

An update to charging for COVID-19 related requests – effective from 1 October 2020

During the first half of the year, NHS Property Services (NHSPS) provided around £15M worth of additional services during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, covering over 4,000 deep cleans and creating over 1,000 additional beds and 25,000m² capacity locally across the country. This was directly funded by NHS England in Q1 and Q2 2020.

From 1 October 2020, the funding mechanism currently in place to support with additional costs incurred as a result of COVID-19 will change for NHSPS. In line with this, NHS England will no longer directly fund incremental service and occupancy costs arising from COVID-19 related requests for NHSPS for properties and services

These costs will now have to be passed onto our NHS colleagues and customers directly. There will be two elements to how NHSPS will charge for additional COVID-19 activities:

- any specific occupancies and services already being delivered, or new occupancies and services being requested will be separately identified and billed to you
- there will need to be a general uplift to all your facilities management and service charges to cover the increased absence rates, additional PPE and other costs that are not property specific.

We remain committed to continuing to support our NHS colleagues and customers during this difficult time as we move into the next stage of the pandemic and we will continue to do everything we can to minimise the financial impact of these additional needs.

What this means for COVID-19 related tenancies at will (TAW) with NHS Property Services

If you are currently occupying additional NHS Property Services property under a COVID-19 tenancy at will (TAW), we will shortly be contacting you to discuss whether you would like to continue with the occupancy.

If you would like to continue with the occupancy, you will be billed for your space and services received from 1st October, you will also be asked to enter into a standard occupancy agreement with us to record the additional space you're occupying. These charges will appear in your quarterly bill. Any longer-term occupancy can be on a flexible basis to reflect your anticipated need for the space going forward.

If you do not wish to remain in occupation and pay for the accommodation, we would be grateful for your earliest notification, latest by 16th October 2020 and confirmation that you will vacate the accommodation by the end of December 2020. If you vacate by this date you will not be charged for your occupancy or services received for the period up to 31/12/2020, otherwise charges will be backdated to 1st October 2020.

What this means for additional COVID-19 related services you have requested

If you have requested additional services (for example, a new service such as catering) and you would like these services to continue, the charges will be included in your quarterly bill from 1st October 2020.

If you do not wish to continue with the additional services, please contact your local Facilities Service Manager or get in touch with the Customer Support Centre (CSC) on 0800 085 3015 or customer.service@property.nhs.uk by 16th October 2020.

What this means for enhancements to existing services you have requested

If you have requested any enhancements to existing services that will continue beyond 1st October 2020 or if you request any further enhancements to existing services after 1st October 2020, such as additional cleaning hours, this will be recovered in the NHSPS true-up for 2020/21.

If you do not wish to continue with the enhancements to your existing services, please contact your local Facilities Service Manager or get in touch with the Customer Support Centre (CSC) on 0800 085 3015 or customer.service@property.nhs.uk by 16th October 2020.

Requesting new services or additional space

If you would like to request new services or additional space related to COVID-19, please contact your regional team or get in touch via our Customer Support Centre on 0800 085 3015 or customer.service@property.nhs.uk who will be happy to assist.

Any new services or space that you request will be treated as an ongoing change to the services and space we provide to you and the charges will be included in your quarterly bill.

One-off requests

One-off requests such as installation of protective screens or signage, will be billed on a monthly basis in line with the costs incurred.

General uplift on facilities management charges and service charges

In line with current practice, the actual costs will be applied to the NHSPS true-up for 2020/21. Based on the incremental costs we have reviewed and agreed with NHS England in Q1 and Q2, it would be sensible for organisations to use an estimate of 4.75% on facilities management charges and service charges to cover the increase on costs that cannot be specifically identified to a customer (for example, increased usage of PPE and consumables, sickness cover etc.). Please use this figure for planning and budgeting purposes.

For more information about how the approach to COVID-19 related charges is changing, please visit www.property.nhs.uk/covid-helpful-guides

We recognise that this continues to be a challenging time for our colleagues across the healthcare system and we are committed to working closely with you and supporting you in the best way possible.

If you would like to change any of the temporary arrangements in place for COVID-19, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 0800 085 3015 or customer.service@property.nhs.uk