

Freedom of Information Request NH200722 (IJ)

1. Please can you provide the date (month/ year) when the last review of foster carer fee rates took place.

There has been no review of foster carer fee rates

2. Please can you provide the date (month/ year) when the last increase of foster carer fee rates took place.

There has been no increase of foster carer fee rates

3. Please can you provide the average increase that was applied when the last increase of foster carer fee rates took place.

N/A as no increase has occurred

4. Please can you outline the details of the fee increase (please provide a format like the table below) for each and all foster carer grades (fee variations) within your trust, providing details of the grade (annual fee), the percentage rise, and the date on which the fee increase was applied. If no annual fee increase was applied in a given year, please state this within the table.

Foster Carer Grade/ Foster Carer Annual Fee Grade/ Percentage Rise/ Date on which fee rise was applied/ Date increase was back date to if applicable

e.g. 2011-12 6.5K 1% rise June 2021 April 2021

As above – there has been no increase in foster carer fee rates at any grade. Each foster carer who receives a fee has this reviewed annually and as a consequence their fee grade may increase or decrease depending on their situation / young people they are caring for, however as response above, the fee rates themselves have not increased .

5. In accordance with UK Minimum Standard “22.3 The authority manages access by carers to reward payments through a clear well publicised system”. Please can you detail your publication of your reward payments (fee payments) system (e.g., web link, recent public communication, recent communication with all foster carers)

HSC (Health and Social Care) Northern Ireland Adoption and Foster Care is a regional service with a Central Team in Belfast and several local teams across Northern Ireland (within each Trust area). The website link below provides information for anyone wishing to explore fostering and adoption within NI. Within the site, there are links to various agencies that support foster carers within NI and throughout the UK, as well as providing information regarding financial support available.

<https://adoptionandfostercare.hscni.net/>



<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/training-and-financial-support-fosterkinship-foster-carers#toc-3>

6. In accordance with UK Minimum Standard “22.4. Each carer receives clear information on any available reward payment scheme requirements of carers for development of skills and how to access increased payments.” Please can you provide a copy of the most recent communication your organisation sent to all foster carers advising them of your reward payment (fee payments) scheme.

As outlined in the Children (NI) Order 1995, Guidance and Regulations Volume 3, Family Placement and Private Fostering sections 4.50, 4.55 and 5.18, financial arrangements are discussed with foster carers during the assessment as well as in the written agreement between the Trust and foster carer.

A service level agreement is completed between the Trust and foster carer when a fee is paid. They also undertake a yearly review regarding the fee grade they are receiving.