

Delegated Decision

29 February 2024

AHS Fees & Charges 2024/25

Ordinary Decision



Report of Jeff Garfoot, Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To set out details of proposed fees and charges for Adult and Health Services for 2024/25.

Executive Summary

- 2 The Constitution provides delegated powers to each Corporate Director, in consultation with their respective Portfolio Holders, to introduce, review or amend fees and charges.
- 3 A Corporate Fees and Charges Policy exists to support budget processes and to provide a framework for Durham County Council's approach to charging for services. The Policy is built around the following key principles:
 - Develop an entrepreneurial approach so that charges whether new or reviewed are properly considered, and consistent.
 - Compliance with the Local Government Act 2003, which gives wide general powers to provide and charge for "Discretionary Services".
 - Adherence with the financial duty to ensure income does not exceed cost.
 - Charges may be set, so that different people are charged different amounts and in different areas to satisfy local needs and objectives. (A service can also continue to be provided free).
 - The income derived from charging will normally be used to offset the costs of providing the service being charged for, including support service costs.

- 4 As a general principle all proposals put forward to alter charges must be affordable, equitable and sustainable. These principles have been applied with regard to price increases throughout this report.
- 5 In the calculation of the budget for 2024/25, pay and price inflation assumptions include a provision for increases on all income budgets of 2%. It is for service groupings to decide how this inflation is applied, for example if a service does not wish to apply a 2% increase to a certain charge, this will need to be offset by savings elsewhere.
- 6 The vast majority of income which is received from adult care services falls into two regimes, residential and non-residential. Charging policies are in line with guidance issued under the Care Act 2014.
- 7 Generally, VAT is not applicable; where VAT is applicable the figures with VAT are shown within the report.

Recommendations

- 8 It is recommended that:
 - a. The revised fees as highlighted in the body of the report are approved by AHSMT and are implemented from relevant dates shown for 2024/25 (The attached appendix provides the comparison between 2023/24 and 2024/25 charges).

Background

- 9 The Constitution provides delegated powers to each Corporate Director, in consultation with their respective Portfolio Holders, to introduce, review or amend fees and charges.
- 10 Fees and charges should be reviewed at least annually and adjusted where appropriate. Increases in fees and charges are necessary to take into account current and future pressures on budgets and the need to achieve MTFP savings through maximising service income as well as reducing expenditure. However, the difficult economic climate means that careful consideration must be given to increasing prices in all discretionary fee generating areas.
- 11 In the calculation of the budget for 2024/25, pay and price inflation assumptions include a provision for increases on all income budgets of 2%. It is for service groupings to decide how this inflation is applied, for example if a service does not wish to apply a 2% increase to a certain charge, this will need to be offset by savings elsewhere.
- 12 The vast majority of income which is received from adult care services falls into two regimes, residential and non-residential. Charging policies are in line with guidance issued under the Care Act 2014.
- 13 Generally, VAT is not applicable; where VAT is applicable the figures with VAT are shown within the report.
- 14 In line with corporate guidance and where appropriate, key increases will be implemented as follows. Note that increases have been aligned with benefit uplift dates where possible:
 - Residential Care, Supported Living, Domiciliary Care, Day Care, Extra Care, Shared Lives and Specialist Support Packages with effect from 8 April 2024, unless contractually agreed otherwise.
 - Funded Nursing Care (FNC) with effect from 1 April 2024.
 - Note: Grant monies were used to apply an early uplift to Domiciliary Care provider payments from October 2023.

Statutory / Regulatory & Discretionary Charges

- 15 The Council is able to charge for certain statutory services, with the fee being determined by the Council, in accordance with regulatory restrictions to ensure no “undue profit” is being generated from the charging policy applied.

- 16 Other fees and charges are set at the discretion of the Council, with only reputational and market conditions being a factor in the decision on the charge that is appropriate.
- 17 For any discretionary charging areas, unless an increase would impact severely on customers, a phased increase is regarded as more equitable.
- 18 The following fees, charges and SLAs are levied within Adult and Health Services:

Charges for Meals within County Durham Care & Support Properties

- 19 Within residential establishments, meals are provided for clients as appropriate. It is proposed to increase the rates for meals in accordance with the MTFP requirement of at least 2%. In order to arrive at a rate to the nearest 5p, the proposed increase will be between 1.43% and 4.35%. (See Appendix 2 for details).

Charges for County Durham Care & Support (CDCS) Provision

- 20 A review of charges has been undertaken to reflect current service provision and this has resulted in revised charges as below:
 - a. In House Respite (Hawthorn House) - £384 per day
 - b. Support & Recovery - £18 per hour
 - c. Pathways - £126 per day
 - d. Positive Journeys - £126 per day (based on 1:1 provision)

Charges for Room Hire within County Durham Care & Support Properties.

- 21 Within day care and residential establishments, rooms are available to hire by outside agencies or external bodies. It is proposed that these rates will be increased in accordance with the MTFP rate of circa 2% (rounded to nearest 5p, the proposed percentage increase will be between 1.97% and 2.11%). (See Appendix 2 for details).

Other County Durham Care and Support Adult Care charges

- 22 Within day care establishments there are additional facilities for use by clients. It is proposed that the rate is increased in accordance with the minimum MTFP rate of circa 2% (rounded to nearest 5p, the percentage increase will be 2.11%). (See Appendix 2 for details).

Shared Lives and Carer Breaks

- 23 The rates for shared lives and carer breaks operate on a banding system; it is proposed that all bands are increased by 2%. In addition, for ease of calculating part weeks the rates are subsequently adjusted to be divisible by

7 to enable a daily rate to the nearest 5p to be obtained. This results in increases from 1.90% to 2.06%. (See Appendix 2 for details).

- 24 The mileage rates payable are to be linked to the agreed County Council mileage rate for 2024/25 (at date of writing £0.45 per mile).
- 25 The Shared Lives approach in Durham includes an indicative baseline charge for 2024/25. The Shared Lives baseline service charge promotes consistency across the scheme, although is subject to individual circumstances.
- 26 Shared Lives Providers are viewed as private landlords for Housing Benefit purposes. A service charge is included in the rent for housing costs which are ineligible for Housing Benefit and is set for 2024/25 at £56.00 per week.

Home/Domiciliary Care

- 27 The home care rate will formally increase in 2024/25 by 5.0%, from £20.00 to £21.00. This acknowledges increases in National Living Wage and other inflationary pressures.
- 28 Recognising the significant pressures in the social care sector and the major impact on the ability to recruit and retain staff within in the domiciliary care market, grant monies were used to apply an early fee uplift to providers from 16th October 2023.
- 29 Contributions continue to be based on financial assessments which determine affordability of contributions towards the cost of overall care.

Reablement Service

- 30 The reablement service offered by the council is provided within the Intermediate Care Service therefore separate charges for this service are not applicable.

Extra Care Services

- 31 There are various extra care establishments throughout the County. Charges include the following elements:
 - Overnight charge (which vary throughout establishments, based on number of tenancies)
 - An hourly rate (consistent throughout establishments)
 - Fixed charge (determined by provider)
- 32 The current hourly rate for extra care is £16.30. It is proposed that the rate is increased in accordance with the minimum MTFP rate of circa 2% (rounded

to the nearest 5p). This will increase the rate to £16.65, an increase of 2.15%.

Direct Payments

- 33 The Direct Payment hourly rate will not increase for 2024/25. The hourly rate for personal assistants employed directly by service users will remain at £15.00 for 2024/25. An increased rate may be appropriate for commissioned services sourced via third party providers. All direct payment allocations should be based on the specific needs of the individual service user.

Residential and Nursing Care

- 34 An increase between 6.31% and 6.35% has been agreed for standard residential and between 6.36% and 6.41% for nursing care rates. A full list of fees for standard residential and nursing care can be found within Appendix 2.

Client Contributions

- 35 The maximum client contribution for non-residential services is three quarters of the standard Older People grade 2 residential rate. The rate for 2024/25 is £776.00. Based on this rate, the maximum contribution is £582.00 per week.
- 36 The maximum charge to the client is restricted to the applicable social care funding. For joint funded or health funded packages, client contributions are restricted to the social care element of the package.
- 37 The general principle for all services not mentioned elsewhere in this report is full cost recovery, although safeguards are in place to ensure service users are not disadvantaged by any changes in unit costs linked to using specific providers.

Deferred Payment Scheme

- 38 The Care Act 2014 establishes a universal deferred payment scheme which means that people will not be forced to sell their home in their lifetime to pay for their care. The regulations for the scheme are set out in the Care and Support (Deferred Payments Agreements) Regulations 2014.
- 39 The deferred payment scheme is intended to run on a cost-neutral basis with local authorities able to recoup the costs associated with deferring fees by charging interest. Interest rates should not exceed the maximum amount specified in regulations which change every 6 months on 1 January and 1 July. Interest will accrue on a compound basis. It is proposed that the maximum rate should continue to be charged and that interest is compounded on a daily basis.

Luncheon Club

40 The luncheon club / evening club contribution to transport charge is increased from £7.05 to £7.20 with effect from 8 April 2024. This charge has been increased by 2.13% (in line with the MTFP increase of circa 2%).

Service User Transport Charge

41 The current rates take into consideration the following banding criteria, and remain unchanged from 2023/24:

- Accessible and Standard Vehicle requirement
- Passenger Assistant requirement
- Average Mileage

42 The 2024/25 Service User Transport charges range from £10.00 to £50.00 per journey across 12 transport brackets. Full details of these are shown in Appendix 2.

Telecare Charges

43 Telecare charges for people with an assessed need are proposed at £2.00 per sensor, up to a maximum £6.00 per week. The proposal increases the rates by 2.56%. This service is relevant to users who receive a Monitoring and Response Service.

44 Due to the digital switch over, those clients who do not have a landline will no longer require a separate Mobile Telecare Unit to enable Telecare alarm calls to Care Connect, which was charged at £3.33 for 2023/24.

Stair, Step, Through-Floor and Vertical Lift Maintenance.

45 The charge for stair, step, through floor and vertical lift maintenance is proposed to increase to an adjusted £325.52 with effect from April 2024. This will be an increase of 1.95% and equates to a weekly charge of £6.26. This charge will cover annual maintenance plus all parts and repairs. This provision is only available to people who meet the Council's Social Care Eligibility criteria which will be established via an individual assessment of need.

Quality Band Assessment for Care Homes

46 The charge for one-off reassessments is proposed to increase by 2.02%. The charge will apply if a care home requests a reassessment following a downgrading at the biennial review and will increase from £1,191.00 in 2023/24 to £1,215.00 in 2024/25.

Blue Badge Fee Charge

47 The £10.00 fee (maximum permitted by legislation) is payable on agreement that the service user qualifies. This covers the administrative cost of the application. Fast tracked Blue Badges for people with a terminal illness continue to be provided free of charge.

Summary

49 The detailed schedule of existing and proposed fees and charges can be seen at Appendix 2.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal

The fees and charges proposed within the report and Appendix 2 consider the Local Government Act 2003, Care Act 2014, Care and Support (Deferred Payments Agreements) Regulations 2014.

Finance

The financial impact of any price increases will be reflected in the revised income forecast in 2024/25.

Consultation

Service Managers have been engaged in contributing to the detailed fees and charges information provided for this report. Various service providers have been involved in discussions on fee rates as appropriate.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The sensitive pricing of services, particularly in discretionary service areas, is essential in the current economic climate.

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

There are currently no staffing implications. However, the fees and charges earned help fund the staff providing the services and any reduction in fees and charges income may have an impact.

Accommodation

None

Risk

MTFP savings assume an increase in income which may not be achieved.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

None

APPENDIX 2 - ADULT AND HEALTH SERVICES - FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25									
Service/ Responsible Officer	Fee/Charge/SLA	Charging basis	Current Charge 2023/24	Rounded Proposed Charge 2024/25	Increase/decrease	% Change	VAT Code	Effective Date	Comment
DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	Other Training/Support Activities								
	Training for staff of other Local Authorities/partner organisations	Per Participant (per half day)	£53.45	£55.60	£2.15	4.02%	E	08/04/24	This rate is in line with the rate within the Resources Report for 2024/25. It is assumed these rates will not increase. This rate is the same as Resources rate.
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Provider Services								
	Respite Establishments - Breakfast	Per Meal	£1.95	£2.00	£0.05	2.56%	SR	08/04/24	For staff meals these rate will apply but include VAT
	Respite Establishments - Lunch	Per Meal	£3.50	£3.55	£0.05	1.43%	SR	08/04/24	For staff meals these rate will apply but include VAT
	Respite Establishments - Tea	Per Meal	£1.15	£1.20	£0.05	4.35%	SR	08/04/24	For staff meals these rate will apply but include VAT
	Respite Establishments - High Tea	Per Meal	£1.95	£2.00	£0.05	2.56%	SR	08/04/24	For staff meals these rate will apply but include VAT
	Respite Establishments - Snack Supper	Per Meal	£1.35	£1.40	£0.05	3.70%	SR	08/04/24	For staff meals these rate will apply but include VAT
	CDCS Respite	Per Day	N/A	£384.00	N/A	N/A	E	08/04/24	Revised rationale for charging
	CDCS Support & Recovery	Per Hour	N/A	£18.00	N/A	N/A	E	08/04/24	Revised rationale for charging
	Pathways - Service Provision	Per Day	N/A	£126.00	N/A	N/A	E	08/04/24	Revised rationale for charging
	Positive Journeys - Service Provision	Per Day	N/A	£126.00	N/A	N/A	E	08/04/24	Revised rationale for charging
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Room Hire to Outside Agencies and External Bodies								
	Weekday per half day	Per Room	£46.60	£47.55	£0.95	2.04%	E	08/04/24	
	Weekday per hour	Per Room	£11.85	£12.10	£0.25	2.11%	E	08/04/24	
	Saturday per half day	Per Room	£57.10	£58.25	£1.15	2.01%	E	08/04/24	
	Saturday for 2 hours	Per Room	£34.65	£35.35	£0.70	2.02%	E	08/04/24	
	Saturday for 1 hour	Per Room	£22.40	£22.85	£0.45	2.01%	E	08/04/24	
	Sunday per half day	Per Room	£60.75	£61.95	£1.20	1.98%	E	08/04/24	
	Sunday for 2 hours	Per Room	£38.10	£38.85	£0.75	1.97%	E	08/04/24	
	Sunday for 1 hour	Per Room	£26.50	£27.05	£0.55	2.08%	E	08/04/24	
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Other Provider Services Adult Care Charges								
	Snoezelen Room	Per Hour	£11.85	£12.10	£0.25	2.11%	E	08/04/24	
	Rebound Therapy	Per Hour	£11.85	£12.10	£0.25	2.11%	E	08/04/24	
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Shared Lives and Shared Lives Carer Breaks								
	Carer Breaks:								
	Lower Rate	Per Week	£427.35	£436.10	£8.75	2.05%	E	08/04/24	
	Mid Rate	Per Week	£455.35	£464.45	£9.10	2.00%	E	08/04/24	
	Higher Rate	Per Week	£497.00	£506.80	£9.80	1.97%	E	08/04/24	
	Weekly Retainer (initial 28 days)	Per Week	£427.35	£436.10	£8.75	2.05%	E	08/04/24	
	Weekly Retainer (further 42 days)	Per Week	£340.20	£346.85	£6.65	1.95%	E	08/04/24	
	Less than 4 hours	Per Session	£15.80	£16.10	£0.30	1.90%	E	08/04/24	
	More than 4 hours	Per Session	£31.50	£32.15	£0.65	2.06%	E	08/04/24	
	Service Level Contract								
	Weekly rate	Per Week	£427.35	£436.10	£8.75	2.05%	E	08/04/24	
	Monthly rate (based on 39 Weeks)	Per Month	£1,388.85	£1,417.33	£28.48	2.05%	E	08/04/24	
	* The above rates have been increased by 2% and subsequently adjusted to be divisible by 7 to enable a daily rate to the nearest 5p to be obtained								
	Mileage Rate to be linked to the County Council Mileage rate of 45p for 2024/25								

	Shared Lives Service Charge - baseline charge	Per Week	£54.75	£56.00	£1.25	2.28%	E	08/04/24	
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Home Care								
	Home Care	Per Hour	£20.00	£21.00	£1.00	5.00%	E	08/04/24	
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Extra Care								
	Daily Rate	Per Hour	£16.30	£16.65	£0.35	2.15%	E	08/04/24	
	Overnight rate	Per Hour	Variable	Variable	N/A	N/A	E	08/04/24	
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Direct payments								
	Personal Assistants	Per Hour	£15.00	£15.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change in 2024/25
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Residential/Nursing Fees								
	OP Nursing Grade 1	Per Week	£802.53	£853.57	£51.04	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	OP Nursing Grade 2	Per Week	£761.58	£810.02	£48.44	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	OP Residential grade 1	Per Week	£771.32	£819.99	£48.67	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	OP Residential grade 2	Per Week	£729.94	£776.00	£46.06	6.31%	E	08/04/24	Max non-residential contribution based on this @ 75%
	Dementia Residential grade 1	Per Week	£799.65	£850.43	£50.78	6.35%	E	08/04/24	
	Dementia Residential grade 2	Per Week	£758.70	£806.88	£48.18	6.35%	E	08/04/24	
	Dementia Nursing grade 1	Per Week	£802.31	£853.74	£51.43	6.41%	E	08/04/24	
	Dementia Nursing grade 2	Per Week	£761.38	£810.18	£48.80	6.41%	E	08/04/24	
	LD Nursing grade 1	Per Week	£806.07	£857.34	£51.27	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	LD Nursing grade 2	Per Week	£765.03	£813.69	£48.66	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	LD Residential grade 1	Per Week	£795.59	£845.79	£50.20	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	LD Residential grade 2	Per Week	£755.05	£802.69	£47.64	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	MI Nursing grade 1	Per Week	£802.53	£853.57	£51.04	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	MI Nursing grade 2	Per Week	£761.58	£810.02	£48.44	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	MI Residential grade 1	Per Week	£771.32	£819.99	£48.67	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	MI Residential grade 2	Per Week	£729.94	£776.00	£46.06	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	PD Nursing grade 1	Per Week	£871.54	£926.97	£55.43	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	PD Nursing grade 2	Per Week	£830.58	£883.40	£52.82	6.36%	E	08/04/24	
	PD Residential grade 1	Per Week	£864.94	£919.52	£54.58	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	PD Residential grade 2	Per Week	£805.95	£856.81	£50.86	6.31%	E	08/04/24	
	Maximum Contribution for Non Residential Care								
	Client Contributions Maximum	Per Week	£547.46	£582.00	£34.55	6.31%	E	08/04/24	Proposed figure based on info above
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Transport								
	Luncheon Club/Evening Club contribution to transport	Per Session	£7.05	£7.20	£0.15	2.13%	E	08/04/24	
	Standard, No PA, 1-5 miles Transport	Per Journey	£10.00	£10.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Standard, No PA, 6-15 miles Transport	Per Journey	£25.00	£25.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Standard, No PA, 16+ miles Transport	Per Journey	£30.00	£30.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Standard, PA, 1-5 miles Transport	Per Journey	£25.00	£25.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Standard, PA, 6-15 miles Transport	Per Journey	£32.00	£32.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Standard, PA, 16+ miles Transport	Per Journey	£46.00	£46.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, No PA, 1-5 miles Transport	Per Journey	£18.00	£18.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, No PA, 6-15 miles Transport	Per Journey	£27.00	£27.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, No PA, 16+ miles Transport	Per Journey	£32.00	£32.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, PA, 1-5 miles Transport	Per Journey	£30.00	£30.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, PA, 6-15 miles Transport	Per Journey	£42.00	£42.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
	Accessible, PA, 16+ miles Transport	Per Journey	£50.00	£50.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25
ADULT CARE SERVICES	Miscellaneous Charges								
	Telecare Charges	Per Sensor / Per Week	£1.95	£2.00	£0.05	2.56%	E	08/04/24	
	Telecare Client Contribution Maximum		£5.85	£6.00	£0.15	2.56%	E	08/04/24	This figure represents a maximum of 3 items of Telecare ie £1.95 x 3

Mobile Telecare Unit - SIM Charge for GSM unit	Per Sensor / Per Week	£3.33	£0.00	N/A	N/A			Due to the digital switch over GSM units are no longer required
Stair, Step, Through-Floor and Vertical Lift Maintenance	Per Annum	£319.28	£325.52	£6.24	1.95%	E	08/04/24	Many people pay weekly instalments , therefore we make the charge divisible by 52 as a whole number
Quality Band Reassessment	Per Assessment	£1,191.00	£1,215.00	£24.00	2.02%	SR	08/04/24	
Blue Badge Scheme (set by the Department of Transport) - for reference	Per Badge	£10.00	£10.00	£0.00	0.00%	E	08/04/24	No change for 2024/25