

T: 0300 244 4000

E:

Siobhian Brown MSP  
Convener  
COVID-19 Recovery Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

By email: [COVID19.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:COVID19.committee@parliament.scot)

21 March 2023

Dear Convener,

Further to my letter of 20 December 2022, I am writing to provide an update regarding the funding made available through the long COVID Support Fund within the financial year 2022-23.

As you will be aware, some NHS Boards have experienced delays in recruiting to posts identified to implement the pathways of care for long COVID, as outlined in my letter of 20 December. Boards are taking action to fill these posts as soon as possible, or where required, give consideration to different models of care to deliver the objective of improving the experience of people seeking support for long-term effects of COVID-19.

As a result of these delays in recruitment, NHS Boards have been unable to fully utilise the long COVID Support funding made available to them for 2022-23. We have worked with Boards, third sector organisations and people living with long COVID to maximise the impact of funding available, and to identify additional opportunities to enhance the support available now to people impacted by long COVID.

I can therefore confirm that in addition to the initiatives outlined in my letter of 20 December, funding has now also been made available to support ten initiatives being led by third sector organisations up until the end of the financial year 2022-23.

Funding for these third sector initiatives has been made possible as a result of the projected underspend by territorial Boards. It is intended that these activities will complement the work already underway by NHS Boards and ensure that we are offering a wide range of support to people living with long COVID.

We remain committed to allocating the £10 million long COVID Support Fund in full. Our 2023-24 budget outlines that £3m will be made available from the Fund over the next financial year, and the remainder of the fund will be allocated over the financial years 2024-

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25 and 2025-26. Any funding not utilised by NHS Boards within the financial year 2022-23 will be made available to Boards within the financial year 2025-26.

The table below outlines the additional organisations to which funding has been made available for 2022-23, the associated amounts, and a brief summary of the project activity. I hope this information is helpful to you and members of the Committee.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>
Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland	£28,904	Integration of the long COVID support application within Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland's case management system. This aims to improve the patient experience by reducing time between the acceptance of support and the onboarding of patients into the CHSS system, and improve reporting methods and data collection.
Covid:Aid	£48,745	Development of an online support community specifically for people in Scotland with long COVID, providing access to advice, information, peer support and webinar events.
Covid:Aid	£57,600	Delivery of Covid Aid/ Let's Get on With it Together (LGOWIT) Self-Management Programme, providing free access to an online course which aims to support people in the management of impacts associated with long COVID.
Covid:Aid	£27,750	Development of mobile phone application for the Covid Aid Support Community.
Covid:Aid	£10,000	Delivery of long COVID advertising and signposting activity, aiming to increase awareness of long COVID amongst the general public in Scotland.
Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (The ALLIANCE)	£27,750	Delivery of a pilot programme of long COVID Support Groups within the Glasgow City and West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership areas, facilitated by Senior Community Links Workers.
Long Covid Scotland	£25,000	Investment in systems and equipment required by the organisation to widen its impact and reach more people. Administrative capacity to support the development of educational resources for healthcare staff.
Scottish Ballet	£3,035	Delivery of the 'Emerge' programme designed through consultation with people with lived experience of long Covid and medical professionals. Aims to help people living with long COVID to manage symptoms, build resilience and offer time for participant dancers to connect with others with lived experience.
Scottish Opera	£86,892	Expanding course capacity on the 'Breathe Cycle II' project which delivers an online programme of gentle vocal training and

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		breathing exercises designed to re-build physical and mental resilience.
Thistle Health and Wellbeing	£19,000	Expansion of a national Self-Management and Rehabilitation programme, delivered through both 1:1 support and group-based activities facilitated by Wellbeing Practitioners and Peer Volunteers to help participants understand stress, pacing, sleep management and exercise.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£334,676</b>	

Yours sincerely,



**HUMZA YOUSAF**

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



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