

## User/Representative Q&As regarding changes from 1 April 2008

### Threshold and Maximum Sums

**Q** Will the maximum that ILF can pay increase?

**A** No, the maximum that ILF can pay will not change and it will remain to be £455 per week.

**Q** Will the combined maximum amount of funding between ILF and the LA increase?

**A** No this will not be the case, the overall funding maximum will remain at £785 per week for the first six months of ILF payments.

**Q** Isn't it unfair to increase the Local Authority contribution by such a large amount?

**A** We do not feel the increase is unfair. It is important to note that 53% of Local Authority contributions already meet the new minimum contribution of £320 per week. Also the average LA contribution towards care packages is already £300 per week. The amount LAs must pay has not been increased for 15 years and this change brings the amount in line with rises in inflation since 1993.

**Q** Why have you had to increase the threshold sum that Local Authorities have to pay?

**A** Since summer 2006 we have had a 27% increase in applications. The money that the government has given us for next year is not enough for us to be able to carry on accepting that level of applications. These changes will help the ILF to make sure that you carry on receiving support, whilst also continuing to enable new users to apply to the ILF.

**Q** What happens if you continue to get the same level of applications from 1 April?

**A** We will give priority to applicants who are on the lowest incomes and those who are in work. This means prioritising those applicants who are paid to work 16 hours or more every week and also applicants who receive Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance and Pension Guarantee Credit or income at a similar level to these benefits

**Q** I have already applied to ILF so will my LA have to increase their contribution to £320 per week?

**A** No, the new threshold sum for LAs will change from 1 April 2008 so if we have already accepted your application your Local Authorities contribution needs to be at least £200 per week. If your care needs go up after 1 April and you need an increase in funding your Local Authority will have to contribute at least £320 per week for ILF to consider increased funding.

**Q** My LA is paying above £320 per week so could they reduce their contribution when funding is reviewed?

**A** No this will not be the case, the rules about Local Authorities reducing their contribution remain unchanged. The ILF is not in a position to take over the cost of care that LAs have previously funded.

### **Changes in my care need or costs**

**Q** Can I ask for an increase in my ILF money if the cost of my care goes up?

**A** Yes, the ILF can still consider an increase in your money if the cost of the care that we already pay for goes up. For example, if we already pay for 30 hours of care at an hourly rate of £8 per hour and the hourly rate increases to £9 per hour we will be able to consider the increase. In this situation your LA does not have to meet the £320 per week contribution.

**Q** Can I ask for an increase in my ILF money if the amount of care I need goes up?

**A** We will only be able to consider paying towards more care if your Local Authorities contribution is worth at least £320 per week. If your Local Authority is not meeting the £320 per week contribution you will need to ask them to consider your increased care needs.

## **Paying Awards**

**Q** Will you be able to backdate payments from the date my increased care costs started?

**A** For any valid applications or requests for an increase we receive on or after 1 April 2008 we will pay your increased award from the date that we receive the Agreement form at the ILF office in Nottingham. However, if you can send us evidence of the increased costs (i.e. agency invoices or records of payments to Personal Assistants) we will consider paying the agreed amount from an earlier date. Any applications or requests we receive before 1 April 2008 are subject to our current policy.

## **General**

**Q** Are the ILF going to be closing down?

**A** There is no such plan. The money that the government gives ILF is a fixed amount over the next three years. The changes in our rules relate to the fact that the growth in application rates has increased by 27% since last year and we cannot continue to sustain that level of applications with the money the government has given us.

**Q** Will you still continue to review my funding every two years?

**A** We are currently in the process of deciding how these changes might affect how and when we review your funding. If there are any changes we will continue to let you know.

8 January 2008