



Department
of Health &
Social Care

39 Victoria St
Westminster
London SW1H 0EU

29 April 2020

Dear Sir / Madam

RE: Request for publication of decisions to enact Care Act easements

Thank you for your letter dated 22 April concerning the publication of decisions to enact Care Act Easements.

The Care Act easements introduced by the Coronavirus Act 2020 put in place a range of measures to help the care system manage pressures caused by Covid-19. Local Authorities should do everything they can to continue meeting their existing duties prior to the Coronavirus Act 2020 provisions coming into force. In the event that they are unable to do so, it is essential that they are able to streamline Care Act assessment arrangements and prioritise care so that the most urgent and acute needs are met. The powers in the Coronavirus Act enable them to prioritise more effectively where necessary than would be possible under the Care Act 2014 prior to its amendment. They are time-limited and are there to be used as narrowly as possible.

As you mention, Local Authorities should report any decision to operate under easements to DHSC. We have currently received notifications from 7 Local Authorities. These are Sunderland City Council, Warwickshire, Staffordshire County Council, Birmingham City Council, Solihull Council, Derbyshire County Council and Coventry City Council. Middlesbrough notified us that they were operating under easements but has since notified us that they have returned to full Care Act duties.

Work is currently being led by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Think Local, Act Personal to understand and share the impact of COVID-19 and the Care Act Easements on individuals, providers and systems. The notifications received by DHSC are being fed into this work, which is underlined by principles of transparency and no criticism.



Department of Health & Social Care

This work includes a list of Local Authorities operating under easements which should be publicly available on the internet soon. When this is available, I will share the link with you. Until this is published, DHSC will regularly share a list of Local Authorities operating under easements with the National Adult Social Care Covid-19 Group. This group is chaired by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and consists of representatives from Local Government, Regulators, Providers and User and Carer Groups who can circulate this information with their networks.

I hope this information will enable you to advise your clients on their entitlements to social care.

Yours Sincerely

Care Act Easements Team