

6/2021 People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper: Housing Implications



8/12/21

Key Points

- On 1 December the Government published its proposals for the reform of adult social care as a White Paper *People at the Heart of Care*.
- The White Paper sets out a ten-year vision for the reform of social care and provides some detail on how the Government plans to use £5.4 billion in receipts from the new Health and Care Levy to invest in social care over the next three years.
- It announces a number of spending proposals over the next three years including:
 - At least £300 million to integrate housing into local health and care strategies, with a focus on increasing the range of new supported housing options available;
 - At least £150 million of additional funding to drive greater adoption of technology and achieve widespread digitisation across social care;
 - At least £500 million for workforce training;
 - More than £70 million to increase the support offer, including by helping local authorities to better plan and develop the support and care options available.
- It is not clear how all of the £300 million mentioned will be spent. £70 million per year will be allocated to the Care and Support Specialised Housing (CASSH) Fund to incentivise the supply of specialised housing for older people and people with a disability, autism or mental ill-health. The White Paper states that this is in addition to the funding for supported housing provided through the Affordable Homes Programme (of which 10% is intended to be devoted to supported housing), but no details are provided on the use of the remaining £90 million.

Background

On 1 December the Government published its proposals for the reform of adult social care as a White Paper *People at the Heart of Care*. The White Paper sets out a ten-year vision for the reform of social care and provides some detail on how the Government plans to use £5.4 billion in receipts from the new Health and Care Levy to invest in social care over the next three years.

Main Proposals

The White Paper's vision centres on three objectives:

- People have choice, control and support to lead independent lives
- People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support
- People find adult social care fair and accessible.

Spending proposals over the next three years to make progress towards these objectives include:

- At least £300 million to integrate housing into local health and care strategies, with a focus on increasing the range of new supported housing options available;
- At least £150 million of additional funding to drive greater adoption of technology and achieve widespread digitisation across social care;
- At least £500 million for workforce training;
- More than £70 million to increase the support offer, including by helping local authorities to better plan and develop the support and care options available.

Housing Implications

The White Paper's ambition is to give more people the choice to live independently and healthily in their own homes for longer. To realise this ambition, it aims to ensure that "*every decision about care is also a decision about housing*". It identifies a number of necessary enablers:

- Strong leadership and partnership: change requires collaboration across commissioners and providers of health, adult social care and housing, and homelessness support services as well as local planning functions and voluntary organisations.
- Long-term funding certainty: housing providers need to take decisions on when and where to invest that look decades into the future in confidence that people will be supported to live in these homes for many years to come.
- Wider influence: housing that better meets future care and support needs must be delivered within a complex housing market. For changes to be embedded influence is needed beyond the adult social care system.

The aim is to actively shape the specialist housing market - to establish and consolidate local strategic leadership and create the right incentives for local areas and housing providers to invest, including in new and innovative models of provision. To achieve this, the White Paper says that at least £300 million will be invested in 2022/23 to 2024/25 to allow local authorities to integrate housing into local health and care strategies with a focus on boosting the supply of specialist housing and funding improved services for residents.

This investment is intended to:

- Boost the supply of supported housing and drive innovation
- Increase local expenditure on services for those in supported housing.

Supported Housing

It is not clear how all of the £300 million mentioned will be spent. £70 million per year will be allocated to the Care and Support Specialised Housing (CASSH) Fund to incentivise the supply of specialised housing for older people and people with a disability, autism or mental ill-health. The White Paper states that this is in addition to the funding for supported housing provided through the Affordable Homes Programme (of which 10% is intended to be devoted to supported housing), but no details are provided on the use of the remaining £90 million.

Disabled Facilities Grant

A further £570 million will be provided to deliver Disabled Facilities Grant. The White Paper also proposes to make changes to the way DFG is delivered following the 2018 review of the scheme. It proposes to increase the amount that the grant can pay for an individual adaptation, review the operation of the means test underpinning DFG and review the way in which DFG is allocated to local authorities. The Government will consult on these proposals in 2022.

The Government also plans a new service to make minor repairs and changes to peoples' homes that will help them stay safe and independent and reduce demand for more substantial adaptations through DFG.