

£30m Funding for Children's Palliative Care - FAQs

1. Can two hospices apply for joint funding - would this count as a partnership?

A: The application could be a single, joint one, but DH cannot make the funding available jointly. If the Department is to fund two hospices, working in partnership, the application will have to show which costs will be incurred by which hospice. DH is making a template for applications available and this allows for the costs of a single project to be paid to more than one organisation.

2. Hospices have to relate to a number of networks, because they provide services in areas covered by more than one Strategic Health Authority. How would network "approval" work - would the hospice have to apply to both networks?

A: Applications don't have to be made through networks – they can be direct to the Department of Health. But DH is looking for proposals to be supported by networks and where a project is relevant to more than network, it would have to be supported by them all.

3. Is partnership across countries possible e.g. North Wales and NW England, NE and Scotland? Could funding for the English part of the work be submitted?

A: Yes – but the work to be funded would have to relate to England only. There are some potentially tricky issues here (eg when a product developed for use in England could be used elsewhere) – it would be sensible to talk to DH at an early stage about proposals like this.

4. Does family involvement have to mean asking families directly, or can this mean using local family groups/councils?

A: If groups are genuinely representative, they would provide the sort of evidence of family involvement that the Panel will be looking for.

5. Can an organisation make applications in July and September?

A: Yes.

If an organisation re-submitted a project that was unsuccessful in the first round for the second round, the Panel and DH would be looking for significant changes, reflecting whatever feedback was given following the first round.

6. Can the money be carried over into 2011-12, if it is clear that the project is on course to be finished?

No. There are no circumstances in which DH can pay for work done after 31 March 2011.

7. What happens if there are extenuating circumstances such as last year's H1N1 which impact on the delivery of services?

A: The funding can be only for activities that are completed by 31 March 2010. If activities for which funding was agreed are not carried out, for whatever reason by this date, payment will not be made/ will have to be paid back.

8. What exactly is the position on capital spending?

A: This grant is a revenue grant and may only be used for revenue expenditure purposes. Capital projects such as building work and significant IT projects and any other capital work over £5000, cannot be funded through this grant.

9. What does children and young people mean?

A: The key beneficiaries of the project should be aged 0 - 19.

10. Can the services be disease specific?

A: Yes.

11. Can adult hospices access this funding e.g. provision of bereavement support for bereaved children (those bereaved of parents etc)?

A: Yes, but it might be sensible to talk to the Panel or DH about specific proposals ahead of submitting them.

12. What is the process and timing for decision-making? Are DH officials or Ministers involved in the decision-making process? How quickly will the money be released after the submission dates?

A. The closing date for the first round of applications is 31 July and for the second 30 September. The Panel will consider applications as soon as they get them and advise the Department. In taking final decisions, DH officials will also consider technical issues, such as the financial viability of organisations applying for funding. Ministers will not be involved in the decision-making process. DH expects to be able to allocate funds to first round applications in late August/ early September and second round ones in late October. Once the Department has notified organisations that their application has been successful, the speed at which the money can be released will depend on the organisation involved, as there are various funding routes.

13. What kind of reporting/monitoring is required on project outcomes?

A: Applications should include provision for local evaluation of the success of the project eg. quality of life measures, reduction of stress and anxiety of family members, changes to hospital admissions rates, lengths of stay and appropriateness of admissions. Evidence of impact, including in relation to equality, across the whole of the local population should be provided. The Panel/DH may also ask projects that are funded to produce a final report. The Panel is planning a national meeting in March 2011 for presentation and dissemination of what has been achieved through this funding.

14. Can ACT/Children's Hospices UK help us with our bids?

A: This is a matter for them. The Department will provide those looking to make applications with all the information and support it can.

15. Can I talk to a real person, not an anonymous DH mailbox?

A: The DH Children's Disability Services Team, led by Sally Anderson, manages the mailbox for the programme. It is a shared mailbox, to enable more than one person to deal with queries at any one time. The person who deals with a query does give their personal details, so organisations can follow up specific questions.

16. Will national projects be funded?

A: The press notice announcing the funding indicated that the money was to "develop local children's palliative care projects". The recently published NHS White Paper outlined the infrastructure of the new NHS with and highlighted the focus on localism. Therefore, we envisage applications, including those as part of local collaborations, to reflect this aim.

17. How will the panel deal with bids that are about the same activities?

A. The Panel will consider this on a case-by-case basis.

It may be that two or more areas want to do similar things – if it is necessary to fund more than one project to achieve the benefits in the different locations, the Panel could recommend this.

And if one particular element of a proposal is essential to that project, but overlaps with a different proposal, the Panel may recommend that both projects be funded in full, notwithstanding the overlap.

However if one or more projects are about creating a particular resource that could be shared across areas or if there appears to be some similar duplication across proposals, the Panel may want to put those proposing them in touch with one another, to discuss how the duplication might be resolved.

18. What about projects that could be suitable for national rollout or which produce products that could be suitable for national rollout?

The Panel will consider these on a case-by-case basis. The forthcoming changes in the NHS infrastructure will increase the amount of local decision-making in the NHS.

19. Will the Panel identify areas where no proposals are put forward for funding from the £30 million?

It will review the position after the first round and consider whether action is needed. DH and the Panel are not looking for full geographical coverage. All areas will be able to access products created through the funding and the findings from evaluating the projects.

20. If a bid needs to be re-submitted, will it have to wait until the second round?

If this happens, the feedback letter will provide individual advice.

21. How will the Panel and DH ensure sufficient money is kept back from the first round to enable strong bids that are put forward for the second round to be funded?

The Panel and the Department are clear that this needs to happen. They will look at exactly what is needed to achieve it once all the first round proposals are in.

22. As part of the evaluation, will projects have to report on exactly how they spent the money, including against the different categories identified in their proposal?

Not as a matter of course. If a project achieves its outcomes, the Department will not need any details about exactly how the money was spent.

23. Is the Department going to make details of all the projects funded through the programme available, so that links can be made across organisations and areas?

Yes – DH will publicise brief details.

24. Some projects are being turned away at this stage. Can they insist on being considered by the Panel?

No project has been turned away. Some organisations have asked for advice about whether a particular proposal falls within the criteria for funding and where asked, DH has given a view on this.

All proposals that are put forward will be sent to the Panel, but if the Department decided that a particular project could not be funded within the criteria for the programme, the Panel could not over-ride that decision. If such a project was something that the Panel considered worthwhile, they might want to discuss with the proposer and DH whether its outcomes could be achieved in alternative ways that would be consistent with the criteria for funding.