

CareCubed Annual Data Update

Staff Costs

For the annual update, we have commissioned an extensive review of the CareCubed hourly rates, employer on-costs, cover costs and cost groups. We look for a robust analysis based on an extensive and reputable data set, which is provided by Skills for Care.

Skills for Care helps create a well-led, skilled, and valued adult social care workforce. They are a trusted independent charity with over 20 years' experience in workforce development, working as a delivery partner for the Department of Health and Social Care.

We use this data in conjunction with recruitment and job-posting data from across the UK to help us augment and validate these returns.

Please note that CareCubed provides two data model updates each year, the annual update (March – April) and interim update (September – October). The interim update usually provided in October, enables us to review the staff costs, non-staff costs and rates projected at the start of the financial year. We review and adjust these for accuracy in view of any new data that has come to light.

Hourly Rates: Adults

The Adult Social Care (ASC) Workforce Data Set is the national online data collection system for adults social care providers, which means they are the leading source of workforce data for the adult social care sector in the United Kingdom. They collect data from approximately 20,000 care providing locations and 750,000 workers annually. Hourly rates for England have been analysed across the ASC-WDS considering the impact of the national living wage increase of £0.50 (or 4.1%) – from £12.21 to £12.71 per hour.

The UK Real Living Wage of £13.45 per hour outside of London, and £14.80 within London will be reflected in CareCubed.

Hourly Rates: Impact

The rates below show the average hourly rate increases across Working Age Adults, Older Persons and Children's services.

The analysis has projected an average increase in hourly rates of 3.2% on average for support workers, 3.1% for senior support workers, 1.9% for nurses, 1.4% for deputy managers, and 1% for managerial roles. Hourly rates for administration roles will increase by 3.3% and other roles will increase by 3.1%. Overall impact will vary from case to case and should therefore be reviewed by users.

Role	Support Worker	Senior Care Staff	Nurse	Deputy - Manager	Managers (medium)
% Change	3.2%	3.1%	1.9%	1.4%	1%
Role		Administration		Other	
% Change		3.3%		3.1%	

Rates for Scotland and Wales have been determined by matching Office of National Statistics (ONS) data to English comparators to allocate to a cost group, and further adjustments to reflect the commitments to the Real Living Wage and Scottish Living Wage.

Please note - no changes were made to the hourly rates for the interim data model update in October 2025, therefore the % change can be used to reflect the full year adjustment (V20-V22).

Staff On-Costs & Cover Costs

On-costs are the additional costs to employers above the hourly rates paid to staff e.g., national insurance and pension contributions, and cover costs are payment for times when the staff member is not delivering care e.g., sickness, holiday, training, suspension, maternity/paternity/adoption.

Worker-level pay records in the ASC-WDS were analysed to calculate effective rates for NI and pensions, considering the mix of FT/PT staff and pay thresholds for contributions. Since the previous release in September, the average employer NI contribution has increased to 11.4% and pension has increased to 2.2%. Sickness allowance has decreased from 5.5 to 5 days per employee per annum and training has increased from 5 to 7 days (further detail about Oliver McGowan training included later in the release notes).

Non-Staff Costs

For each data model update we increase non-staff costs by an inflation index.

For the annual update we have used the relevant ONS CPIH measure to identify increases in all non-staff costs individually. With the exception of the water component of utilities which has been uplifted by predicted cost increases for the year ahead.

The impact on each cost line is shown in the table below:

Non-Staff Cost	%Change V20-21 (March25 - Oct25)	%Change V21-V22 (Oct25 - Mar26)
Food	+3.6%	+0.8%
Social activities	+4.9%	+0.7%
Transport	+3.6%	+0.09%
Utilities	+0.4%	+3.2%
Phone & broadband	+5%	-0.01%
Insurance	-2.6%	+3.4%
Recruitment costs and staff training	+2.8%	+0.04%

Changes to the Assumptions

Revised ROC Methodology

As part of the version 22 release, we have reviewed and updated the assumptions for the Return on Capital methodology, specifically for working age adult services. Significant research has been undertaken over recent months, based around evidence gathering, desk research and data analysis.

The new methodology will use 80% of the authority wide average property prices with a 6% yield. Where available, we would encourage users to use actual valuations.

The revised methodology calculation is likely to increased this element by an average of 15-20% per package.

Further research will be taking place on new builds and return on investment for conversion costs.

Oliver McGowan Training

All working age adults (WAA) cases and children with disabilities (CWD) cases will now include Oliver McGowan training, which is reflected in the training days cover cost.

General Changes

Apprenticeship Levy

Users now have the option to reflect the apprenticeship levy as an on-cost within the calculations. This cost line defaults to 0% but the revised value can be changed and stored within the case.