



Edward Timpson MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

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To all Directors of Children's Services

23 March 2015

Dear Directors,

National Roll-Out of the Adoption Support Fund

You will be aware that from 1 May, the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) will be available to all children adopted from care and their families across England who are in need of therapeutic services. The purpose of my letter is to ask for your help in ensuring the ASF is a success.

The national roll-out follows a successful pilot of the fund in 10 local authorities. During the pilot, over 160 families have been supported with over £1m in funding. It is in my view a good example of national and local government working successfully together to support vulnerable children and their families (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-million-from-adoption-support-fund-helps-over-160-families>).

The Government is fully funding the first year of the ASF – making over £19m available for adoptive families. It is important that your local authority starts planning now to meet parental requests for an assessment of their support needs, and have procedures in place to make applications to the ASF from May.

To help you prepare for the introduction of the ASF, the Department has appointed a contractor, Mott MacDonald to work with you. They are setting up a simple and accessible system for local authorities to apply to the ASF and will provide training for local authority staff on how to use it. This includes 9 regional workshops in April. Your Adoption Team Manager will have recently received an invitation to the workshops, please encourage them to attend. Further information is available on the ASF website at www.adoptionsupportfund.co.uk. There is also an Adoption Support Fund Helpdesk which can be reached by emailing asf@mottmac.com or by calling 01223 463517.

I hope your local authority will make full use of the opportunities presented by the ASF, including the opportunity to grow the local market and work with other services in the area, such as schools and health providers, to encourage referrals and signposting to the ASF. I firmly believe it will make a huge difference to improving the support that adoptive families need and ultimately improve the life chances of some of our most vulnerable children.

Yours sincerely,

Edward

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