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The VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund 2021/22

Providing support to respond to a potential surge in respiratory infections in children

Information pack for voluntary,
community and social enterprise (VCSE)
sector organisations

Version 1, August 2021

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Summary

This information pack provides voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations with all the information they need to apply to the Health and Wellbeing (HW) Fund 2020/21. Please read it carefully to ensure your organisation and project or programme are eligible.

The HW Fund is jointly run by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England and NHS Improvement. We value the significant contribution that the VCSE sector makes towards improving health and care and see you as a key partner in delivering our strategic priorities and improving health and wellbeing across England.

The HW Fund 2021/22 will fund VCSE organisations to provide extra support for children, families and children's respiratory and acute services during autumn/winter 2021, and to raise awareness of management of paediatric respiratory infections within communities that experience the greatest health inequalities. This is a priority this year given the predicted increase in paediatric respiratory viral infections, such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), parainfluenza and human metapneumovirus, during autumn/winter 2021. There have been fewer cases of these common infections than usual while society has been living under lockdown restrictions.

This is a short-term fund, with all funding to be spent by the end of March 2022. It is for VCSE organisations already providing services which could be extended to give extra support to those in need.

RSV is the most common paediatric viral infection. Most children will have had it by their third birthday. Very young children and vulnerable children (usually under 3 months) are at higher risk of paediatric critical care admission because inflammation of their smaller airways can cause breathing difficulties. If the prevalence of these viruses increases, potential additional pressure on children's services will need to be managed.

Key dates for the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund 2021/22

- Launch of the fund 2 August 2021
- Meet the funder webinar 11 August 2021 (10–11am)
- Deadline for applications 27 August (12 noon)
- Assessment of applications 30 August–10 September 2021
- Contract award 13 September 2021

Please book your place for the Meet the funder webinar at [The VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund 2021/22 - Meet the Funders \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/health-and-wellbeing-fund-2021-22-meet-the-funders/)

1. Introduction

The NHS Long Term Plan commits to “continue to commission, partner with and champion local charities, social enterprises and community interest companies providing services and support to vulnerable and at-risk groups”,¹ and “by expanding and reforming urgent and emergency care services ...ensure patients get the care they need fast, relieve pressure on A&E departments, and better offset winter demand spikes”.²

This Health and Wellbeing (HW) Fund aligns with this commitment and ensures that the VCSE sector is commissioned and working alongside the NHS to support those most in need with respiratory illness.

“Children and young people account for 25% of emergency department attendances and are the most likely age group to attend A&E unnecessarily”.³ By funding the VCSE sector to provide support and messaging to targeted communities, we hope to prevent unnecessary attendances during a period of significant pressures across services and provide support and information to families whose children may be unwell with respiratory viruses.

The VCSE Health and Wellbeing Programme (HW Programme), of which the HW Fund is one part, was launched in April 2017. It is a joint initiative by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England and NHS Improvement to enable these system partners to work with the VCSE sector to promote equality, reduce health inequalities and help families and communities to achieve and maintain wellbeing.

The programme’s objectives are to:

- encourage co-production of person-centred, community-based health and care which promotes equality for all
- enable the voice of people with lived experience and experiencing health inequalities to inform national policy and shape service delivery

¹ [NHS Long Term Plan v1.2 August 2019, 2.37](#)

² [NHS Long Term Plan v1.2 August 2019, 1.24](#)

³ [NHS Long Term Plan v1.2 August 2019, 3.44](#)

- build evidence of sustainable, scalable solutions to mitigate and prevent inequalities impacting on the health and wellbeing of communities.

It consists of:

- a national partnership arrangement: the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance (HW Alliance). The HW Alliance was recently refreshed with a new membership in place until 31 March 2024. Further information can be found here: [NHS England » Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise \(VCSE\) Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#)
- funding for bespoke projects and programmes: the HW Fund.

VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund

The HW Fund aims to promote equalities and reduce health inequalities by building the evidence base about good practice, sharing lessons and widening the adoption of interventions with a proven track record.

It focuses on one theme each year, which is agreed by the system partners together with the VCSE sector. In its first round, the theme was social prescribing (23 successful applicants); in its second, children and young people's mental health (23 successful applicants); and in its third, starting well (19 successful applicants). The theme this year is paediatric respiratory infections.

For updates from the HW Programme, including information on the HW Fund, please [sign up to the DHSC monthly newsletter](#).

2. Aims of the HW Fund 2021/22

The theme of the HW Fund 2021/22 is providing advice and support to families and children's services to support national and local response to potential increases in paediatric respiratory infections. It will achieve this by funding the VCSE sector to:

- provide extra support for families and children's respiratory services and acute services affected by respiratory infections during autumn/winter 2021
- raise awareness of respiratory infections; signposting advice on how to navigate NHS services and access relevant support; providing families and communities with information about early detection and management to

prevent late admissions and enable self-care where appropriate. There will be a particular focus on communities that experience the greatest health inequalities

- support people with children suffering from respiratory infections, especially where they may not have access to other support.

Examples of the types of projects that could be funded are:

- hospital charities working alongside hospital trusts to support parents/carers with children in hospital
- raising awareness of safe management of respiratory infections in different communities using different formats/languages
- supporting families/carers of children with respiratory illnesses to prevent their late admissions to services
- providing helpline support to those in need.

Due to the emerging need to support children's respiratory and acute services and families, and provide information on the increased rate of respiratory infections, the system partners have agreed that:

- this fourth round of the HW Fund will only be distributed within this financial year
- the HW Fund will accept applications which match the criteria from national and local VCSE organisations.

Please note that as this is a short-term fund, we expect all applicants to be able to mobilise at pace in the autumn and deliver their programmes before 31 March 2022.

3. HW Fund 2021/22 criteria

To be considered for grant funding, applications must support the aims of the HW Fund by meeting all the following criteria (but either c or d), and demonstrate this in the application form and required supporting information.

a) Expansion or development of a current scheme

Due to the tight timeframe and the support needed, the only VCSE organisations we will fund are those that **already have a programme of support in place with the potential to be expanded to provide the support required**. Applicants should be able to justify this potential by demonstrating that they already have sufficient reach to the target groups (those with respiratory illness, children, parents, carers, in-hospital services). Applicants must demonstrate what additional services or support this grant will deliver over current activities.

b) Demonstrate how projects will address gaps in existing support structures

We expect applicants to demonstrate in their application the gaps in current provision and support for families and children with respiratory illness that they are looking to address.

c) Demonstrate support for the health system

Projects must contribute to existing clinical pathways for respiratory services in community/acute settings. This includes focusing on prevention activities to support safe management and avoid late admissions to hospital of children experiencing acute symptoms.

or

d) Working with communities that experience health inequalities

Projects must raise awareness of respiratory infections and appropriate management in children within communities which experience the greatest health inequalities. Applications should explain how information will be made available and accessible to these communities.

e) Funding

Grants will be between £75,000 and £300,000 per applicant over the period from receipt of grant until the end of March 2022. We anticipate funding only a small number of organisations providing either local or national support.

Please note applications from local VCSE organisations must justify why their locality needs the additional support; for example, because of deprivation or children's respiratory illness are already prevalent in the community.

We welcome joint applications from VCSE organisations and statutory partners. The lead organisation must meet the eligibility criteria outlined above as it will be the one that receives the grant.

f) Supporting letter

Applicants are asked to provide a supporting letter from a statutory/government body. The letter must contain:

- reference to the applicant's track record
- confirmation of their ability to mobilise quickly
- any information to demonstrate the consequences of the project not receiving funding from the HW Fund.

Applicants will need to demonstrate:

- reach into different communities and their ability to provide support in different languages/formats
- experience in supporting families with children aged 0–3 years as well as working alongside NHS services
- track record of mobilising services quickly to meet goals/objectives.

Evaluation, monitoring and reporting

Applicants must commit to completing an evaluation and sharing learning with the system partners; we will provide successful applicants with further information on this.

Organisations will be asked to submit monthly reporting, which will include activity undertaken, lessons learnt and demographics of those who have been supported where necessary. This will be agreed with successful applicants at the start of their project.

We will expect this work to be resourced by the HW Fund grant.

What we will not fund

We are only able to fund projects and programmes that meet all the above criteria and eligibility requirements.

Joint applications

We welcome joint applications; for example, collaborations between VCSE organisations and statutory partners. There is no limit to the number of partners. However, the lead applicant needs to be a VCSE organisation and will be required to undertake a significant proportion of the project or programme activity. It will also be the accountable body.

Eligible expenditure

Grants are intended to cover:

- service delivery costs
- volunteer/service user/survivor/patient participation and involvement costs
- management and administrative costs
- evaluation, monitoring and reporting

Any questions about the HW Fund should be sent through the Atamis portal (please see Section 5: Application process).

4. Eligibility to apply

Eligibility for grant funding

Your project must meet the criteria for funding outlined in Section 3.

Project criteria

You will need to meet all the criteria detailed in Section 3. This needs to be demonstrated in the application form and through the required supporting information.

Organisational eligibility

NHS England is exercising its powers under Section 13X of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended) to provide a grant to a “Voluntary Organisation” which provides or arranges services similar to NHS England’s functions. A “Voluntary Organisation” is defined under Section 275 of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) as a body, the activities of which are carried out other than for profit but does not include any public or local authority. In addition, applicants must:

- **not apply for grant funding of more than 25% of their current annual turnover for the financial year 2020/21.** This will be verified by a review of their audited or independently examined accounts where applicable
- have an equal opportunities, health and safety and safeguarding policy.

The HW Fund 2021/22 will fund both national and local VCSE organisations, unlike in previous rounds where only local VCSE organisations were funded.

5. Application process

Meet the funder webinar

We encourage all prospective applicants to attend the Meet the funder webinar on 11 August (10–11am). Please book your place for the Meet the funder webinar at [The VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund 2021/22 - Meet the Funders \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/vcse-health-and-wellbeing-fund-2021-22-meet-the-funders/)

Application process

Applications must be submitted via NHS England's e-Tendering system (Atamis) no later than 12 noon on 27 August. Please note that we will not consider applications submitted after this deadline, even due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control. Applications may be completed online at any time before this closing date but will not be opened until the opening date.

NHS England may at its own absolute discretion extend this closing date for receipt of applications.

NHS England will use an electronic e-Tendering system (Atamis) to manage this grant application process and communicate with applicants. You can register on Atamis by visiting [Welcome \(force.com\)](https://www.force.com) and selecting 'register here'.

All communications from applicants (including any sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants and advisers) with NHS England during this application exercise must be directed via the messaging service on Atamis where possible.

To ensure equality of treatment of applicants, NHS England intends to publish on a regular basis the questions and clarifications applicants have raised together with our responses (but not the source of the questions).

Documentation for completion and submission (all available through Atamis)

NHS England requires the following documents to be submitted as a minimum for your tender to be accepted:

- completed document 2 – Grant application questionnaire
- completed document 2a – Grant application questionnaire – cost schedule
- completed, printed, signed, scanned and uploaded document 3 – Form of application
- supporting evidence from a statutory organisation.

Applicants must complete their applications within the Atamis portal as described in the Supplier response form. Failure to do so may render the application non-compliant and it may be rejected.

Applications should not include information which is not specifically requested, including, for example, any sales or marketing literature or standard terms of trading.

Applicants must adhere to the word limit requirements in their response to each application question. Where a question in the grant application questionnaire (document 2) specifies a word limit for your answer, longer responses will be reviewed to that word limit only.

Applicants are required to provide information/responses to all fields/questions in document 2 unless the field/question is marked as optional. They must complete this questionnaire, save the resulting word document and then upload it to Atamis.

Applicants are required to provide information/responses to all fields/questions in the Form of application (document 3) unless the field/question is marked as optional. They must complete this form, save the resulting word document and then print, sign, scan and upload it to Atamis.

Form of agreement

On conclusion of the grant application process, the successful applicants will be required to sign the grant agreement (document 4).

Confidentiality

All information NHS England makes available to applicants in relation to the grant agreement and the project, will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed to any third party without our prior written consent.

Transparency

Applicants should be aware that government has set out the need for greater transparency in public sector procurement and NHS England is subject to these requirements across government operations, as updated from time to time. If an applicant is awarded a grant agreement, NHS England will publish their completed NHS England grant application documents and the resulting grant agreement (with appropriate redactions) on the Contracts Finder website:

<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Canvassing

Any applicant who in connection with this grant application process:

- offers any inducement, fee or reward to any employee of NHS England or any person acting as an advisor for NHS England or in connection with the application process or
- does anything which would constitute a breach of the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 1916 or
- contacts any employee of NHS England about any aspect of the application process, except through the agreed communication channel(s) authorised in this document

will be disqualified from any further involvement in this process, without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to NHS England and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by an applicant may attract.

6. Assessment process

A panel of representatives from NHS England and NHS Improvement will assess applications against the criteria set out above, with special consideration given to how the proposal will support the clinical pathway of patients. They may wish to discuss your proposal in more detail. Each application will also undergo a due

diligence process to ensure that the organisation is suitable to receive grant funding.

A good application:

- meets all the essential criteria, providing evidence for this where appropriate
- is concise and respects the word limits noted
- is relevant to and addresses the requirements of the HW Fund and the VCSE HW Programme more widely
- outlines how you will achieve something and not just why.

Table 1 gives the scoring matrix. It reflects the evaluation framework described above. Applications will be ranked in order of their total quality score and funding will be allocated in the same order, until such point that all resources have been exhausted.

Table 1: Scoring matrix

Score	Interpretation
4 – Excellent	The applicant’s response provides full confidence that the applicant understands and can deliver their own specified outcomes well and addresses the priorities the application is designed to address. The applicant’s response includes value add elements.
3 – Good	The applicant’s response provides a good level of confidence that the applicant understands and can deliver services that address the priorities, and addresses all or most of the requirements set out in the question.
2 – Satisfactory	The applicant’s response provides a satisfactory level of confidence that the applicant understands and can deliver services that address the priorities, and addresses at least some of the requirements set out in the question. However, the response is lacking in some areas.
1 – Poor	There are weaknesses (or inconsistency) in the applicant’s understanding of how their services will address the priorities. And the applicant’s response fails to address some or all of the requirements set out in the question.
0 – Unacceptable	No response and/or information provided is deemed inadequate to merit a score.

Table 2 gives a breakdown of the criteria and score weightings that will be used to assess bids.

Table 2: Weighting

#	Criteria/question	Word limit	Quality score
1	Please provide us with a summary of what your organisation does. This should include information on how many people have accessed your current programmes.	300	5%
2	Please provide us with a summary of the existing programme that you would like to expand to provide the support required. Please include information on when it started, what it does, how much activity is already carried out and who it is aimed at as well as any outcomes you have already achieved. Please refer to Section 3a in the information pack.	300	15%
3	With this expansion, what are you looking to achieve and why? Please describe the need for this and how it addresses gaps in existing support structures. Please refer to Section 3b in the information pack.	350	15%
4	How will this work meet the aims of the HW Fund? Please refer to Section 2 of the information pack	150	10%
5	Who is your target demographic and approximately how many more people do you expect to be able to support compared to your current activities? Please also include how you have collaborated with users and communities in the co-design and delivery of this project to support strong integrated communities.	200	10%
6	How will you ensure that your project supports a reduction in health inequalities?	200	15%
7	How will this project support the health system? Please refer to Section 3c in the information pack.	250	10%
8	Please describe your plans to mobilise the project and provide a timeline for this.	200	5%
9	This project is due to finish on 31 March 2022. How will the project be sustained after funding ends or the information/knowledge used?	250	5%
10	How do you plan to evaluate your project? Please include details of what data you already collect, or plan to, and how you will measure impact.	250	10%
Total		2,450	100%

Timetable

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Launch of the fund | 2 August 2021 |
| • Meet the funder webinar | 11 August 2021 (10–11am) |
| • Deadline for applications | 27 August (12 noon) |
| • Assessment of applications | 30 August–10 September 2021 |
| • Contract award | 13 September 2021 |

Grant offer

Once a decision has been made to award a grant, a formal approval letter will be issued along with a completed copy of the grant agreement. The receiving organisation will be required to sign and return the grant agreement as an indication of acceptance.

Terms and conditions

A copy of the grant terms and conditions is available through Atamis. Receipt of any grant monies is conditional on the applicant's compliance with the terms and conditions of funding. Specific points to note are:

- grant payments will be in one lump sum at the start of the project
- where applicable the required insurance liability levels are as follows:
 - public liability: £5 million
 - employer's liability £5 million
 - professional liability: £5 million.