2024 and will be reflected in the April monthly Home payment.

The SPPG has also advised that its expectation is that these uplifts will be applied to the rates for agreed extra care required for more dependent residents based on assessed need ('specialist rates').

Uplifts to Third Party Contributions

If/ where a Home intends to increase the cost of an existing third party contribution for any Trust care managed resident, it must inform the Trust by completing the attached template and returning it by email to: ContractsCommServ@belfasttrust.hscni.net It is the expectation of the Trust that any increase to a third party contribution should not exceed the regional tariff uplift.

If/ where the Home intends to increase weekly rate for a resident for whom there is a Trust contract in place, and the percentage increase is in excess of the regional tariff uplift, the Home must also return a written explanation for same along with the aforementioned template. The Trust may also seek further financial information in order to assess any proposed increase. If/ where a third party advises the Trust that they are unable or unwilling to pay the proposed uplift the Trust will inform the Home accordingly.

Non-recurrent support for inflationary pressures in 2022-23

In addition to the above, and in observance of inflationary pressures, the Minister of Health has also approved additional non-recurrent funding to support Independent Sector Home Care Providers. This will be paid at a per bed rate as per the arrangements in 2022/23. The Trust awaits further correspondence from the SPPG in this regard and will further correspond with Provider when this have been received.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries regarding any of the above.

Yours sincerely,

Leona McCullough

Senior Manager, Planning and Contracts

Encs.

Residential Care Homes	2023/24 Estimated Recurrent Tariff Rate Inc. AfC (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	781	833	52
Elderly	697	744	47
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	697	744	47
People with a Learning Disability	697	744	47

Nursing Care Homes	2023/24 Estimated Recurrent Tariff Rate Inc. AfC (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	929	972	43
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	865	905	40
People with a Learning Disability	865	905	40
All other people	865	905	40

Note 1

The estimated recurrent tariff 2023/24 is following the inclusion of an estimate for AfC uplift, still subject to approval.

Note 2

The interim tariff for 2024/25 is based on the 2024/25 NLW uplift applied to the estimated final 2023/24 tariff (Note 1).



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3rd June 2024

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Care Home Provider,

Re: Independent Sector Care Home Tariff –Final Tariff 2023/24

I refer to my letter, dated 18 April 2024 and enclosed for ease of reference in **Annex B**, with respect to the interim 2024/25 Care Home Tariff. At that time the Trust had not received formal confirmation of the HSC Agenda for Change (AfC) pay award for 2023/24 and therefore, whilst assumptions had been made in this matter to derive the 2024/25 interim tariffs, the Trust was unable to confirm the final position for 2023/24.

The DoH Workforce Policy Directorate has now formally confirmed the position regarding the 2023/24 AfC pay arrangements in their recently issued circular, HSC (AfC) (4) 2024 'Agenda for change pay arrangements 2023/24', dated 10 April 2024. These arrangements are in line with the assumptions made to derive the 2024/25 interim tariffs, as outlined in my aforementioned letter, and therefore present no change to the 2024/25 interim tariffs advised therein.

The Trust is now in a position to confirm the final recurrent tariffs for 2023/24 and the interim tariffs for 2024/25 as outlined in **Annex A** (and as per my previous letter). The final recurrent tariff rates for 2023/24 will now be applied with effect from 1st April 2023, and the Trust will proceed to process retrospective payments to Providers as soon as practicable.

The SPPG has also advised that its expectation is that similar uplifts will be applied to the rates for agreed extra care required for more dependent residents based on assessed need ('specialist rates').

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries regarding any of the above.

Yours sincerely,

Leona McCullough

Senior Manager, Planning and Contracts

Encs.

Independent Sector Care Home Care Tariffs –Final 2023/24 and Interim 2024/25

Residential Care Homes	2023/24 Final Recurrent Tariff Rate (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	781	833	52
Elderly	697	744	47
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	697	744	47
People with a Learning Disability	697	744	47

Nursing Care Homes	2023/24 Final Recurrent Tariff Rate (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	929	972	43
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	865	905	40
People with a Learning Disability	865	905	40
All other people	865	905	40

Note 1

The final recurrent tariff 2023/24 is following the inclusion of approved AfC uplift for 2023/24.

Note 2

The interim tariff for 2024/25 is based on a 2024/25 NLW uplift applied to the final 2023/24 tariff (Note 1).

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Tel: 028 9504 6341

19th August 2024

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Care Home Provider,

Re: Independent Sector Care Home Tariff – Revised Interim Uplift 2024/25

I refer to my letters, dated 18th April 2024 and 3rd June 2024 enclosed in **Annex A**, which reference the interim 2024/25 and final 2023/24 Care Home Tariffs respectively.

I am further writing to set out, as advised by the Department of Health (DoH) via Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), that the DoH Budget for 2024/25 has now been approved, resulting in an additional annual non-pay inflationary uplift of **0.6%** for 2024/25.

This effectively increases the 2024/25 interim uplift, to be applied to 2023/24 tariff rates, to:

- A revised interim uplift of **5.26%** in respect of independent nursing care home tariff rates; and,
- A revised interim uplift of **7.35%** in respect of independent residential care home tariff rates.

The revised 2024/25 interim tariffs, noted in **Annex B**, will now be applied with effect from 1st April 2024, and the Trust will proceed to process retrospective payments to Providers as soon as practicable.

It is also the SPPG's expectation that these uplifts will be applied to the rates for agreed extra care required for more dependent residents based on assessed need ('specialist rates').

Non-recurrent support for inflationary pressures in 2023-24

I can also confirm that the additional non-recurrent funding to support Independent Sector Home Care Providers referenced in our correspondence of 18th April 2024 was paid by the Trust on Friday 3rd May 2024.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries regarding any of the above.

Yours sincerely,

Leona McCullough

Senior Manager, Planning and Contracts

Encs.

Annex A



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Independent Sector Care Home Revised Interim Tariffs - 2024/25

Residential Care Homes	2023/24 Final Recurrent Tariff Rate (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Revised Interim Tariff Rate NLW and non-pay elements only (Note 3) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift for non-pay £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	781	833	838	5
Elderly	697	744	748	4
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	697	744	748	4
People with a Learning Disability	697	744	748	4

Nursing Care Homes	2023/24 Final Recurrent Tariff Rate (Note 1) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Interim Tariff Rate NLW element only (Note 2) £ per week (Rounded)	2024/25 Revised Interim Tariff Rate NLW and non-pay elements only (Note 3) £ per week (Rounded)	Additional Uplift for non-pay £ per week (Rounded)
People with a Physical Disability	929	972	978	6
People with Mental Illness (or drug/ alcohol dependence)	865	905	910	5
People with a Learning Disability	865	905	910	5
All other people	865	905	910	5

Note 1

The final recurrent tariff 2023/24 is following the inclusion of approved AfC uplift for 2023/24.

Note 2

The interim tariff for 2024/25 is based on the 2024/25 NLW uplift applied to the final 2023/24 tariff (Note 1).

Note 3

The revised interim tariff for 2024/25 is based on the 2024/25 NLW and the non-pay uplift applied to the final 2023/24 tariff (Note 1).