

Questions:

Please provide the recorded information held by the Department of Health and/or the Strategic Planning and Performance Group in relation to the calculation, assessment and recommendation of the annual uplift advised for nursing home fees in Northern Ireland.

For each financial year from 2022/23 to 2025/26, please provide:

1. The percentage uplift advised or recommended for nursing home fees.

For each financial year from 2022/23 to 2025/26, please provide:

2. The full basis for the advised or recommended uplift, including all calculations, formulas, workings, costings, figures, numerical inputs, assumptions, weightings, adjustments and methodology used to arrive at the advised or recommended percentage uplift.
3. Any spreadsheets, models, tables, calculation sheets, working papers, briefing notes, submissions, reports or internal papers setting out, explaining or showing how the advised or recommended uplift was calculated.
4. A breakdown of all cost pressures, factors and assumptions considered in reaching the advised or recommended uplift, including, where held:
 - staffing costs;
 - National Insurance;
 - pension costs;
 - agency staffing;
 - utilities;
 - food;
 - insurance;
 - regulatory costs;
 - inflation;
 - property, maintenance or capital-related costs;
 - financing costs;
 - training costs;
 - dependency or acuity-related assumptions;
 - occupancy assumptions;
 - efficiency assumptions;
 - any other operating cost pressures, assumptions, adjustments, factors or considerations taken into account in reaching the advised or recommended uplift.

For each cost category, factor or assumption, please provide the recorded figures used, the source of those figures, the weighting or allowance applied, and how that category, factor or assumption contributed to the final advised percentage uplift.

5. Any spreadsheet, model, table, calculation sheet or working document showing how the underlying figures were converted into the final advised percentage uplift, including any intermediate calculations, adjustments, exclusions, caps or rounding applied.
6. Any correspondence, meeting notes, consultation material or records of discussions exchanged with Health and Social Care Trusts, care home provider representatives, sector bodies or other stakeholders about the annual nursing home uplift.
7. Any policy, guidance, decision-making framework or methodology used when assessing, calculating or recommending the annual nursing home fee uplift.

Responses:

1. The Department of Health advises HSC Trusts where there are approved uplifts to the care home rates, including the regional weekly tariff rate.

It can be the case that interim percentage uplifts are communicated and implemented in respect of a financial year, before any final uplift for that year is confirmed.

The following table sets out the final percentage uplifts for the nursing home tariff for the financial years 2022/23 to 2025/26.

Financial Year	Final uplift %
2022/23 (See note 1)	6.58% (in year only) 5.73% (recurrently)
2023/24	6.88%
2024/25	6.91%
2025/26	7.02%

Note 1: In 2022/23 an in-year percentage uplift of 6.58% was applied. This included the impact of one-off items, such as the in-year impact of changes to Employer National Insurance requirements. The recurrent uplift was 5.73% excluding these items.

Note 2: Uplifts are applied to the weekly nursing bed tariff for the previous year before the tariff is then rounded to the nearest whole pound.

Note 3: Where final percentage uplifts were confirmed after the beginning of the financial year, they will have been backdated to the beginning of the financial year.

2. – 7.

Upon receipt of your request DOH has taken some time to consider the information held which would be relevant to your request. Whilst DOH will hold information to inform a response; the process of:

- finding the requested information, or records containing the information;
- retrieving the information or records; and
- extracting the requested information from records

would be a significant exercise.

Given the volume and complexity of the information requested, an initial review of the work has estimated that the cost of complying with your request would far exceed the cost limit of £600.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) website provides advice around fees and cost limits (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/guide-to-managing-an-foi-request/charging-a-fee-and-cost-limits/>) and identifies cost limits for a Government Department at £600 or 24 hours at a cost of £25/hour. The DOH therefore considers Section 12 of the FOI Act to be relevant on this occasion and is therefore refusing this element of your request on the grounds of cost.

Date response issued: 17th June 2026
Reference Number: DOH 2026-0129