

Core brief

Friday 13 April 2018

Introduction

This issue of Core Brief details information on endowments reassurance.

Glasgow and Clyde endowments reassurance

There has been coverage in a few newspapers over recent days about allocations of money from health board endowment funds.

Our Board Chairman, John Brown, and the Chair of NHSGGCs Endowment's Management Committee, Ian Ritchie, felt it important to reassure the public and NHS staff who contribute to these charitable funds that there is good governance and scrutiny of applications and also that the general endowments fund has a breadth of appropriate areas of funding which include research as well as patient and staff projects that would not be covered under core NHS funding.

Some commentators have described endowments as a patient funded charity that should be used only for patient extras beyond what would normally be provided for by NHS core funding. In part – this is true – but it is only part of the picture.

The whole picture of our Endowments Fund is that it is for patient **and staff amenities and also for research work** which would not normally be provided from NHS exchequer funds.

The endowment fund receives money from a number of sources including money bequeathed from patients or their families for specific or general purposes, or from the wills of former staff to further the work or research they were involved in during their career or an area of specific interest to them... or indeed from any source for the benefit of NHS staff, or research or patient benefit.

The Endowments Management Committee, whose members are mostly non-executive board members with a wide range of professional and life experience, carefully scrutinises and questions all applications.

Three examples of approved endowment funding applications which have attracted media comment in recent days include:

- Funding for hundreds of defibrillators for public and staff areas across all our hospitals - not acute areas. As a result, these can be found in areas including rehabilitation gyms, laundries, reception areas and canteens.
- The purchase of new automatic beds for medical and older people areas in the Clyde sector which were of a higher specification than the previous manual beds. This is in line with the use of endowment funding being permitted if it allows the purchase of an item with enhanced functionality or with benefits additional to those required for basic service provision. The funds could not be used

to buy a standard bed but are permitted to purchase an advanced electronic bed with specific features that improve the patient experience.

- Glasgow is in the midst of a continuing HIV outbreak having recorded more than 100 new cases linked to public injecting drug use since 2015. The funding secured from endowments was for research and evaluation work which is now helping inform how best to manage the outbreak while meeting the needs of this vulnerable group. Research and evaluation not funded through core budgets or Universities are a common request to the endowment committee who scrutinise carefully their value for money as well as appropriateness of the use of charitable endowment funds. This research funded by endowments was used to help prepare a case for a “safer drug consumption facility”, however this research has also helped better understanding of the reasons for the HIV outbreak and how other measures could be identified to help this vulnerable group including the use of targeted preventative treatments which are now being used.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Endowments is a charity of over 2000 funds for the benefit of patients and staff. Funds are used for equipment, patients comforts and amenities, research and training together with the provision of extra facilities and opportunities not available from government funding.

Details of what endowments funds have been used for are also freely available on our public website: www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/242656/item-06-endowments-funds-accounts.pdf

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