

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Minister for Health



The Rt Hon John Major MP  
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NBAM

PLC 22/5

22 May 1989

New P.M.

**PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES: SPECIFIC GRANTS: PES 1989**

1. This letter constitutes my bid for specific revenue grants for local authorities personal social services. At this stage I am not putting forward any bids for specific grants in support of Community Care [but may need to do so depending on the outcome of our discussions on Sir Roy Griffith's report.] Nor am I yet able to put forward my proposals for post qualifying training in order to complete a medium to long term strategy for social services training. I hope to do that in the Autumn. But I do see the need to make a start on correcting the management deficiencies in social services departments and am therefore seeking a small addition to the training programme for this purpose.

**Summary**

2. I propose to continue the Support Grant for Social Services for People with AIDS and HIV Related Expenditure for a further three years at increased levels of funding to meet the additional costs associated with the greater number of people in the community living with AIDS. I also propose to extend for a further three years the two existing Training Support Grants relating to Elderly People and Child Care and to run them as one programme. I wish to extend the training grant to cover three new areas - training in preparation for implementation of the Children Bill, Post Qualifying Studies and Practice Placements.

● IS Bid

3. The cost of such specific grants will be as follows;

	1990/91 fm	1991/92 fm	1992/93 fm
Continuation of existing programmes	21.3	21.3	21.3
Inflation increase on existing programmes	0.6	1.3	2.0
Volume increase in AIDS	2.8	6.3	10.5
New training programmes	11.5	10.9	9.8
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TOTAL	36.2	39.8	43.6

#### AIDS Support Grant

4. The specific grant to provide support for expenditure incurred by local authorities' social services departments in caring for people with AIDS and for expenditure related to HIV has been well received by the local authorities. The programme came into effect from 1 April 1989. The specific grant has enabled the department to target resources where they are most needed. Thus, out of a total of £6.5 million already allocated some £2.2 million has been divided among the five inner London authorities who carry the heaviest load. £3.4 million has been distributed between a further 22 authorities in London and the metropolitan areas where there is either a heavy concentration of cases or where there is a regional treatment centre. A further seventy seven authorities will receive a maximum of £14,000 each to fund the establishment of an AIDS coordinator in their area and to begin planning the appropriate response for that authority.

5. Before qualifying for a grant authorities have been required to submit detailed costed plans identifying their response in care and prevention and in developing strategic plans. The total value of approved expenditure for which bids were submitted exceeded the available grant by £1.5 million. The standard of these submissions has been generally high.

6. Information is not yet available on the total expenditure likely to be incurred on HIV related services in 1989/90 or 1990/91. The Cox report issued in November 1988, which has been accepted by Government as the best available basis for planning, provides estimates of the number of people alive with AIDS at the

end of each calendar year. The report suggests that the number of people living with AIDS will rise by 40% between the end of 1989 and the end of 1990, and by a further 50% by the end of 1991. The bid scales up the £7 million grant provision in 1989/90 in line with these forecasts.

7. As a result the bid in respect of the AIDS Support grant is;

1990/91	1991/92	1992/93
£9.8 million	£13.3 million	£17.5 million

8. The continued aim will be to concentrate resources upon those authorities with the highest incidence of cases whilst enabling other authorities to prepare for service need.

#### Training Support Grant

9. Over the last two years the department have reviewed the arrangements for training PSS staff and established a medium to long term plan for a cost effective improvements package. This has included improving the existing qualifying training and arrangements for acquiring the practical skills required by students; supporting the Government inspired National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) framework to be in place by 1991, as the best way to identify and achieve the competencies needed by the majority of social services staff who do not require professional qualifications; pursuing the grant aided programme for staff working with the elderly and with children to put right the worst deficiencies in both trained and untrained staff; and tackling the problems and deficiencies of the existing qualified workforce by encouraging post qualifying training. This composite plan may take 5 to 10 years to complete.

10. The strategy was announced in my speech at the Newcastle conference in September 1988 following clearance with colleagues. I am not yet able to come forward with detailed plans for post qualifying training as discussions with interested bodies are still underway. But I am including a small bid in this area for management training which I see as an urgent priority.

11. The TSG (Elderly People) has been a great success in its first year. All 109 PSS authorities have received grant in proportion to the number of staff they have in the relevant employment groups. All the indications are that it has provided valuable preliminary and specialist training to the staff working with the elderly and provided the stimulus for local authorities to improve the quantity and quality of training. We are undertaking a thorough review of progress in the first year of the scheme but detailed results will not become available until a few months after the year end. Monitoring the effects on service

delivery will necessarily have to take place over a longer time scale. Whilst we expect considerable improvement in the preparation of staff working with elderly people only some part of the deficit will have been tackled and reports such as Lady Wagner's on residential care show how much progress still needs to be made.

12. The TSG (Child Care) started operation in April 1989. This programme aims to improve the quality of social services provided for children and their families by increasing training provision for staff who work in this field. The staff in the child protection service who come under the scheme include untrained care staff as well as professionals. There is a training need across the board. It aims to cure deficits in basic childcare training and then provide training in child protection work, including sexual abuse.

13. Special arrangements have been made in relation to that part of the programme for training staff who come in contact with those who have been, or may have been, sexually abused. This has been firmly led from the department so that the lessons of the Butler-Sloss Report on Cleveland are followed. A specialist group has been established to develop guidance for those organising in-service training courses on child sexual abuse. This has established general criteria to be met by all courses and provided advice on suitable materials which are available. They have organised a series of workshops for local authority training officers. A condition of the award of any grant in respect of training in child sexual abuse has been that the LA representative has attended a workshop and that the locally based training courses they run will follow the guidelines set. The working party intend to identify suitable advanced training courses for key workers to attend.

#### Proposals

14. The two training programmes had to be run separately for 1989/90 but this is administratively inefficient both for the Department and for authorities. In future we wish to run them as one programme and to rationalise those features of both programmes which aim to strengthen the infrastructure of training and to build up the expertise of staff in management as well as targetted specialist areas . In addition:-

##### i) Practice Placements

Tony Newton and I have both identified the urgent need to tackle the problem of the quality and quantity of practice placements. It was a key element in our refusal to fund the extension to 3 year training for social workers that this problem should be tackled in order to maximise the

effectiveness of the existing mainly two year arrangements. This proposal would enable us, through CCETSW, to maintain existing practice placements (where there is currently a turnover of 50% in practice teachers) and to increase them over time to ensure that every social work student is provided with an acceptable level of practical experience. My intention in the first year is to target £7 million in a programme of £10.8 million provision. This takes account of the 84% increase in student numbers since a practice placement element was included in RSG in the early 1970s, and securing improvements in placement quality.

ii) **Post Qualifying Studies**

As mentioned earlier I will be bringing forward proposals for a coherent policy in post qualifying training once current discussions are complete. In the meantime there is an urgent need to improve the management of social services. The efficiency and effectiveness of the whole range of PSS activities is very much dependant upon the quality of its management and I am convinced that there is much scope for improvement. I therefore propose to start by targetting £2 million grant (£2.9 million provision) in 1990/91 on training for the 4200 senior and middle managers. Figures for 1991/92 onwards are markers only pending the outcome of discussions.

**Implementation of the Children Bill**

15. Additionally I need to bid for a one-off training grant as part of the implementation of the Children Bill. We are planning to implement it in full in. There will be a significant training task involved in preparing staff who work with children for the new legislation and for the consequent new and changed procedures. It is essential that this is completed speedily and efficiently so that the benefits of the new provisions in the Bill can be gained. The initiative would last for about twelve months spread over 1990/91 and 1991/92. I propose to top slice about £0.5 million of this grant to fund the central preparation of suitable training material and courses to be used by the local authorities.

**Value of specific grants for Training Support Programme**

16. It is proposed that the elderly and child care initiatives and the first two of these new programmes should be reimbursed at a rate of 70% of approved expenditure but that the Practice

Placements should qualify for 65% grant. This produces the following bid:

	1990/91 £m	1991/92 £m	1992/93 £m
Elderly People	7.6	8.0	8.3
Child Care	7.3	7.6	8.0
Children Bill	2.5	1.5	---
Post Qualifying	2.0	2.1	2.2
Practice Placements	7.0	7.3	7.6
	—	—	—
Total TSG	26.4	26.5	26.1

#### Monitoring and Value for Money

17. We will be closely monitoring the existing specific grants during the coming year. We have asked authorities for detailed training plans in respect of the grant for elderly people and for children. These will be checked for relevance and completeness. We have asked authorities for a progress report on the first full year of the Elderly TSP and should know later in the Summer how far the targets they set have been achieved. Inevitably there have been teething problems for the local authorities with the new grants, both of which had to be established very quickly and in the uncertainty of their continuation. We hope that we can now move to a period of planning the programme with some certainty over the next three years so that proper plans can be devised and pursued and the necessary infrastructure put in place for the quantum leap in the quantity and quality of social services training which is necessary to tackle outstanding deficiencies and to prepare the service for the future. We will seek integrated training plans to take account of the development proposed here and will expect authorities to set and achieve targets for the new elements of the programme and to account for the way in which they have used the resources provided. The impact of training on service delivery will be systematically explored through research proposals now being pursued and through future inspection work by my Social Services Inspectorate.

#### Submission

18. I am accordingly seeking your approval and colleagues support for the extension of the existing AIDS grant; to the extension of the existing training grants for elderly people and child care;

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and to the merging of these into an integrated Training Support Grant extended to cover training for the Children Bill, Post Qualifying Studies and Practice Placements. These proposals taken together would increase specific grants to £36 million in 1990/91. This is still less than 1% of the total PSS expenditure. They are closely targetted on priority areas, will be closely monitored and will provide good value for money.

**Circulation**

19. I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of E(LA) and to Sir Robin Butler.



DAVID MELLOR