

News release  
3 July 2008



Regional Improvement and  
Efficiency Partnerships

## **Care Funding Calculator set to transform adult care purchasing**

Today's (3 July) launch of the care funding calculator marks a major opportunity to transform the way care for people with learning disabilities is purchased.

Developed by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships, the calculator is being offered to all English adult care departments following successful trials in over 70 councils and two primary care trusts. The Voluntary Organisations Disability Group has also been closely involved in its development.

With adult care budgets under huge pressure, the calculator – a highly sophisticated spreadsheet – allows both provider and commissioning staff to assess a fair price for residential care and supported living arrangements for service users.

A single care placement for an adult can cost in excess of £150,000 a year and the market is characterised by hundreds of providers and huge variations in cost, from £400 to £4,000 a week. The care funding calculator gives councils a much better understanding of the market for accommodation-based care and ensures that users' needs are clear and specified in a consistent way.

It does this by breaking down the needs of an individual into fine detail and works out accurately, based on benchmarked guide prices, how much it might cost to meet those needs. It ensures that care services are linked directly to the needs of an individual and that clearer contractual arrangements with providers are in place.

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**Care Funding Calculator set to transform adult care purchasing cont.**

Earlier versions of the tool have already proven to be a success in the South East and South West with councils saving an average of 13% on their costs.

Joyce Redfearn, Chair of the Chief Executives' Task Force, said, 'This is about making sure that we get value for money and high quality outcomes for some of the most vulnerable people in our society. The calculator makes a complex process much more transparent for services users, their carers, providers and commissioning staff alike. The response from piloting councils has been tremendous and I would urge adult care services to take up this opportunity.'

John Good, Head of Finance of Leonard Cheshire Disability, said, 'Leonard Cheshire Disability is pleased to have worked on this project and hopes that the calculator can play a part in bringing realistic and consistent funding to support people with learning disabilities, supporting providers and purchasers in our shared aim of driving up the quality of support. To ensure this aim is met, both providers and commissioners need to ensure that it is used pragmatically and reflects appropriate market rates for all input costs.'

David Stout, Director of the Primary Care Trust Network, said, 'The calculator supports two important policy aims – an effective use of resources and the move towards self-directed support. It gives service users and their carers much more influence over their care. They can check the cost of their care and determine what support they need.'

Future developments will include a version that can be used by service users and their carers under individualised budgets and an adaptation for other groups such as children and people with physical or sensory impairments.

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## **Notes for editors**

1. The South East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership has led the project on behalf of all nine RIEPs. It marks the first project to be made available nationally by the RIEPs.
2. Councils wanting to use the care funding calculator should contact their RIEP.
3. The RIEPs are networks of councils, fire authorities and other local services that have come together to challenge, collaborate and share ideas and expertise. RIEPs help councils deliver the outcomes set through Local Area Agreements by supporting them to become more efficient, innovative and engaging with their citizens. They were created in April 2008 with a three year funding package of £185 million from Communities and Local Government and build on the successful foundations laid by the former Regional Improvement Partnerships and the Regional Centres of Excellence.
4. The Chief Executives' Task Group consists of the nine lead chief executives from each region and is chaired by Joyce Redfearn of Wigan Council.

**Issued by Seth Brook on behalf of the RIEPs**

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