

Our Reference: CE_MG_121121_392

12th November 2021

Mr. Nigel Minns
Strategic Director, People Directorate
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall
Warwick CV34 4RL
Email: nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk

Dear Mr. Minns,

Care England, a registered charity, is the leading representative body for Adult Social Care providers in England. Working on behalf of small, medium and large care home providers, Care England speaks with a single unified voice for both members and the whole care sector. Our membership includes organisations of varying types and sizes, amongst them single care homes, small local groups, national providers and not-for-profit voluntary organisations and associations. Between them they provide a variety of services for older people and those with long term conditions, learning disabilities or mental health problems. Care England is committed to supporting a united, quality conscious, independent sector that offers real choice and value for money for our older people. Our aim is to create an environment in which care providers can continue to deliver and develop the high-quality care that communities require and deserve.

Fair Price for Care

The Laing Buisson Cost of Care Benchmark, 11th Edition, published May 2020 used data prior to the Pandemic. This is likely deemed a more “normal” period for establishing the true cost of care prior to the pandemic, and a more reflective period for most council care home fee rates, which have then subsequently been inflated. This report placed residential care costs between £696 and £849, and residential nursing between £969 and £1,075.

In the same report, Laing Buisson state that English councils paid on average £596 for residential care and £764 for nursing and goes on to comment that this is “indicating a *continued shortfall in care funding and that care homes remain dependent on premium fees from private payers to generate sustainable levels of income*” which is recognised by our members.

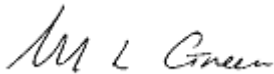
Data collected from Freedom of Information requests, local authority websites, and provider uplift letters, indicate that fees paid by your authority, fall below the Laing Buisson Cost of Care Benchmark and certain peer authorities. We respectfully ask you to explain the process, and provide the model used, to evidence the approach your authority has taken to determine care home fees for, both nursing and residential residents living with and without dementia in CQC registered care homes. This should be irrespective of whether you operate on a set fee structure, base fee, or a needs-based fee to reflect individual need. We ask for clear evidence of how you establish an appropriate fee for residents you place in a care home.

2022-23 Care Home Fees

As councils no doubt enter another period of fee review and post the Chancellors SR21 budget, which announced the National Living Wage uplift of 6.6%, and inflation to September 21 of 3.1%, we want to express the concerns of our members about the fees to be paid from April 2022. Our members are seeing pressure on workforce recruitment and retention, increasing agency costs due to workforce shortfalls, low occupancy, the financial impact on costs as a result of Brexit, the transport and fuel crisis, and rising utility costs.

We would again ask that you confirm your timelines for collecting any necessary data, key dates and decision processes for determining the 2022-23 fee rates, uplift, and the 2022-23 approach to funding care, so we can assist our members in planning to ensure high quality care is sustained in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Martin Green OBE
Chief Executive, Care England