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Date 3rd December 2024

Dear South West London VCSE leaders,

Thank you for your letter of 20 November regarding the Autumn Budget announcement and the potential impact of the increases to employer national insurance contributions on the South West London health and care Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector.

We recognise and share your concerns that this will be a significant issue for many health and care partners. Alongside the voluntary and community sector, we know these changes will also impact our partners across primary care and the care home sector. We assure you that this is a matter we have already raised and we will continue to raise in our discussions with our local authority and NHS provider partners, with NHS England and our neighbouring ICBs. These concerns are being widely echoed across our NHS leadership networks.

While we await further guidance from NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care on finalising funding, including confirmation of NHS funding allocations for 2025/26, we will continue to advocate for the sustainability of the VCSE sector. We are not expecting guidance until the New Year, at that point we will be in a position to discuss contracts.

Although South West London has a significant financial challenge, the Integrated Care Board is committed to shifting funding to services in community care, prevention initiatives and addressing health inequalities. We will keep all partners informed of any future opportunities that arise. As we plan for the future, the national 10-Year Health Plan and the three 'shifts' for the NHS – a move from analogue to digital, from hospitals to community care and from treatment to prevention - reinforce this focus.

We appreciate that our voluntary sector partners are key to the NHS supporting our local communities, particularly those under-served communities, and we will continue to work with you all to support the health and wellbeing of our South West London residents.

Best wishes,

Mike Bell and Sarah Blow

