



Independent
Living Fund
Scotland



ILF Scotland Newsletter

December 2021



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2015 Fund Review Visits

We normally visit our recipients once every two years, but we have been unable to do this because of COVID-19 restrictions.

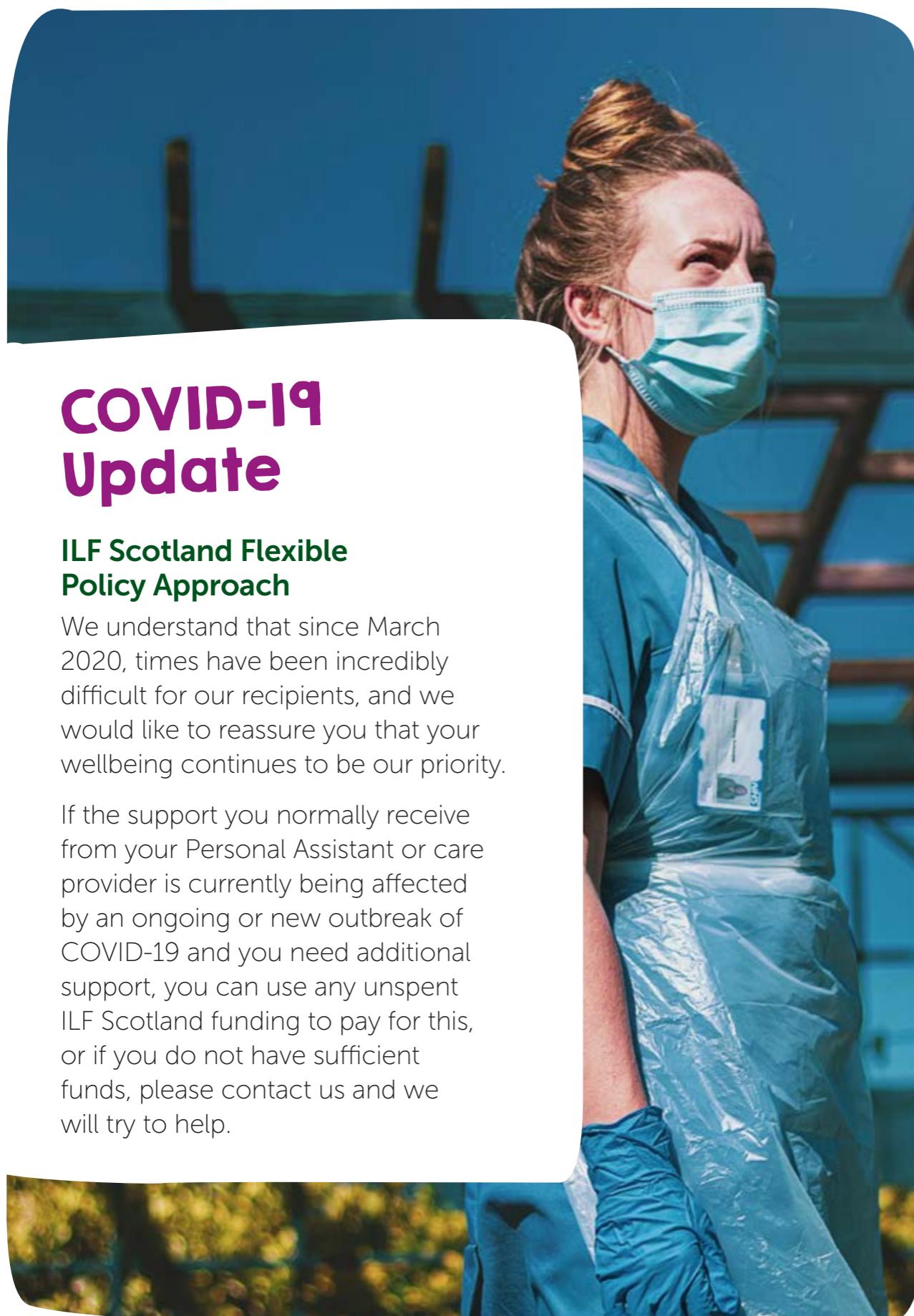
As the Scottish and Northern Ireland Governments are now lifting restrictions, we have started to resume review visits to your home in line with guidance. We will give priority to those where there is an urgent need to review support arrangements.

You will receive a letter from us with guidance about what you can expect before, during and after our visit and we will prioritise your health to ensure that our visits are as safe as possible.

If you have social work funded support, we will advise your local department that we expect a representative to attend the visit and we will ask them to provide information about the support they provide you.

We recognise that whilst restrictions are easing not everyone will be comfortable with having people visit their home for review visits. If you are notified of a planned review visit and have concerns about this, please let us know. We can still complete some reviews by video if necessary.

You can find more information on our website at www.ilf.scot and you can access a video detailing the process here: <https://bit.ly/ilf-vid>.



COVID-19 Update

ILF Scotland Flexible Policy Approach

We understand that since March 2020, times have been incredibly difficult for our recipients, and we would like to reassure you that your wellbeing continues to be our priority.

If the support you normally receive from your Personal Assistant or care provider is currently being affected by an ongoing or new outbreak of COVID-19 and you need additional support, you can use any unspent ILF Scotland funding to pay for this, or if you do not have sufficient funds, please contact us and we will try to help.

If you have additional expenditure due to COVID-19, for example, paying for transport to COVID-19 vaccination or testing services then again, you can use any unspent ILF Scotland funding or contact us if you need to. You can find more information about how we are applying our policies flexibly during COVID-19 here: <https://bit.ly/ILF-policy>.

COVID-19 - Booster, Third, and Flu Vaccinations

Scotland

The NHS is now offering booster doses of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine to help the protection you gained from your first two doses and give you longer term protection. You and your Personal Assistants are eligible. You can get the booster vaccine from 24 weeks after your second dose, and you may get your flu and coronavirus booster vaccines at the same time. Please see NHS Inform for more information.

The flu vaccine:
<https://bit.ly/nhs-flu>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) booster vaccination: <https://bit.ly/nhs-cov>

The NHS is also offering a third dose of the coronavirus vaccine to immunocompromised people. This third full vaccination is an extra 'top-up' dose to help increase the level of protection for people who may not have generated a full immune response to the first two doses, and who may therefore be less well protected than the wider population. If you are eligible for a third dose, NHS Scotland will contact you to arrange your appointment. You may get a flu vaccination at the same time. You will also need a booster dose after six months to extend your protection. You can read more information here: <https://bit.ly/3rd-scot>.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has its own arrangements for the COVID-19 Booster Vaccine. On the 15 November 2021, the Department of Health announced the extension of the booster vaccination to 40-49 year olds. If you are eligible, you can book a vaccination appointment at a participating pharmacy at the following link or wait for your GP to call you: <https://bit.ly/comm-pharma>. Community pharmacies will vaccinate non-Trust employed frontline health care staff, which includes your Personal Assistants.

The NHS in Northern Ireland is also offering a third dose of the coronavirus vaccine to people with a severely weakened immune system.

This third full vaccination is an extra 'top-up' dose to help increase the level of protection for people who may not have generated a full immune response to the first two doses, and who may therefore be less well protected than the wider population. Trusts or GPs are responsible for identifying and inviting people for their third primary dose. You will also need a booster dose to extend your protection. You can read more information here: <https://bit.ly/3rd-dose>.

People eligible for the flu vaccine can access this in Northern Ireland through their GPs or participating Community Pharmacists. You can read more on the Flu and Covid vaccination plans page here: <https://bit.ly/covid-ni>.

2015 Fund and Transition Fund Publicity

The ILF Scotland Communications Team are always interested in hearing directly from any recipients about their personal stories and how ILF Scotland funding positively impacts their lives. We would love

to hear from you if you would like to share your experience with others and be a part of any of our upcoming PR campaigns. Please don't hesitate to get in touch by emailing communications@ilf.scot or by phoning 0300 200 2022.

Award Manager Sessions



ILF Scotland will be hosting two Award Manager Information Sessions on 14th and 16th December. The sessions will be held on Microsoft Teams. Please see joining details below. These sessions aim to provide people who manage ILF Scotland awards (2015 Fund) with helpful information about what this entails, signpost people to other useful sources of help and provide Award Managers with an opportunity to ask our staff any questions they have or discuss any issues with the wider group of attendees.

The Scotland Award Manager Information Session will be held on 14 December at 10.30 until 12.30. You can find the link to register for this session here: <https://bit.ly/30DCGkS>.

The Northern Ireland Award Manager Information Session will be held on 16 December at 10.30 until 12.30. You can find the link to register here: <https://bit.ly/3HpHQSc>.

If you have any questions or would like help registering, please email Lee House at communications@ilf.scot or phone 0300 200 2022.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

ILF Scotland recipient and Depute Chair of our Scotland Recipient Advisory Group, Andy, developed and maintained ILF Scotland's online Forum. Andy wanted to share some information and a blog with our recipients.

Hi, my name is Andy. I suffered from my trauma back in September 2003, this trauma affected my movement and my ability to speak. Assistive technology wasn't as advanced then as it is now and help and support weren't as readily available either. Today's Assistive Technology can provide you with an effective way of communicating and having full access to IT.

Being able to communicate effectively opens up the affected persons mind, you can then:

- freely communicate,
- build new and maintain existing relationships,
- get involved with matters that are important to you,
- access training and further education,

- secure one of the many forms of work and,
- develop your own choice and control over your life.

You can have a chat online with me to discuss things like:

- Get guidance on where to have an AAC assessment carried out,
- Who will provide funding for AAC equipment,
- The types of AAC equipment and software that are available,
- You can also exchange information with other people who are experiencing similar barriers in life when we refer to communication.

Join me at the ILF Scotland Forum Site: <https://ilf.scot/ilf-scotland-forum>.

Recipient Advisory Group (Scotland) & Stakeholder Group (Northern Ireland)

The purpose of these groups is to support the improvement and development of ILF Scotland, for recipients living in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Group Members provide feedback and advice on all matters relating to the operation of the fund, including experiences of using the existing fund, communicating and interacting with ILF Scotland and providing insight and advice into

potential policy developments relating to the existing fund. Both groups are currently looking for new members, particularly from among our disabled recipients. If you are interested in being involved in either group please contact Linda Scott (Director for Policy, Improvement and Engagement) by emailing Linda.Scott@ILF.scot or phoning 0300 200 2022.

UN International Day of People with Disabilities Campaign

The UN's International Day of Persons with Disabilities (UNDPWD) is on 3 December. The theme for this year is **"Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world."**

ILF Scotland will be running an exciting campaign with a number of our recipients, Stakeholder and Advisory Group members to celebrate the day, linking in with this year's theme. You can check out what we get up to and get involved online on our **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram** channels and our website www.ilf.scot.

2015 Fund - Scotland

Adult Social Care Pay Uplift

The Scottish Government has announced that as part of their winter plans for social care they are funding an increase in the minimum rate of pay for frontline workers. The minimum amount that adult social care workers, including Personal Assistants, can be paid from 1st December 2021 is increasing from £9.50 per hour to £10.02 per hour.

If we have not done so already, we will be writing to all of our recipients who are affected by this change to inform them that their ILF award will be increased from 1st December and that the increase is to ensure they can pay at least this new rate of pay.

Please notify your payroll provider if you use one to ensure the new rate is paid to your Personal Assistants. If you use a Care Provider for your support it is likely that they will increase their charges to ensure they comply with this new minimum wage. Your ILF award is being increased in anticipation of this.

We are hearing a lot about difficulties in recruiting social care staff at present, and we hope this increase will help to alleviate some of these challenges.

National Care Service and ILF Scotland re-opening

Following the Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland, which reported at the beginning of 2021, the Scottish Government ran a consultation on the creation of a National Care Service, which was one of the main recommendations of the review. The consultation has now closed, and over 1000 responses have been submitted, including one from ILF Scotland. The process of analysing the responses and working towards implementation has now started. We expect a report on the consultation response in early 2022.

The Independent Review recommended that the ILF Scotland 2015 Fund be re-opened to new applications. Although there was no specific question about this in the consultation document, it stated that:

"The Independent Living Fund (ILF) was established in 2015, following the closure of a UK Government programme, and is effectively a national scheme of direct payments to support independent living by disabled people. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care (IRASC) called for ILF to be re-opened. We will consider options for the future of the ILF within the context of the development of the National Care Service."

We continue to work with our colleagues in Scottish Government, exploring possible options for re-opening the fund. The Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care, Kevin Stewart, met with the ILF Scotland Recipient Advisory Group on 18th October, where he confirmed that it is his ambition to re-open ILF. We will keep you updated with any developments.

Meeting with Minister and Advisory Group Members

Members told the Minister about what they used their funding for and spoke about the positive impact it made to their lives. Members commented that ILF Scotland's culture and

funding empowers recipients to be employers, to exercise choice and control, and to be productive members of society and live a good life regardless of their impairment.



Kevin Stewart MSP

The Minister thanked members for their stories and for their hard work and dedication to the ILF Scotland Recipient Advisory Group.

The Minister spoke about the proposed National Care Service (NCS) and said he would like the ILF Scotland Recipient Advisory Group members to be heavily involved in the consultation process.

Duty of Candour and Complaints information

The intention of the Duty of Candour legislation and regulations introduced in Scotland aim to ensure that organisations are open and transparent with people who use health, care and social work services. Although not required by law to comply with the Duty of Candour, ILF Scotland is fully committed to act in accordance with the principle of the Duty as it relates to our own service provision in both Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Our procedures ensure that we fully investigate all complaints according to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) published

guidance and complaints handling procedures. We also make sure that these comply with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO). We use feedback from the complaints we receive as a learning opportunity to continuously improve our services and publish information about the complaints we receive. In addition, we adhere to the Public Records Scotland Act and maintain a guide to information on our website.

The SPSO has updated its model Complaints Handling Procedure. ILF Scotland acts in accordance with this and we have updated our complaints

handling procedure in line with this. You can find our revised procedure here: <https://bit.ly/30EapuP>. At ILF Scotland, we strive to provide the best possible service we can but if on occasion we don't get it right we want to know so please tell us. We welcome all complaints as an

important feedback mechanism and we make it easy for people to complain to us – you can do this in person, by phone, email or post.

In the first six months of 2021-2022, ILF Scotland received 16 complaints across both 2015 and Transition Fund services, broken down as follows.

	No of complaints	Stage 1 – resolved at point of contact	Stage 2 – investigated	Of those investigated – no. upheld
2015 Fund	4	2	2	1
Transition Fund	12	2	10	8

Four complaints related to the 2015 Fund and 12 to the Transition Fund. Collectively we investigated 12 and upheld nine of these. We capture each learning point from this valuable

feedback about our service and act to address any issues raised through revised procedures, staff training, etc., in the spirit of continuous organisational improvement.

National Wellbeing Hub Webinars



Following the success of the Focus on Wellbeing programme, the National Wellbeing Hub is now offering a programme series that covers the period from mid-November 2021 to the end of January 2022. It is aimed at everyone working in health and social work/social care in Scotland.

The various sessions are intended to support and empower everyone working in health and social care services to enhance personal resilience during challenging times ahead, especially over the winter months. You can find more information here:

<https://wellbeinghub.scot/our-events>.

Northern Ireland

ILF Potential Re-opening

Work has continued behind the scenes on finalising the formal submission to the Minister for Health on re-opening ILF in Northern Ireland. This work has been slowed down by the wider COVID-19 impact, but we hope that it will progress in the next few months.

Advance Care Planning - Northern Ireland

The Department of Health is developing an Advance Care Planning policy for adults in Northern Ireland. A key aim of the policy will be to encourage people to think about what matters to them and if they became unwell, to consider their

wishes, feelings, beliefs and values to help them to plan for their future. This is part of a programme of work supported by the Department of Health to develop and implement a public health approach to palliative care. You can read more about this here: <https://bit.ly/3nrWCzM>.

Some of our Stakeholder Group Members attended consultation events earlier in the year and Corinna Grimes, Regional Advance Care Planning Lead, attended the Stakeholder Group meeting on 9 November 2021 and delivered a

presentation. Group Members were able to feed in their views, which Corinna will take on board, and she will be meeting individually with a few of the group's members to follow up on specific points raised at the meeting.

Staff Recognition Payments - Northern Ireland

Health and Social Care Staff in Northern Ireland are to receive a £500 Special Recognition Payment. Personal Assistants employed through the use of Direct Payments or payments from the Independent Living Fund or Thalidomide Fund will be eligible for the payment.

Payments to staff in the independent sector will be taken forward in two phases. The first phase will see payments made to eligible staff in care

homes and domiciliary care providers. This phase is currently well underway.

Further work is ongoing to finalise arrangements to deliver the payment in a second phase to the remaining categories of independent sector staff including Personal Assistants. The Department of Health will communicate details of phase two shortly and will provide an update of timeframes. You will be able to check this link for updates in information: <https://bit.ly/3Duraqo>.



Transition Fund Ambassador – Andrew Batchelor

One of our Transition Fund Ambassadors, Andrew, was chosen by Joe Fitzpatrick MSP as one of Scotland's local heroes and was invited to attend the official opening of the Scottish Parliament for the 2021/22 Parliamentary session by Her Majesty the Queen at the beginning of October.

Recently, he was also featured in The Courier showcasing his rise to success with his business Dundee Culture. Andrew started Dundee Culture at just 12 years old to showcase Dundee and has built this into a community with a massive following. Find out more about Andrew and his business here: <https://bit.ly/3nl3z5H>.



Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award – Cait Kostka

We are delighted to hear that our Transition Fund Ambassador, Cait Kostka, has been nominated for the Dumfries and Galloway Life Awards in the Young Entrepreneur of the Year category! Cait is excited for the Christmas period with a diary full of repeating customers and a



continuously growing business, Cait's Bakes. Find out more about Cait's journey to creating a successful business here: <https://ilf.scot/fund-case-study/caits-story/>.

Facebook Live Event – Sharing Experiences and Inspiring Futures

In October, ILF Scotland held its first Facebook Live event. This was a fantastic night, hosted by Disability Activist, Emily Yates with Chair of the ILF Scotland Board, Susan Douglas-Scott, and one of our Transition Fund Young Ambassadors, Andrew, as guests. They spoke about their experiences as disabled people and the barriers they face on a daily basis. If you didn't manage to make this event, you can rewatch it here: <https://bit.ly/3FkvUiH> You can find out about more of our upcoming events through our Facebook page.

Online Application and Processing Timescales

The quickest and easiest way to make an application to the Transition Fund is online. You can find the link to apply online here: <https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/how-can-i-apply/>.

We are currently receiving a very high volume of applications and because of this, we aim to process the majority of our applications online. If you cannot apply online for any reason or if you need more information or help with your application, please give us a call on 0300 200 2022 or email enquiries@ILF.scot.

Currently, we are taking approximately 10 weeks to process applications.

Please be assured that we will be in touch with you about your application as soon as possible. If you need funding for a specific time, please make sure that you apply in good time to allow us to process the application before you need the funding. Please note that we cannot fund anything retrospectively because the Transition Fund is an entirely discretionary fund and we must ensure that people meet the eligibility criteria.

We can only process applications once we have all of the information we ask you for. If this isn't supplied with your application, it will delay the time we take to pay the grant. It is really important that you upload the correct documents when applying online, otherwise this will delay your application. If you are in receipt of DLA or PIP, please upload your most recent update letter – these are usually sent out in January to March each year.

If you do not receive DLA or PIP, you need to supply a letter of support from a professional person that knows you well enough to tell us how your disability or impairment affects you on a day to day basis. You can find out more information here: <https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/who-can-apply>

- you can download the Transition Fund Support Letter Template from the bottom of the page. You can find out further information and apply on our website: www.ilf.scot/transition-fund.

#Try Something New

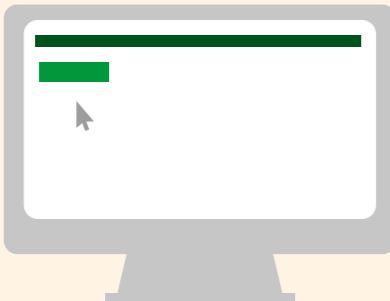
Since the opening of the Transition Fund in December 2017 ILF Scotland has:



Received
over
5,200
applications



Approved
over
£8.3
million
in funding



Read our recipients stories at:
[https://ilf.scot/
transition-fund/](https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/)



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