



Department
of Health



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund

Policy Framework

March 2017

Title: Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework 2017-19
Author: Social Care, Ageing and Disability / Integration, Local Devolution and Policy Improvement / 11120
Document Purpose: Policy
Publication date: 03/17
Target audience: This document is intended for use by those responsible for delivering the Better Care Fund at a local level (such as clinical commissioning groups, local authorities and health and wellbeing boards) and NHS England.
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2017-19 Integration and Better Care Fund

Policy Framework

Prepared by the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government

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Executive Summary

Why Integrate?

People need health, social care, housing and other public services to work seamlessly together to deliver better quality care. More joined up services help improve the health and care of local populations and may make more efficient use of available resources.

How is Integration being done?

There is no single way to integrate health and care. Some areas are looking to scale-up existing initiatives such as the New Care Models programme and the Integration Pioneers. Others are using local devolution or Sustainability and Transformation Plans as the impetus for their integration efforts.

One part of the solution – the Better Care Fund

The Better Care Fund is the only mandatory policy to facilitate integration. It brings together health and social care funding, with a major injection of social care money announced at Spring Budget 2017. This policy framework for the Fund covers two financial years to align with NHS planning timetables and to give areas the opportunity to plan more strategically. Details of the financial breakdown are below:

Better Care Fund funding contribution (£bn)	2017-18	2018-19
Minimum NHS (clinical commissioning groups) contribution	£3.582	£3.65
Disabled Facilities Grant (capital funding for adaptations to houses)	£0.431	£0.468
New grant allocation for adult social care (Improved Better Care Fund)*	£1.115	£1.499
Total	£5.128 billion	£5.617 billion

*Combined amounts announced at Spending Review 2015 and Spring Budget 2017

Many areas choose to pool more than is required. For 2017-19, there are four national conditions, rather than the previous eight:

- 1. Plans to be jointly agreed**
- 2. NHS contribution to adult social care is maintained in line with inflation**
- 3. Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may include 7 day services and adult social care**

4. **Managing Transfers of Care** (a new condition to ensure people's care transfers smoothly between services and settings).

Beyond this, areas have flexibility in how the Fund is spent over health, care and housing schemes or services, but need to agree how this spending will improve performance in the following four metrics: **Delayed transfers of care; Non-elective admissions (General and Acute); Admissions to residential and care homes; and Effectiveness of reablement.**

Going beyond the Better Care Fund through Graduation

The Better Care Fund is intended to encourage further integration and 90% of areas say it has already had a positive impact on integration locally. For the most integrated areas, there will be benefits in graduating from the Fund to reduce the reporting and oversight to which they are subjected. We are planning to test the graduation process with a small number of advanced areas (6 to 10) in a 'first wave', in order to develop our criteria for graduation for all areas. We are therefore inviting 'Expressions of Interest' from areas that think they are exemplars of integration, by 28th April 2017.

Agreeing a local vision of integration

As part of Better Care Fund planning, we are asking areas to set out how they are going to achieve further integration by 2020. We would encourage areas to align their approach to health and care integration with Sustainability and Transformation Plan geographies, where appropriate. This may be an exact match (e.g. Greater Manchester) or it may be smaller units within Sustainability and Transformation Plans. The focus may also be on commissioning integration (e.g. North East Lincolnshire) or through Accountable Care Systems or Organisations that bring together provision (e.g. Northumberland). What matters is that there is locally agreed clarity on the approach and the geographical footprint which will be the focus for integration.

Measuring progress on integration

To help areas understand whether they are meeting our integration ambition, we are seeking to rapidly develop integration metrics for assessing progress, particularly at the interface where health and social care interact. These will combine outcome metrics, user experience and process measures. Following the development of the metrics and an assessment of local areas, we will ask the Care Quality Commission to carry out targeted reviews in a small number of areas, starting as soon as is practical from May 2017. These reviews will be focused on the interface of health and social care.

Need more detail?

Further information on everything here can be found in the full Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework 2017-19.

Introduction

This document sets out the story of integration of health, social care and other public services. It provides an overview of related policy initiatives and legislation. It includes the policy framework for the implementation of the statutory Better Care Fund (BCF) in 2017-19, which was first announced in the Government's Spending Review of 2013 and established in the Care Act 2014. And it sets out our proposals for going beyond the BCF towards further integration by 2020. Whilst there will now be no separate process for integration plans, we will provide a set of resources, integration models and indicators for integration to help local areas towards our shared goal of person-centred, coordinated care.

This Policy Framework has been developed by the Department of Health (DH), Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), Local Government Association (LGA), Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), and NHS England.

The case for integrated health and care services

Today, people are living much longer, often with highly complex needs and multiple conditions. These needs require ongoing management from both health and care services, which combine both the medical and social models of care. As our population ages and the financial pressures on the health and care system increase, we need to be better at providing proactive, preventative care in community settings, so that people can be supported to live at home for longer and avoid the need for commissioned health and care services.

More joined up and sustainable services help improve the health and care of local populations and may make more efficient use of available resources (i.e. by reducing avoidable hospital admissions, facilitating timely discharge, and improving people's experiences of care). Integration needs to reflect the different strengths that the NHS and social care bring to an integrated response, including the role of social services of promoting and supporting independence, inclusion and rights as far as possible, invigorating wider community services and supporting informal carers.

People want services to work together to provide them with person-centred coordinated care. National Voices set out a narrative for person-centred care, which sums up what we are working to achieve: "I can plan my care with people who work together to understand me and my carer(s), allow me control, and bring together services to achieve the outcomes important to me."¹ This translates into positive interactions with health and care services, and better experiences for individuals as illustrated by Figure 1.

¹ <http://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/publications/our-publications/narrative-person-centred-coordinated-care>

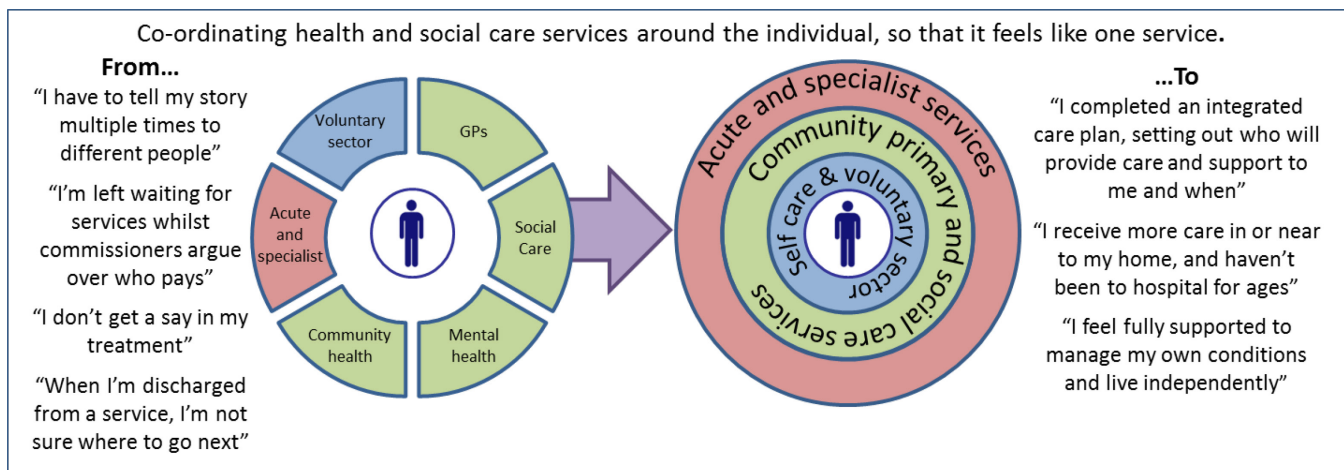


Figure 1: Co-ordinating health and care services around the individual

1. Integration to date

Integration is not a new goal and there have been initiatives over a number of years (see Figure 2).

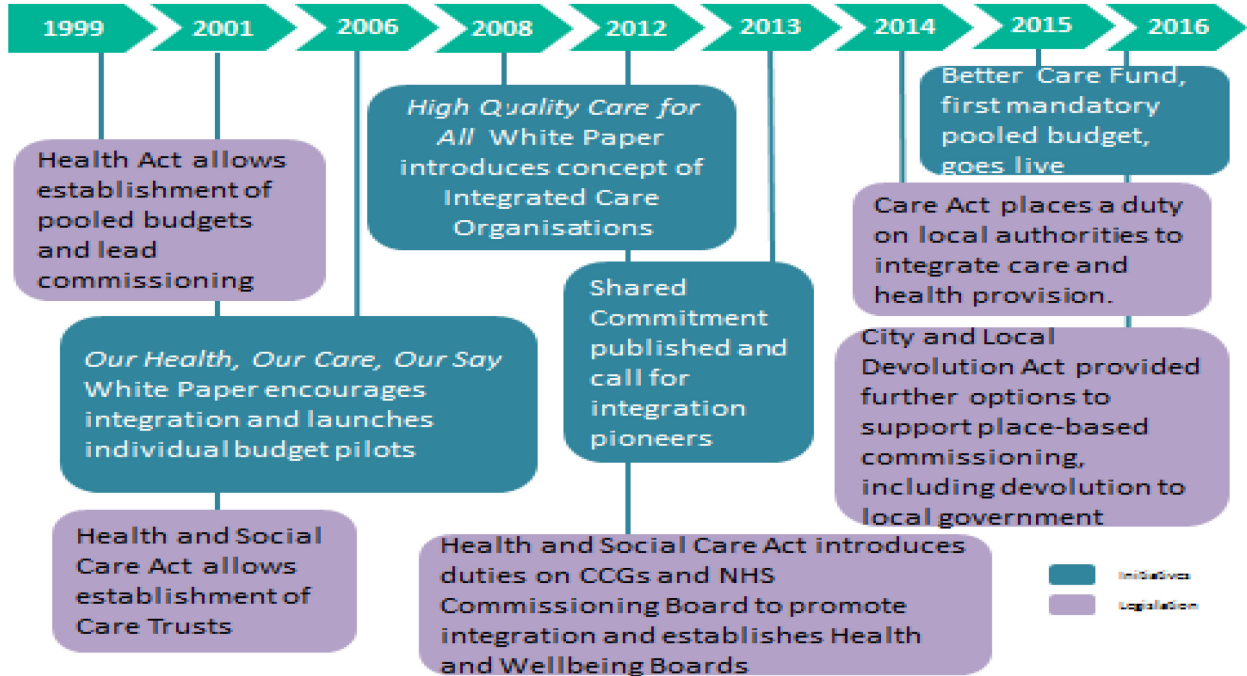


Figure 2: Key integration initiatives and enabling legislation

The Coalition Government and partners set out collective intentions on integration in [Integrated Care and Support: Our Shared Commitment](#) in 2013.² This showed how local areas can use existing structures such as **Health and Wellbeing Boards** to bring together local authorities, the NHS, care and support providers, education, housing services, public health and others to make further steps towards integration.

This collaboration with 12 national partners was backed by a call for areas wanting to lead the way to apply to become an ‘Integrated Care Pioneer’. We identified excellent examples of joined-up care happening in different ways up and down the country and the **Integrated Care Pioneers Programme** was launched to learn from the most innovative areas and to encourage change from the bottom up. The second annual report³ of the Pioneers summarises some of the recent learning and experiences, and the Pioneers’ resource centre⁴ contains a collection of tools, information and useful links.

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/198748/DEFINITIVE_FINAL_VERSION_Integrated_Care_and_Support_-_Our_Shared_Commitment_2013-05-13.pdf

³ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/pioneers/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2016/01/pioneer-programme-year2-report.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/pioneers/resource-centre/>

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More recently, the LGA, ADASS, NHS Confederation and NHS Clinical Commissioners have developed a shared vision document, [Stepping up to the place](#)⁵ for a fully integrated system based on existing evidence. This framework describes the essential characteristics of an integrated system to improve the health and wellbeing of local populations, and paves the way for integration to happen faster and to go further, so that integrated, preventative, person-centred care becomes the norm.

There is also a growing recognition of the important contribution of housing to integration. A national [Memorandum of Understanding to Support Joint Action on Improving Health through the Home](#)⁶ has been signed by a spectrum of organisations including: DH, DCLG, NHS England, ADASS and the LGA, along with members of the wider housing sector. The proposals set out in the Housing White Paper – Fixing our Broken Housing Market⁷ – also underline the Government’s commitment to do more to provide the homes we need for all in our society, including older people and those with care and support needs.

⁵ http://www.nhsconfed.org/~media/Confederation/Files/Publications/Documents/Stepping%20up%20to%20the%20place_Br1413_WEB.pdf

⁶ <https://www.adass.org.uk/media/3957/health-and-housing-mou-final-dec-14.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-white-paper>

2. Integration now and the wider policy context

Just as progress has already been made on integration, there are a number of current initiatives across the health and care system that contribute towards this goal.

Announced in June 2013, the **Better Care Fund (BCF)** brings together health and social care budgets to support more person-centred, coordinated care. In the first two years of the BCF, the total amount pooled has been £5.3bn in 2015-16 and £5.8bn in 2016-17.

The BCF offers a good opportunity to have shared conversations, and to consider issues from different perspectives, particularly how BCF plans can support the delivery of wider objectives and strategies around health and social care. In particular, every health and care system in England has produced a **Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)**, providing the system-level framework within which organisations in local health and care economies can plan effectively and deliver a sustainable, transformed and integrated health and care service. Local areas should ensure the financial planning and overall direction of travel within BCF plans and the local STP(s) are fully aligned.

The **vanguards**, which are part of NHS England's new care models programme⁸, have clear plans for managing demand more effectively across the local health and care system and reducing costs, at the same time as improving outcomes for patients and users. The vanguards programme has published two frameworks that cover population-based integrated models – the **Multi-speciality Community Providers (MCPs) and the Primary and Acute Care Systems (PACs)**.⁹ Many of these two types of vanguards include social care as well as pursuing integration within health services. All areas are encouraged to take action against the core elements described in the models where these support local objectives around the integration of health and care services. Scaling up of PACS and MCPs in a small number of STP areas will create Accountable Care Organisations, with further details in the Next Steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View.

Local devolution deals can add impetus to all of these initiatives, offering local areas the opportunity to go beyond the integration of health and social care and drawing in other local government services such as housing, planning, skills, justice, and transport. This provides opportunities for local areas to further tailor public services around individual needs and also to tackle the wider determinants of health. Figure 3 shows how multiple integration initiatives interact, for example, within Greater Manchester.

⁸ https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/new_care_models.pdf

⁹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/pacs-framework.pdf> and <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/mcp-care-model-fmwrk.pdf>



Figure 3 – Integration initiatives in Greater Manchester

There is a growing evidence base on the contribution that **housing** can make to good health and wellbeing. At a system level, poor housing costs the NHS at least £1.4bn per annum. And there are also costs to local government and social care. On an individual level, suitable housing can help people remain healthier, happier and independent for longer, and support them to perform the activities of daily living that are important to them – washing and dressing, preparing meals, staying in contact with friends and family.

The increase in funding for the **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)** – and the decision to move it into the BCF in 2015-16 – is recognised as an important step in the right direction. Further action to support people into more suitable accommodation, and to adapt existing stock, is also to be welcomed.

The Department of Health is also currently working with NHS England, Local Government and others to improve the support available to informal **carers**. Supporting informal carers also supports those they care for: improving outcomes for both parties, enabling people to live independently in the community for longer and reducing impact on commissioned services. All areas are therefore encouraged to consider how BCF plans can improve the support for carers. In doing so, they may wish to make use of ‘*An Integrated Approach to Identifying and Assessing Carer Health & Wellbeing*’¹⁰, an NHS England resource that promotes and supports joint working between adult social care services, NHS commissioners and providers, and voluntary organisations.

Within an area, a number of initiatives can also contribute towards overall system integration. These are not sufficient to full integration of health and social care, but can offer important contributions to key cohorts of patients and service users. For example:

¹⁰ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/identifying-assessing-carer-hlth-wellbeing.pdf>

- Some local areas are also taking action on '**Integrated Personal Commissioning**' (IPC), whereby individuals experience holistic, personalised care and support planning, and an option for them to commission their own care using a personal budget or direct payment arrangements that combine funding from health, social care and education. IPC is being progressed by nine demonstrator areas (covering 20 CCGs and 12 local authorities) that are leading the way in developing a practical operating framework to enable wider replication, with a further 10 early adopters set to join the programme by March 2017.¹¹

NHS England expects that IPC will become a mainstream model of care for around 5 per cent of the population, enabling the expansion of personal health budgets and integrated personal budgets at scale. IPC is expected to be operational in 50% of STP footprints by 2019. Some Demonstrator sites (i.e. Luton and Stockton on Tees) are incorporating their work on IPC into BCF plans, using personal health budgets and integrated personal budgets to create more stable, coordinated care at home and in the community for high risk groups. Other parts of the country are also encouraged to consider this approach.

- Learning from the six **Enhanced Health in Care Homes** (EHCH) vanguard sites suggests that action to provide joined up primary, community and secondary health and social care to residents of care and nursing homes, as well as those living in the wider community, can have significant benefits. These include transforming the quality of care, reducing costs and activity levels, and supporting relationship-building at local level. Some parts of the country (i.e. East and North Hertfordshire and others) are already building in work around EHCH into their BCF plans and other parts of the country are encouraged to do the same. For more details, please see the 'Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework'.¹²

¹¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/ipc/sites>

¹² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ehch-framework-v2.pdf>

3. Integration now and the Better Care Fund 2017-19

This Policy Framework for the Better Care Fund (BCF) covers two financial years (2017-19) to align with NHS planning timetables and to give areas the opportunity to plan more strategically. In 2017-18, the BCF will be increased to a mandated minimum of £5.128 billion and £5.617 billion in 2018-19.¹³ The local flexibility to pool more than the mandatory amount will remain. Further details of the financial breakdown are set out in Table 1 below.

The main change to the Framework from last year is inclusion of significant amounts of local authority social care grant funding. Some of this was announced at the 2015 Spending Review, with an additional £2 billion over three years announced at Spring Budget 2017. There will be grant conditions on this new money to ensure it has the expected impact at the care front line.

In developing this framework, we have listened to feedback from local areas about the need to further streamline the processes around planning, assurance and performance reporting. There is also a halving of the number of national conditions that areas are required to meet through their BCF plans - reduced from eight to four. We have also set out more clearly, the requirements around the social care national condition.

The national conditions that areas will need to meet in their plans for 2017-18 and 2018-19 are: **plans to be jointly agreed; NHS contribution to adult social care is maintained in line with inflation; agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out of hospital services; and managing transfers of care.** The detailed requirements for each condition are set out in **Annex A.**

The removal of some national conditions from 2016-17 does not reflect a downgrading of the importance of these policies and we expect them to underpin local BCF plans. For example, all areas should be working to embed 7-day services across the health and care system. Shared information, interoperable IT and joint care assessments are critical enablers to deliver integrated services - therefore, we expect every area to continue taking action to build on the progress made in the last two years. In **Annex B** we have set out what you can do to keep up the momentum.

Statutory and Financial Basis of the Better Care Fund

The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the BCF. It allows for the Mandate to NHS England to include specific requirements to instruct NHS England over the BCF, and NHS England to direct Clinical Commissioning Groups to pool the necessary funding.

¹³ These are indicative figures only.

Better Care Fund in 2017-18

The Mandate to NHS England for 2017-18 requires NHS England to ring-fence £3.582 billion within its overall allocation to Clinical Commissioning Groups to establish the BCF in 2017-18. The Mandate was published on 20th March 2017.¹⁴

The remainder of the £5.128bn BCF in 2017-18 will be made up of the £431m Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and £1.115bn new grant allocation to local authorities to fund adult social care, as announced in the 2015 Spending Review and Spring Budget 2017. Both grants are paid directly from the Government to local authorities.

As in the previous two years, the NHS contribution to the BCF includes funding to support the implementation of the Care Act 2014. Funding previously earmarked for reablement (£300m) and for the provision of carers' breaks (£130m) also remains in the NHS allocation.

Better Care Fund in 2018-19

The Mandate to NHS England for 2017-18 also denotes an indicative ring-fence of £3.65bn from allocations to Clinical Commissioning Groups for the establishment of the BCF in 2018-19. The actual amount will be confirmed via the Mandate for 2018-19, which will be published in winter 2017-18.

The remainder of the £5.617bn BCF in 2018-19 will be made up of the £468m DFG and an indicative amount of £1.499bn new grant allocation to local authorities to fund adult social care, both of which will be paid directly from the Government to local authorities.

As in 2017-18, funding previously earmarked for reablement (£300m) and for the provision of carers' breaks (£130m) remains in the NHS contribution.

Table 1: BCF funding contributions in 2017-19

Better Care Fund funding contribution (£bn)	2017-18	2018-19
Minimum NHS (clinical commissioning groups) contribution	£3.582	£3.65
Disabled Facilities Grant (capital funding for adaptations to houses)	£0.431	£0.468
New grant allocation for adult social care (Improved Better Care Fund)	£1.115	£1.499
Total	£5.128 billion	£5.617 billion

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-mandate-2017-to-2018>

Conditions of access to the Better Care Fund

The amended NHS Act 2006 gives NHS England the powers to attach conditions to the amount that is part of Clinical Commissioning Group allocations (as discussed earlier, these are £3.582bn in 17-18, and an indicative amount of £3.65bn in 18-19). These powers do not apply to the amounts paid directly from Government to local authorities.

For the DFG, the conditions of usage are set out in a Grant Determination Letter, due to be issued by DCLG in April. This references the statutory duty on local housing authorities to provide adaptations to those disabled people who qualify, and sets out other relevant conditions.

For the new grant allocation to local authorities to fund adult social care, the conditions of usage will also be set out in a Grant Determination Letter. This will also be issued by DCLG in April, though a draft version of the conditions has been shared in March, for information.

National Conditions for 2017-19

In 2017-19, NHS England will require that BCF plans demonstrate how the area will meet the following national conditions:

- **Plans to be jointly agreed;**
- **NHS contribution to adult social care is maintained in line with inflation;**
- **Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may include 7 day services and adult social care; and**
- **Managing Transfers of Care**

The refreshed definitions of these national conditions are set out at **Annex A**.

NHS England will also set the following requirements, which local areas will need to meet to access the CCG elements of the funding:

- A requirement that the BCF is transferred into one or more pooled funds established under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006; and
- A requirement that Health and Wellbeing Boards jointly agree plans for how the money will be spent, with plans signed-off by the relevant local authority and Clinical Commissioning Group(s).

Under the amended NHS Act 2006, NHS England has the ability to withhold, recover or direct the use of CCG funding where conditions attached to the BCF are not met, except, as mentioned above, for those amounts paid directly to local government. The Act makes provision

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at section 223GA(7) for the mandate to NHS England to include a requirement that NHS England consult Ministers before exercising these powers. The 2017-18 Mandate to NHS England confirms that NHS England will be required to consult the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government before using these powers.

Disabled Facilities Grant

In two-tier areas decisions around the use of the DFG funding will need to be made with the direct involvement of both tiers working jointly to support integration ambitions. DFG funding allocated by central government should be passed down by the county to the districts (in full, unless jointly agreed to do otherwise) to enable them to continue to meet their statutory duty to provide adaptations and in line with these plans; as set out in the DFG Grant Determination Letter due to be issued by DCLG in April 2017.

New grant for adult social care (announced in the 2015 Spending Review and Spring Budget 2017 as 'Improved Better Care Fund' (iBCF) funding)

The Government's Spending Review in 2015 announced new money for the BCF of £105m for 2017-18, £825m for 2018-19 and £1.5bn for 2019-20. The Spring Budget 2017 subsequently increased this to £1.115bn for 2017-18, £1.499bn for 2018-19 and £1.837bn for 2019-20. The Government will require that this additional Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) funding for adult social care in 2017-19 will be pooled into the local BCF. This funding does not replace, and must not be offset against the NHS minimum contribution to adult social care.

The new iBCF grant will be paid directly to local authorities via a Section 31 grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The Government will attach a set of conditions to the Section 31 grant, to ensure it is included in the BCF at local level and will be spent on adult social care. The final conditions will be issued in April. However, a draft has been shared with areas in March. The draft conditions of use of the Grant can be summarised as:

1. Grant paid to a local authority under this determination may be used only for the purposes of meeting adult social care needs; reducing pressures on the NHS, including supporting more people to be discharged from hospital when they are ready; and ensuring that the local social care provider market is supported.
2. A recipient local authority must:
 - a) pool the grant funding into the local BCF, unless an area has written Ministerial exemption;
 - b) work with the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group and providers to meet National Condition 4 (Managing Transfers of Care) in the Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework and Planning Requirements 2017-19; and

- c) provide quarterly reports as required by the Secretary of State.
3. The Government has made clear that part of this funding is intended to enable local authorities to quickly provide stability and extra capacity in local care systems. Local authorities are therefore able to spend the grant, including to commission care, subject to the conditions set out in the grant determination, as soon as plans have been locally agreed.

In terms of the wider context, the funding is also intended to support councils to continue to focus on core services, including to help cover the costs of the National Living Wage, which is expected to benefit up to 900,000 care workers. This includes maintaining adult social care services, which could not otherwise be maintained, as well as investing in new services, such as those which support best practice in managing transfers of care.

Local authorities will be required to confirm that spending of the BCF money provided at Spending Review 2015 and Spring Budget 2017 will be additional to prior plans for social care spending, via a Section 151 Officer letter.

The assurance and approval of local Better Care Fund plans

As in 2016-17, plans will be developed locally in each Health and Wellbeing Board area by the relevant local authority and Clinical Commissioning Group(s). Plans will be assured and moderated regionally in line with the operational planning assurance process set out in the Integration and Better Care Fund Planning Requirements, published by NHS England and the Local Government Association.

Recommendations for approval of overall BCF plans will be made following moderation of regional assurance outcomes by NHS England and local government. Plans will be approved and permission to spend the CCG minimum contribution to the BCF will be given once NHS England and the Integration Partnership Board have agreed that the conditions attached to that funding have been met.

Local authorities are legally obliged to comply with grant conditions. The NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Care Act 2014) allows NHS England to direct the use of the CCG elements of the fund where an area fails to meet one (or more) of the BCF conditions. This includes the requirement to develop an approved plan. If a local plan cannot be agreed or other National Conditions are not met, any proposal to direct use of the CCG elements of the Fund will be discussed with the Integration Partnership Board.

National performance metrics

As in 2015-16 and 2016-17, local areas are asked to agree and report metrics in the following four areas:

- Delayed transfers of care;
- Non-elective admissions (General and Acute);
- Admissions to residential and care homes; and
- Effectiveness of reablement

The detailed definitions of these metrics will be set out in the Integration and Better Care Fund Planning Requirements.

We are no longer requiring the national collection of a locally proposed metric.

Better Care Fund support offer in 2017-19

In implementing the BCF from 2017-18 to 2018-19, the joint Better Care Support team hosted by NHS England will continue to:

- Provide support to local areas to ensure effective implementation of agreed plans;
- Build an intelligence base to understand the real impact of the BCF on delivering integration;
- Support local systems to enable the successful delivery of integrated care in 2017-19 by capturing and sharing learning, building and facilitating networks to identify solutions;
- Promote and communicate the benefits of health and social care integration;
- Monitor the ongoing delivery of the BCF – including quarterly reporting on national metrics and spending; and
- Support areas that are proposing to graduate or have graduated from the BCF.

4. Integration now - Graduating from the Better Care Fund

Overview

The Government's Spending Review 2015 set out that "areas will be able to graduate from the existing Better Care Fund (BCF) programme management once they can demonstrate that they have moved beyond its requirements, meeting the government's key criteria for devolution."

It is the Government's ambition that all areas will be able to work towards graduation from the BCF to be more fully integrated by 2020, with areas approved in waves as they demonstrate maturity and progress towards greater integration. The best areas are showing that greater levels of integration bring positive benefits in terms of improving people's health, wellbeing and experience of care, particularly in wrapping services around people's needs and shifting the focus to keeping people well and happy at home, with reduced demand for hospital and other health and care services.

These areas can apply for 'earned autonomy' from the BCF programme management. Graduation will mean that we will have a different relationship with these local areas; with reduced planning and reporting requirements and greater local freedoms to develop agreements appropriate to a more mature system of health and social care integration. This will include a bespoke support offer for areas that graduate, in addition to them no longer being required to submit BCF plans and quarterly reports.

We are planning to test the graduation process with a small number of areas (6 to 10) in the first instance. We are inviting areas that believe they can demonstrate that they meet the criteria for graduation now to put themselves forward prior to the deadline for submission of first plans, with a view to graduating from the BCF in this first wave.

Subsequent waves of areas will have the opportunity to graduate over the course of this spending review period. Departments, the LGA and NHS England will work with graduated areas to role-model how integration can support better outcomes for populations across health, social care and housing.

A "first wave" of Better Care Fund graduation

We have no set targets for the numbers of areas that graduate from the existing BCF programme management in each year. In the first round, we are planning to test graduation with a small number of areas (between 6 and 10), and will use this learning to refine the criteria and process going forward.

Graduation proposals should be made, at minimum, across an entire Health and Wellbeing Board geography, but could be aligned to Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)

footprints or devolution deal sites, as long as all relevant Health and Wellbeing Boards included in the proposal are supportive.

The eligibility criteria are set out below. Areas interested in participating in the first wave of graduates should benchmark themselves against these criteria and discuss their interest with their Better Care Manager.

The process of graduation will utilise sector-led improvement principles, supporting areas through peer review and development. This will culminate in a “graduation panel”, which will provide face-to-face support and challenge to local areas to agree the conditions for graduation.

Eligibility criteria for Better Care Fund graduation

To keep the application process simple, all partners in an area wishing to apply for graduation will need to complete an Expression of Interest and demonstrate that they:

a) Have in place a sufficiently mature system of health and social care with evidence of:

- Strong shared local political, professional, commissioner and community leadership;
- An agreed system-wide strategy for improving health and wellbeing through health and social care integration to 2020. The government supports a range of models of health and social care integration, as set out in Chapter 5. You should reference your choice of model in your integration strategy or action plans and their links to wider health and local government strategies; and
- A robust approach to managing risk, including adequate financial risk management arrangements proportionate to the level of risk in the system, for example, if any CCG is subject to financial directions, a clear appraisal of any additional risk and approach to managing it.

b) Can demonstrate the application is approved by all signatories required by BCF planning

c) Provide evidence of improvement and/or approach to improving performance on BCF national performance metrics and how graduation will enable the area to accelerate improvement on these metrics. This should include current performance data and stretch targets.

d) Set out plans to pool an agreed amount greater than the minimum levels of the BCF or align the commissioning of an equivalent or greater scope of services. Set out plans to maintain joint investment in integrated services, including:

- Maintaining the NHS contribution to social care and NHS commissioned services in line with inflation;
- Maintaining additional contributions from CCGs and local authorities to the pooled fund, in addition to the ‘Improved Better Care Fund’ grant funding to local government; and

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- Continuing to meet grant conditions attached to the newly allocated funding within the Improved Better Care Fund.
- e) **Are committed to a ‘sector-led improvement’ approach in which they are willing to act as peer leaders, working with national partners to support other areas looking to graduate.**

Selection criteria

As the first wave is testing the process, we will use the Expressions of Interest and other available information, including the following additional criteria, to select a small pool of 6-10 applicants, as follows:

- a) The applicants commit and have the capacity to participate in the selection process which is set out below, participate in the pilot evaluation and share learning with peers and with national organisations supporting integration work.
- b) The applicants have discussed their proposal with their local Better Care Manager.
- c) The pilot cohort covers a range of different care model types as set out in Chapter 5.
- d) The pilot cohort covers a spread of geographical locations and local authority type.

The selection process will include graduation workshops to help local leaders identify the steps necessary to graduate from the BCF and progress integration, in line with the 2015 Spending Review commitments. The workshops are based on the existing LGA sector-led improvement model, and will involve a half-day session for senior local health and local government leaders; these workshops will run in May and June, in order to complete the pilot in the agreed timeframe. The process will culminate in graduation panels (in early-to-mid July) with representatives from Department of Health, Department for Communities and Local Government, NHS England, Local Government Association, and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, and will agree with local leaders, clear, measurable and transparent objectives and milestones for integration locally to 2020. We also intend to develop a dedicated package of support, building on the learning and experience of sites which have graduated from the pilot.

We are seeking areas which have made the most progress in moving beyond the requirements of the BCF. We recognise that the restricted number of pilot areas is likely to mean some areas are unsuccessful. We do understand that this will be disappointing for those areas not selected, but subsequent graduation waves will not be restricted in numbers in the same way. In addition those areas which are not selected for the pilot can continue to prepare for subsequent waves.

Expression of Interest process and timelines

- Applicants should submit to England.bettercaresupport@nhs.net an Expression of Interest, which demonstrates how local organisations meet the eligibility criteria a) to e) above by 5pm on 28th April 2017; this should include an indication of the discussion with their local Better Care Manager, which should take place before 19th April 2017.
- All applications will be assessed by the selection panel, with results communicated by 10th May 2017.
- Graduation workshops will run in May and June, with graduation panels taking place in early-to-mid July.

Guidance on submitting an Expression of Interest

The form should specifically address the eligibility criteria outlined in a) to e) above. Any submitted documents, including any covering letters, must not be longer than 6 pages, and have no embedded or attached appendices. Any attached or embedded documents will not be considered by the selection panel.

The Expressions of Interest will be assessed by a panel of representatives from the Department of Health, Department for Communities and Local Government, NHS England, Local Government Association, and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. Its decision will be based on the evidence provided against eligibility criteria a) to e), with adjustments made to ensure a fair selection of pilots across geography, care model and local authority type in order to maximise the potential for learning from the pilots.

The support offer

We will put in place an ongoing support offer for areas, before, during and after the process of graduation. This will include:

- **Before** – Seminars, workshops or individual support for areas preparing for graduation (second and subsequent waves), including peer support from areas that have graduated;
- **During** - Advice and support for areas shortlisted for graduation to develop the core essential characteristics for integration including those required as evidence for graduation;
- **After** - Support for a peer network of graduated areas to share experience and evidence of what is working;

Once an area has been selected for graduation, we will aim to support them to achieve and/or maintain their integration vision. Areas that have 'graduated' from the BCF will continue to be subject to the normal local authority and CCG reporting requirements on finance and performance. We will develop with the first wave the format and process for providing a self-certifying annual report. In the unforeseen circumstances of serious financial or performance

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issues or a breakdown in local partnership's ability to realise their integration plan, it may be necessary to reinstate some or all of the BCF programme management. This would be considered a last resort to support local leaders. Local areas would be given adequate advance notice, before any assurance or reporting requirements are reinstated.

BCF graduates will be at the forefront of demonstrating how integration of health and care is becoming a reality by 2020 and we expect that early graduates will work with national partners to share learning with others and provide leadership in delivering fuller integration by 2020.

5. Integration future - Integration to 2020

Overview

At the Spending Review 2015, the Government announced its ambition to integrate health and social care by 2020 so that it feels like one service. As noted by the Nuffield Trust there “is no one model of integrated care that is suited to all contexts, settings and circumstances”.¹⁵

The ways local areas integrate will be different, and some parts of the country are already demonstrating different approaches, which reflect models the government supports. For example:

- **Greater Manchester** – a devolution area pooling health and social care budgets within 10 HWB localities. Where there are clear benefits, services will be commissioned across the footprint through the joint commissioning board (comprising the CCGs, local authorities and NHS England). Each locality has its own individual plan for integrating services which feeds into the overarching health and social care strategy.
- **North East Lincolnshire** – a lead commissioner model, in which the CCG exercises the Adult Social Care functions on behalf of the local authority;
- **Northumberland** – a single Accountable Care Organisation (ACO), taking on responsibility for general practice, primary care, hospital and community services, adult social care and mental health services.¹⁶

	Joint commissioning	Lead commissioning	Accountable Care Organisation (ACO) ¹⁷
Characteristics	<p>Some or all CCG/LA commissioning decisions made jointly.</p> <p>Budgets (and other resources) pooled or aligned in line with extent of joint commissioning.</p>	<p>One body exercises some or all functions of both the CCG and the LA, with the relevant resources delegated accordingly.</p>	<p>CCG and LA pay a set figure (possibly determined by capitation) to an Accountable Care Organisation to deliver an agreed set of outcomes for all health and care activity for the whole population, using a multi-year contract.</p> <p>The ACO decides what services to purchase to deliver those outcomes. MCPs and PACs are types of ACOs.</p>

¹⁵ Nuffield Trust, An overview of integrated care in the NHS. What is integrated care? (London: Nuffield Trust, 2011), 20.

¹⁶ Northumberland is a PACs vanguard site, but the ACO goes well beyond simply combining primary and secondary acute care.

¹⁷ M McClellan et al., Implementing Accountable Care to achieve Better Health at a Lower Cost, WISH 2016 <http://www.wish-qatar.org/wish-2016/forum-reports>

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An integrated health and social care service should have full geographical coverage, with clear governance and accountability arrangements. As part of this, we would encourage areas to align their approach to health and care integration with STP geographies, where appropriate. This may be supplemented by initiatives for particular groups, such as Enhanced Health in Care Homes and Integrated Personal Commissioning.

The Government recognises the integration efforts that are already happening, including through the Better Care Fund (BCF), STPs and local devolution. There will be no separate process for integration plans. **Instead, we will simply require local areas to set out how they expect to progress to further integration by 2020 in their BCF 17-19 returns.**

Next Steps

To help areas understand whether they are meeting our integration ambition, we will develop integration metrics for assessing progress, particularly at the interface where health and social care interact. This will combine outcome metrics, user experience and process measures. The metrics will build on work already carried out on behalf of Government (see Annex C) and the Integration Standard tested on the Government's behalf by the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) found at Annex D. SCIE found that the standard identified helpful integration activities such as risk stratification and multi-disciplinary community teams, but was process-focused and did not tell the whole integration story. We therefore want to bring elements of the standard into the wider integration scorecard. SCIE's full report is available here: www.scie.org.uk/integrated-health-social-care/integration-2020/research

Further work involving SCIE and key stakeholders will develop these integration metrics. If you have any thoughts on what to include in these, please email: Bettercarefund@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Following the development of the metrics we will ask the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out targeted reviews in a small number of areas, starting as soon as is practical from May 2017. These reviews will be focused on the interface of health and social care and will not cover wider council social care commissioning. This should lead to a tailored response to ensure those areas facing the greatest challenges can improve rapidly.

Other actions will include:

a) Consideration of Section 75 arrangements

The Department of Health, working with NHS England, is now considering what further changes could be made to secondary legislation to support more integrated, place-based approaches to health and social care, for example:

- The commissioning functions that can be included in scope
- The governance and partnership working arrangements that are permissible, for example Joint Committees

Before NHS England can make arrangements involving combined authorities and local authorities for example, regulations would need to be made prescribing those bodies for the purposes of such arrangements. The Department is also considering whether further amendments to the section 75 partnership regulations would support local areas to extend the benefits of partnership working as they take forward their integration vision.

b) Developing our evidence base on integration, through independent evaluation and sector-led engagement

We will build on our evidence base on what good integration looks like through:

- **The final report of the system-level evaluation of the Better Care Fund will be ready in winter 2017-18.** An interim report is expected in spring 2017, including a typology analysis of integration activities, initial findings from the comparative evaluation, and a BCF policy background paper (a documentary analysis of official BCF literature).
- **Learning from LGA's sector-led support using the Integration 'self-assessment' tool¹⁸** developed by LGA, ADASS, NHS Confederation and NHS Clinical Commissioners. The peer-led tool assesses local leaders' readiness, capacity and capability to integrate. We will build on this to facilitate graduation panels.
- **NHS England and NHS Improvement evaluation of the New Care Models Programme.** There is a wide range of national, local and independent evaluation of the NCM. Evaluations are progressing at pace.
- **DH and CQC testing the feasibility of a national survey of people's experience of integrated care.** This will be piloted in 2017-18 with a view to national roll out in the future.

Resources:

The LGA has developed a library of resources, signposting local areas to evidence, case studies, tools and resources which will support the development of integration ambitions locally.¹⁹ The resource is organised around the essential integration characteristics, such as leadership, governance, prevention, housing and planning, co-production, care models and workforce. Organisations may also find the slides on Integration, produced by consulting firm Oliver Wyman, a useful resource.²⁰

¹⁸ <http://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/stepping-place-integratio-f0b.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/our-improvement-offer/care-and-health-improvement/integration-and-better-care-fund/better-care-fund/integration-resource-library>

²⁰ <http://www.oliverwyman.com/our-expertise/insights/2016/nov/global-health-strategy-hub.html>

Annex A: Further information on the national conditions for 2017-19

NATIONAL CONDITION	DEFINITION
<p>Condition 1: Plans to be jointly agreed</p>	<p>Local areas must ensure that their Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan covers the minimum of the pooled fund specified in the BCF allocations spreadsheet, and potentially extending to the totality of the health and care spend in the Health and Wellbeing Board area.</p> <p>The plans should be signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board itself, and by the constituent councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups.</p> <p>The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) will again be allocated through the BCF. As such, areas are required to involve local housing authority representatives in developing and agreeing the plan, in order to ensure a joined-up approach to improving outcomes across health, social care and housing. In two-tier areas decisions around the use of the DFG funding will need to be made with the direct involvement of both tiers working jointly to support integration ambitions. DFG funding allocated by central government should be passed down by the county to the districts (in full, unless jointly agreed to do otherwise) to enable them to continue to meet their statutory duty to provide adaptations and in line with these plans. During these discussions, it will be important to continue to meet local needs for aids and adaptations, whilst also considering how adaptation delivery systems can help meet wider objectives around integration. For both single tier and two tier authorities, areas are required to set out in their plans how the DFG funding will be used over the two years.</p> <p>In agreeing the plan, Clinical Commissioning Groups and local authorities should engage with groups likely to be affected by the use of the fund (including health and social care providers) in order to achieve the best outcomes for local people.</p>
<p>Condition 2: NHS contribution to adult social care is maintained in line with inflation</p>	<p>For 2017/18 and 2018/19, the minimum contribution to adult social care will be calculated using the assured figures from 2016/17 as a baseline. This will apply except where a Health and Wellbeing Board secures the agreement of the Integration Partnership Board to an alternative baseline.</p> <p>The NHS contribution to adult social care at a local level must be increased by 1.79% and 1.9% (in line with the increases applied to the money CCGs must pool) in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 respectively.</p> <p>Local areas can opt to frontload the 2018-19 uplift in 2017-18 and then carry over the same level of contribution in 2018-19 as in 2017-18.</p> <p>The funding must be used to contribute to the maintenance of adult social care services in each local authority, which also has a health benefit. However, beyond this broad condition, the Department of Health wants to provide flexibility for local areas to determine how this investment in adult social care</p>

	<p>services is best used.</p> <p>The additional funding for adult social services paid directly to local authorities by the government in each year (please refer to page 17) does not replace, and cannot not be offset against, the NHS minimum contribution to adult social care.</p>
<p>Condition 3:</p> <p>Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out of hospital services, which may include 7 day services and adult social care</p>	<p>Local areas should agree how they will use their share of the £1.018 billion in 2017/18 and £1.037 billion in 2018/19 that had previously been used to create the payment for performance fund (in the 2015-16 BCF).</p> <p>This should be achieved by funding NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may include 7-day services and adult social care, as part of their agreed BCF plan. This can also include NHS investment in the high impact change model for managing transfers of care (linked to compliance with national condition 4), although CCGs can commission these services from funding outside of this ringfence.</p> <p>Local areas can choose to put an appropriate proportion of their share of the £1.018bn into a local risk-sharing agreement as part of contingency planning in the event of excess activity, with the balance spent on NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, which may include a wide range of services including 7-day services and adult social care (local areas should seek, as a minimum, to maintain provision of NHS commissioned out of hospital services in a manner consistent with 2016-17).</p> <p>Further guidance to support local areas on deciding whether to hold back a proportion of funds as part of a risk share agreement will be provided in the Integration and Better Care Fund Planning Requirements.</p>
<p>Condition 4:</p> <p>Managing Transfers of Care</p>	<p>All areas should implement the High Impact Change Model for Managing Transfer of Care²¹ to support system-wide improvements in transfers of care. Narrative plans should set out how local partners will work together to fund and implement this and the schemes and services commissioned will be assured through the planning template.</p> <p>Areas should agree a joint approach to funding, implementing and monitoring the impact of these changes, ensuring that all partners are involved, including relevant Accident and Emergency Delivery Boards.</p> <p>Quarterly reports will be provided, as required by the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government.</p>

²¹ Including arrangements for a Trusted Assessor model, as per the following link:
[http://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Impact change model managing transfers of care %281%29.pdf](http://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Impact%20change%20model%20managing%20transfers%20of%20care%281%29.pdf)

Annex B: Maintaining progress on the 2016-17 national conditions

We have made changes to the national conditions and reduced the number of conditions to reflect wider changes in the policy and delivery landscape.

For the policy areas that are no longer national conditions of the Better Care Fund (BCF) in 17-19 (see table below), we encourage areas to continue taking action through their BCF plans or other local agreements to ensure these policy priorities and critical enablers for integration continue to feature in local planning and delivery.

National condition	Update for 2017-19 Better Care Fund planning
1. Plans to be jointly agreed	This is a condition for 2017-19 (see Annex A)
2. NHS contribution to adult social care is maintained in line with inflation.	This is a condition for 2017-19 (see Annex A)
Agreement for the delivery of 7-day services across health and social care to prevent unnecessary non-elective (physical and mental health) admission to acute settings and to facilitate transfer to alternative care settings when clinically appropriate	<p>Improving services through the implementation of the 7-day service clinical standards remains an important priority.²² All areas should be working to make progress on implementing the 4 priority clinical standards, supported by NHS England and NHS Improvement, so that by April 2018, 50% of patients have access to these standards of care every day of the week with this rising to everyone by 2020. Sustainability and Transformation Plans are providing an opportunity for areas to come together to consider the delivery of 7-day services across geographical areas.</p> <p>Although not a requirement for accessing BCF funding in 2017-19, BCF areas should continue to make progress locally, building on the action taken in 2016-17, on implementing standard 9 of the 7-day hospital service clinical standards which concerns the transfer of patients to community, primary and social care. Standard 9 sets out that: 'Support services, both in the hospital and in primary, community and mental health settings must be available seven days a week to ensure that the next steps in the patient's care pathway, as determined by the daily consultant-led review, can be taken, 'Academy of Medical</p>

²² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/qual-clin-lead/seven-day-hospital-services/the-clinical-case/>

	<p>Royal Colleges (2012): Seven day consultant present care’.</p> <p>Without the timely transfer of patients across settings of care there can be detriment to both existing hospital patients and newly-arriving patients. All BCF areas should work together to avoid unnecessary delays in patient pathways, including taking the actions to reduce delayed transfers of care set out in the section on DTOC below.</p>
<p>Better data sharing between health and social care, based on the NHS number</p>	<p>Data sharing is no longer a condition of the BCF but it remains an important enabler to delivery of BCF or wider integration commitments.</p> <p>To enable effective information sharing for direct care, Parliament introduced the Safety and Quality Act in 2015 which now makes it a legal requirement to share information where it is likely to facilitate the provision of health or care services and is in the individuals’ best interests. The Safety and Quality Act also now makes it a legal requirement to use a consistent identifier (such as the NHS number) to support local information sharing. There are examples of where leadership commitment is enabling information sharing at a local level.</p> <p>In addition, through Local Digital Roadmaps, local areas are outlining ambitions for the use of information sharing and technology to support the delivery of care. There are existing examples across the country of where local areas are joining up local systems to give a single health and care record to support the delivery of direct care. These approaches will enable improved coordination of care and support information sharing across health and care settings.</p> <p>The National Data Guardian has also published a review of data security, consent and opt outs across health and care. The report proposed a set of ten data security standards for the health and care system and made a series of recommendations to support information sharing. This includes a commitment to refresh the current Information Governance Toolkit, so that it becomes a portal to support organisations across health and social care to demonstrate increasing resilience and compliance with the standards. Local areas should consider how best to implement these recommendations in conjunction with national policy and services such as CareCERT. The review builds on the previous two Caldicott reports to emphasise the</p>

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	importance of building public trust in data security and information sharing, and encouraging public bodies to ensure they engage with citizens regarding how their information is shared.
Ensure a joint approach to assessments and care planning and ensure that, where funding is used for integrated packages of care, there will be an accountable professional	This is no longer a condition of the BCF; however, BCF plans should have embedded within them, an integrated and proactive approach to planning and managing care with other health and care professionals.
Agreement on the consequential impact of changes on the providers that are predicted to be substantially affected by the plans	This is no longer a condition of the BCF but areas should engage with groups likely to be affected by the use of the fund (including health and social care providers) in order to achieve the best outcomes for local people (as set out in condition 1 for 2017-19)
3. Agreement to invest in NHS commissioned out of hospital services, which may include a wide range of services including social care	This is a condition for 2017-19 (see Annex A)
Agreement on local action plans to reduce delayed transfers of care (DTOC)	<p>There is an improved condition around Managing Transfers of Care (National Condition 4), which requires areas to implement the High Impact Change Model for Managing Transfers of Care.</p> <p>Areas should agree a joint approach to funding, implementing and monitoring the impact of these changes, including setting out the intended impact on reducing delayed transfers of care.</p> <p>This will also support the target of a reduction in total delayed transfers of care to 3.5% by September 2017 (recognising existing variation between areas), which is referenced in the Mandate to NHS England for 2017-18.</p>

Annex C: Draft Interface Metrics

Proposed scorecard for measuring effectiveness of social and healthcare interfaces

A Main performance indicators

- A1** NEL admissions (65+) per 1,000 65+
- A2** NEL admissions (65+) with length of stay >30 days per 1,000 65+
- A3** Emergency readmission (65+) per 1,000 emergency admissions 65+
- A4** Institutionalisation bed days (65+) per 1,000 65+
- A5** DTOC – overall and due to social care placement or package per 1,000 65+

B Supporting overarching indicator

- B1** Index of 'User reported quality of life' and 'Proportion of people feeling supported to manage their LTC'

C Contextual indicator

- C1** Index of multiple deprivation (IMD)

Additional contextual indicators to collect in the future:

- Public health and social care spend per capita for 65+
- Proportion of 65+ with shared care records in place which are accessible by all care manage teams

Annex D: Integration Standard

	Objective	Improvement to person's experience	System change needed to deliver this objective
1	Digital interoperability	"I have access to a Digital Integrated Care Record that moves with me throughout the health and care system. All professionals involved in my care have access to this record (with the appropriate safeguards in place to protect my personal data)"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas reach digital maturity, including universal use of the NHS number as the primary identifier and fully interoperable IT across providers and commissioners.
2	Resource targeted at key cohorts to prevent crises and maintain wellbeing	<p>"If I am at risk of emergency hospital admission, I will receive the right care at the right time to help me to manage my condition and to keep me out of hospital."</p> <p>"If it would benefit me, I will be able to access a personal budget, giving me greater control over money spent on my care."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas use health and social care data to risk stratify their populations, identifying those most at risk of unplanned admissions and allocating resources according to need. Areas will allow greater access to Integrated Personal Commissioning, for identified groups who could benefit. Areas use capitated budgets where appropriate
3	Value for money	"I receive the best possible level of care from the NHS and my Local Authority."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas deliver against a clear plan for making efficiencies across health and care, through integration.
4	Single assessment and care plans	"If I have complex health and care needs, the NHS and social care work together to assess my care needs and agree a single plan to cover all aspects of my care."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas use multi-disciplinary integrated teams and make use of professional networks to ensure high-quality joined-up care is delivered in the most appropriate place seven days a week.
5	Integrated community care	"My GP and my social worker or carer work with me to decide what level of care I need, and work with all of the appropriate professionals to make sure I receive it."	
6	Timely and safe discharges	"If I go into hospital, health and social care professionals work together to make sure I'm not there for any longer than I need to be."	
7	Social care embedded in urgent and emergency care	"If I have to make use of any part of the urgent and emergency care system, there are both health and social care professionals on hand when I need them".	