

Ref: FOI/00320/CMICB
23 May 2023

Dear

**Re: Freedom of Information Act 2000
Additional Funding for Warrington Hospital**

Thank you for your email of 29 April 2023 in which you request further information, following NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB's response to your Freedom of Information request.

NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB has undertaken a review of our previous response to you of 26 April 2023 and considered your further comments provided in respect of the information you are seeking. We can now provide you with the following response.

You previously asked:

I am making a FOI request following guidance from Andy Carter MP. In the House of Commons recently, Andy Carter MP asked the Secretary of State for Health for additional funding for Warrington Hospital. I have subsequently asked Andy Carter MP to provide details of the answer he received and the benefit of the additional funding. Other than telling me that there was "an additional 29 Care Beds", he informs me that he has no further information and referred me to Carl Marsh but had no contact details for Mr Marsh. He advised me to send this FOI. The questions I asked were:-

- 1) How much more money will your Hospital receive and when.*
- 2) How a reduction in the bed spaces has been achieved and when.*
- 3) How many care spaces(or, God forbid) Hotel places have been allocated, where they are and the cost.*
- 4) How many more staff have been recruited to manage the changes, what level, what skills, and when they will be in post.*
- 5) Details of the positive benefit on A&E in Warrington.*

The reason I ask these questions is that we often hear about the millions of pounds that the Government says it is allocating, but rarely hear what happens to it.

Our Previous Response:

In your request, you make reference to "an additional 29 Care Beds", please note that these beds were funded in Warrington via the allocation of £200m nationally ([Up to £250 million to speed up hospital discharge - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/up-to-250-million-to-speed-up-hospital-discharge)) to buy additional short-term care placements to allow people to be discharged safely from hospitals into the community. The answers to the following questions posed have therefore been assumed to be in relation to the above hospital discharge funding referenced in your request.

1) The above hospital discharge funding was received by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB and then distributed to each Place (former CCG/Local Authority area) across Cheshire and Merseyside to allow local systems to identify additional bed capacity in a community setting (usually a care home). As a result, the funding was never intended to be allocated to individual hospitals directly, such as Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

2) The hospital discharge funding was used to enable people to be discharged from hospital beds into community settings, particularly people who were no longer required to be in a hospital bed. This funding was intended to free up hospital beds for people who were medically fit to be discharged, allowing other people to then be moved into those hospital beds to be treated. Consequently, the intention of the hospital discharge funding was never to reduce bed spaces, but rather to reduce unnecessary hospital bed occupancy to free these up for other patient's waiting for them.

3) The hospital discharge funding was not used to book any hotel spaces in Warrington. In Warrington it was used to fund 14 beds in Lilycross Care Centre and 15 beds in Florence Mill Care Home between January and March 2023. The cost of each additional care home bed was negotiated on an individual price basis with the care home, based on each patient's individual needs and requirements.

4) The hospital discharge funding was non-recurrent in nature and the guidance associated with the funding advised that it should be used to purchase additional bed capacity within the community. As a result, no additional staff were recruited to undertake this exercise as it was completed by the existing staff.

5) As previously advised, the intention of the hospital discharge funding was to free up hospital beds being unnecessarily occupied, so people could be admitted more quickly from A&E into hospital ward beds, thus reducing pressure on emergency departments and speeding up ambulance handovers. The additional community beds also allowed people that were currently in hospital to be discharged more quickly, reducing their overall length of stay and allowing greater capacity within the hospital to admit those people that need to be treated in a hospital specifically. The availability of the additional 29 care home beds between January and March 2023 had a positive impact on the

patient flow from A&E into the hospital as well as allowing those people that were medically fit to leave hospital in a more timely manner.

Your review request:

I am sorry to take more of your time, but it is important that when the Government says that it has allocated resources, then we should know in detail where and how they are spent. Too often we only hear of global figures in parliamentary answers and no results are available.

I show below the chain of mails with Andy Carter MP, and his original question in the House of Commons in January 2023. As you see, he is unable to answer my questions and it has ended up with my FOI request to you.

Please let me be more specific in my request.

1i) How much money was allocated to each "Place" Was it a specific amount, or did you have to "bid" from a global sum? What portion was allocated for the beds in Warrington and Widnes?

2i) If the funding is "non recurrent", do these beds now belong to the Trust?

3i) Will the allocation of the 29 beds be available in perpetuity? If not, what is the availability to Warrington Hospital and for how long?

4i) You state that the cost of each bed depends on the need of the individual. Given that, there must be an average cost per unit. What is that cost? Can it be shown by bed units used per month since the allocation?

5i) Is 29 beds the limit of the funding? Are more beds available? Can you show beds used since January to date for the Warrington and Widnes portion.

6i) In his question [below] Mr Carter uses the fact that 90 people were in A&E at Warrington waiting for a bed to justify the additional funding. "The busiest in 30 years". What figures are available to show what progress has been made since January to help the A&E dept. Please show the numbers waiting for a bed daily from January to date.

***[Andy Carter Conservative, Warrington South
I spent Friday morning at Warrington Hospital to see the challenges that A&E department staff are facing. One senior clinician said to me that it was the busiest he had seen it in 30 years. The entire hospital was full—there were no beds—and last Monday, 90 people were waiting in A&E to be admitted to a bed. The Secretary of State knows that I am waiting for an announcement on whether a new hospital can be funded in Warrington, and I am keen to hear when that announcement will come, but can he reassure my constituents that the funding announced today will support the staff in Warrington Hospital and the social care staff in Warrington and***

ensure that the pressures that they are facing will be addressed immediately?]

7i) Given the unacceptable number of 90 waiting in A&E, will the numbers now show a maximum of 60 waiting in A&E, and if so, is that a satisfactory answer to the problem?. If not, is more funding available?

Our Review Response:

1i) Funding is assigned at a Cheshire and Merseyside wide level, then an amount is allocated to each Place (former CCG area). For Warrington Place, the allocation was £765,000. However, the funding could only be accessed when the capacity was used. Locally, Warrington Place made available 29 beds at Lilycross and Florence Mill. The usage of the beds was dependent upon demand and patient choice.

2i) The funding listed above was non-recurrent and used to buy additional capacity when/where it is needed (particularly over the winter period) to support the local NHS Trust to discharge patients from the hospital and helps with the flow of patients through the hospital. The 29 beds that were made available were in care homes, so once the funding ceased at the end of March 2023, the beds were no longer available for the local Trust to utilise.

3i) As detailed above, the additional beds were made available to support the local NHS Trust in Warrington during the winter period to allow patients to be discharged into care homes. These are not the only beds that are available within the Warrington Place system and these were additional beds that were made available.

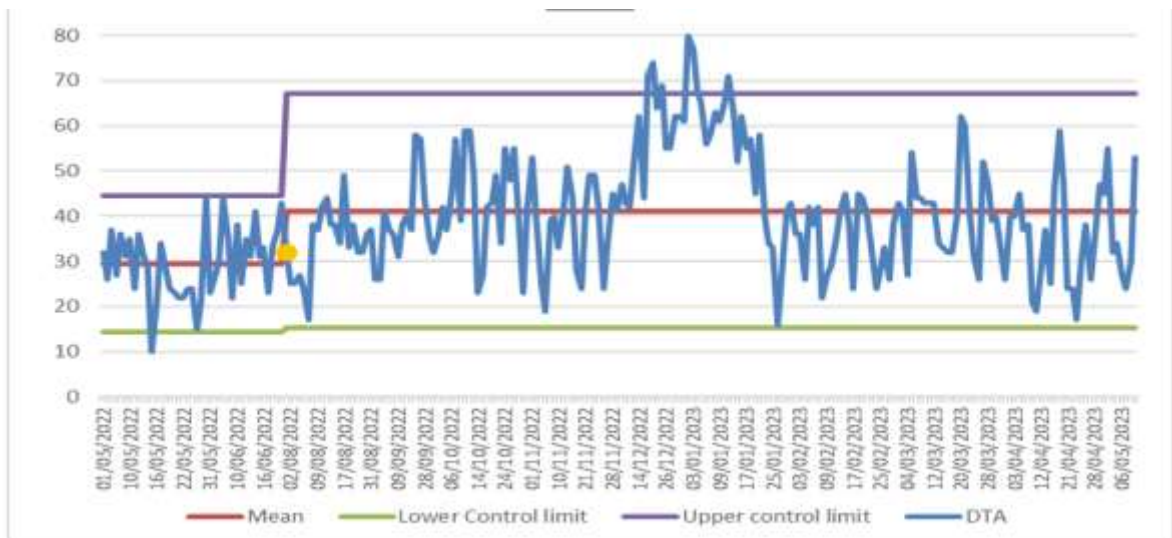
4i) As previously advised, the cost of each additional care home bed was negotiated on an individual price basis with the care home, based on each patient's individual needs and requirements. NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB does not hold information specifically listing these prices as an 'average cost' per unit/per month.

NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB holds this information on the specific cost of each care home bed negotiated on an individual price basis with the care home. However, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB considers the individual negotiated prices of care home beds with private care home providers to be commercially sensitive. As a result, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB is unable to provide you with information detailing the individually negotiated prices of these care home beds with private providers under *Section 43: 'Trade Secrets and Prejudice to Commercial Interests'* of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

On applying the Public Interest Test, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB believes that release of these individually negotiated care home bed prices into the public domain would, or is likely to, significantly prejudice the commercial interests of the care homes as an private independent provider.

5i) The above 29 beds related specially to the national £200m funding that was made available. However, please note that this is not the only source of funding and therefore these are not the only beds that are available for Warrington Place residents. The 14 beds made available at Lilycross were all utilised, with some of the placements filled twice (depending on the onward journey of the patient). The beds at Florence Mill were able to have 14 people discharged to them between the start February 2023 and the end of March 2023.

6i) Please find listed below a graph of the data held relating to the number of patients waiting for a bed on a daily basis at Warrington Hospital.



Please note work to support timely discharges from Warrington Hospital, partners across Warrington Place are working on the continued expansion and effective use of services that provide an alternative to hospital attendance and admission. The key services in the Warrington Place community are Urgent Care Response, Clinical Assessment Service, Falls Responder, 24/7 Mental health Crisis Line, and the key services in the acute setting are Same Day Emergency Care and the Frailty Assessment Unit.

7i) NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB does not hold information detailing what is a satisfactory maximum number of Warrington patients waiting in A&E at any one time, as this is dependent upon a variety of reasons. However, for information please find listed below the average numbers of Warrington Patients waiting in A&E per month, which gives an indication on the fluctuating picture:

Month	Number of patients waiting in A&E
December 2022	58
January 2023	54
February 2023	35
March 2023	41
April 2023	34

I hope that this response has sufficiently addressed the review of our previous response to your Freedom of Information request and the additional information you are seeking.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response or do not feel that your request has been answered as you would expect, please contact us to discuss.

Where you remain dissatisfied with our review under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at;

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk

Should you need any further clarification or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us quoting the above FOI reference.