

Note of Meeting

Northern Ireland Stakeholder Group Meeting

Tuesday 7 March 11.30am – 3.00pm

The Mount Conference Centre / Zoom

Permanent Members Present

David McDonald, Chair

Niqi Rainey

Frances McHugh (via Zoom)

Robert Dallas

Collette Jones

Caroline Wheeler

Kieran McCarthy (via Zoom, left meeting at 12:25)

Affiliate Members Present

Amanda Paul (left meeting at 13:30)

Bryan Myles

ILF Scotland Representatives in Attendance

Linda Scott

Lee House

Peter Scott

Harvey Tilley

Robert White (via Zoom, joined 13:30 left 14:20)

Permanent Members Apologies

Michaela Hollywood

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List of Actions:

- Linda to share with Bryan the AI/Uplift records of the accounts that LCIL manage
- Peter, ILF Scotland will raise the matter of the increase in PA rates upcoming in April 2023 to the Northern Ireland Government as a matter of urgency
- Linda to share the key cost savings of the re-opening of the fund.
- Lee to email out details of training of PAs to the Stakeholder Group. (Insurance could be invalid if PA not trained properly)
- Lee to send the link out from the ILF Scotland website on Advanced Care Planning to the Group. (VELA Micro board Share)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Housekeeping

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if everyone was happy for Lee to record the audio of the meeting for minuting purposes. All agreed.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The Group approved the minutes of the previous meeting. ILF Scotland will publish these on its website.

Actions points from previous meeting:

- Colin and Linda to discuss uplifting the PA rate by 12% in advance of April 2023 and backdating to 1 April 2022. (Complete)
- Lee to share links from Michaela to the communication team on PA support and future landing programme.

3. Matters arising

No matters arising.

4. Re-opening of the 2015 Fund in Northern Ireland

Harvey advised the Stakeholder Group that due to the current legislation in Northern Ireland and with no Assembly currently in place, the financial sustainability of re-opening of the fund is not currently possible to confirm. There will be a new proposal submitted to the Permanent Secretary, which will include a return on investment, for the re-opening of the fund. Harvey advised that there has been some reprofiling of figures carried out in relation to the potential reopening but it has not been possible to progress this due to the lack of an Executive. Colin will progress this in financial year 2023/24. Colin will have view of this before putting it forward in the new financial year in 2024.

David suggested that people leaving hospital and returning home should be part of the new proposal. Harvey agreed that this would be included in the submission.

Niqi suggested that it would be a good idea to include statistics comparing ILF Scotland Recipients to non ILF Scotland Recipients for hospitalisations and specifically around Covid. Linda confirmed that ILF Scotland could provide these figures for Recipients in terms of Recipients who have advised ILF Scotland of hospital stays but was not sure if they will be able to cite Covid or not. ILF Scotland will investigate further.

5. ILF Available Income Reduction

Linda confirmed that all of the uplifts have been successfully completed to the new maximum of £43.00 per week or less.

On behalf of the Stakeholder Group and all NI Recipients benefiting from this very positive change, David thanked Peter, Harvey, Linda and

everyone else at ILF Scotland and Mark and Colin at our Department of Health who have worked with such determination to achieve this. He added that, especially in the current financial climate, it will make a world of difference to everyone affected.

6. PA Uplift Update

Linda asked the Group if Members were accepting of the following proposed manner of uplifting PA rates, as agreed between the Department of Health and ILF Scotland. This would be a 12% increase for all Recipients unless a Recipient was at a gross £14.75 per hour currently, in which case it would remain at a gross £14.75. For those under the national minimum wage at £9.50 per hour it was intended to apply the increase, and if it is still below the national minimum wage, it will be increased to £9.50 per hour. These increases will be applied automatically for the vast majority of Recipients by the beginning of April 2023. Any Recipient going through a review visit or in suspension, will have the adjustment worked out and applied manually, which might take slightly longer.

The Stakeholder Group confirmed their acceptance of the proposals above and warmly expressed their thanks to everyone involved at ILF Scotland and the NI Department of Health for making all of this possible, adding that it will make such a difference to our retention and recruitment of PAs and therefore to all of our lives.

In addition, Members remarked on the fact that the National Minimum Wage tends to increase on 6 April, the start of the financial year, each year and asked that future increases occur in sufficient time to enable Recipients and Award Managers to increase PA wages on 6 April also, so that they are not in a position of always backdating. Peter agreed to follow this up with the Government as a matter of urgency.

7. Review Visits Update

Robert advised the Stakeholder Group that ILF Scotland are a little behind on the review visits. This is due to the complexity of hiring and retaining PAs, which in turn is impacting on the time taken to complete review visits. The assessors are also struggling to have the Social Worker from the Trusts available at review visits which is causing delays. Any urgent reviews will always be a priority for ILF Scotland.

David thanked Robert for bringing the Group up to date and asked that he continue to do so.

8. Stakeholder/Advisory Group Meeting

Harvey advised the Group that we need to submit a proposal to the Scottish Government before ILF Scotland can put plans in place for a joint event. The proposed month of the event is September or October. David asked that we invite the Permanent Secretary of the NI Department of Health and offered to write a letter to this effect, which was agreed by all. Harvey added that planning for the event will start in April / May. ILF Scotland will establish a working group with Members from Scotland and Northern Ireland to help shape the event.

Members expressed their enthusiasm for the event and their willingness to assist with the planning.

9. Advanced Care Planning

Linda advised the Group that ILF Scotland has now added all of the relevant information to its website and asked for any feedback on this. David suggested that this is as much as we can share just now on this subject, which was accepted.

10. PA Training Programme

David asked that this agenda point be carried forward to the next meeting as Michaela is not present at this meeting.

11. Supporting Award Managers/Third Party Payroll

Peter advised the Group that this has been passed internally to the Department of Health and Colin will provide an update to share with the Stakeholder Group in due course. The indication is that ILF Scotland will align itself with the Department's position.

12. Charter for Involvement and ILF Scotland Meetings

Emma was to arrange a working group to determine future priorities but has been unable to do this because she has been absent from work. She will reschedule this. Linda advised the Group that ILF Scotland are currently reviewing Recipient feedback surveys and this will be linked into the Charter. Linda advised that working groups will be arranged to start in the first quarter of 23/24 and that ILF Scotland will publish an updated action plan in April 2023.

13. Any Other Business

None

14. Proposed Next Meeting & Arrangements

Lee will check potential dates with The Mount and will send out 'save the dates' to Group members.