

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Health & Wellbeing Board

Date: 18th March 2026

Subject: Better Care Fund (BCF) Quarter 3 report 2025-2026

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Responsible Director: John Morley, Director of Adult Social Care (DASS) and
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SUMMARY

This Better Care Fund (BCF) paper sets out the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (H&F) and the H&F Integrated Care Board (ICB)'s the BCF quarter 3 report. The BCF Plan 2025-2026 was submitted to NHS England on 3rd July 2025 and the BCF Quarter 3 report will be submitted 30th January 2026.

This report seeks approval of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) or the board's Chair on behalf of the HWB where submission deadlines do not align with the sitting of the board for the BCF Plan and Quarter 3 update as required by NHS England.

Where NHS England submissions precede the sitting of the board, HWB Chair's approvals will need to be ratified at the next HWB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approval of the BCF Quarter 3 BCF report for 2025-2026 by the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board in advance of the Health and Wellbeing board meeting.
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Wards Affected: (Give the Wards directly affected, or "None" or "All")

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The Better Care Fund supports community health and social care resources to reduce the number of people who need to be admitted to hospital and supporting people to get home as soon as they are well.

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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In accordance with the statutory duties and powers given to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Board's Terms of Reference in Hammersmith & Fulham Council's constitution include overseeing the development and use of the Better Care Fund (BCF) by the Council and the H&F Integrated Care System (ICS).
2. The Better Care Fund supports community health and social care resources to reduce the number of people who need to be admitted to hospital. Residents that do require admission to hospital are supported to get home as soon as they are well.
3. The H&F BCF plan submitted to NHS England details the following:
 - Planned income and expenditure.
 - Planned performance targets against BCF metrics (avoidable admission, falls, discharge to normal place of residence and residential admissions).
4. One of the three BCF metrics are not on track to meet target as follows:
 - Emergency admissions have not met its target due to a spike in winter conditions and flu's (for people aged 65+). Although this metric is not currently on track, a range of wider system initiatives are helping reduce avoidable admissions, including digital front-door pathways, 111 assessments and Same Day Emergency Care. The rollout of Integrated Care Coordination hubs expanded UCR capacity and frailty virtual wards is further supporting community-based responses and preventing unnecessary conveyance. Additional programmes such as enhanced community support, neuro-navigation and the Pharmacy First scheme are also helping de-escalate care needs and facilitate timely discharges- Not on track to meet target.
 - Discharge delays (adult patients discharged from acute hospitals on their discharge ready date) – is on track to meet target.
 - Residential admissions (long term support needs of older people aged 65 and over met by admissions to residential and nursing care homes – is on track to meet target.
5. The Quarter 3 report 2025-2026 focuses on the use of hospital discharge and residential funding as stipulated in by the NHS England and details the following:
 - Planned expenditure and actual expenditure to date.
 - Planned and actual outputs delivered to date.

6. The BCF quarter 3 report submission deadline date set by NHS England was 31 October 2024. The Chair of the H&F HWB Board approved the final version of the BCF quarter 2 report before officers submitted it to NHS England on 28 October 2024.

HWB BCF Requirements

7. The HWB is required to confirm whether the four national conditions detailed in the Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2025-26 continue to be met through the delivery of joint BCF plan.
8. The four national conditions are all continued to be met and are (1) plans to be jointly agreed, (2) implementing the objectives of the BCF, (3) complying with the grant and funding opportunities including maintaining the NHS minimum contribution to adult social care (ASC) and section 75 in place and (4) complying with oversight and support processes.
9. The key purpose of BCF reporting are as follows:
 - To confirm the status of continued compliance against the requirements of the fund (BCF).
 - In Quarter 3 to refresh capacity and demand plans, and in Quarter 4 to confirm activity to date, where BCF funded schemes include output estimates, and at the End of Year actual income and expenditure in BCF plans.
 - To enable the use of this information for national partners to inform future direction and for local areas to inform improvements.

Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 submission 2025-2026