# NHSE funding to support the development of Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists 2024/25

## Information for South East Cancer Alliances on how to access this funding, including the application process.

For any queries about this funding or details within this document, please contact the **NHS England South East Cancer and Diagnostic Programme,** part of the **Workforce, Training & Education directorate**, [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Key Messages**

## 2024/25 funding for the NHS England South East Cancer & Diagnostics (C&D) Programme, part of the Workforce, Training & Education Directorate (WT&E) has not yet been confirmed.

## We are hopeful that the 2024/25 C&D Programme budget will include funding to support the *development of Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists* and we are therefore progressing with the application stage; applications will be reviewed and provisionally approved, subject to funding confirmation from the National Cancer & Diagnostics Programme.

This document details the 2024/25 offer for the development of Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists via an NHSE training grant.

The funding is:

* to support Cancer Nurses Specialists new in post to access training and development opportunities identified at the point of their appointment.
* to support experienced nurses on the journey to becoming CNS to undertake training and development to support them in their career progression.
* to support nurses to access Level 7/ master’s level / advanced training and education to develop specialist clinical, leadership, education and / or research capabilities as identified for their development.
* to support Cancer Alliances and cancer services to develop the nursing workforce and develop a sustainable pipeline of nurses ready to move into CNS roles.
* Being offered to all NHS Trusts within SE Cancer Alliance geographies. This includes Trusts within Dorset ICS [Wessex CA] and Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust [Thames Valley CA]

**Deadline for funding applications**

* **The application window will open early March 2024 and will close at 9am on Tuesday 2 April 2024** to support funding being transferred in June 2024 via the NHSE Education Contract schedule if possible. It is possible that a second application round will run later in the year, subject to available funding but at this stage we aren’t able to confirm this.

Funding is required to be spent and fully utilised by 31 March 2025, and chosen courses and formal education must start **before** 31 March 2025.

For any queries please email [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Overview**

## NHS England South East Cancer & Diagnostics Programme is offering 2024/25 training grants to support the development of Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialists [CNS]; the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan sets out the commitment to continue investing in training opportunities and ‘…*the development of career pathways for nurses who wish to become clinical nurse specialists, working with people with cancer supporting the NHS Long Term Plan commitment of ensuring that all cancer patients, including those with secondary cancers, have access to specialist care and support.’ [[1]](#footnote-2)*

## As in previous years, the grants are aimed at existing and aspiring CNSs to enable them to undertake master’s level /advanced training and education to develop specialist clinical, leadership, education, and /or research capabilities.

## The project has four overarching aims:

## 1. To support CNSs new in post to access training and development opportunities identified at the point of their appointment.

## 2. To support experienced nurses on the journey to becoming CNS to undertake training and development to support them in their career progression.

## 3. To support nurses to access master’s level / advanced training and education to develop specialist clinical, leadership, education and / or research capabilities as identified for their development.

## 4. To support Cancer Alliances and cancer services to develop the nursing workforce and develop a sustainable pipeline of nurses ready to move into CNS roles.

**The funding offer**

The funding being made available is **training grants of up to £5000 per individual**. These can be used to cover:

* course fees (postgraduate or advanced development programmes for example: advanced communication skills, psychological skills, leadership programmes, masters level postgraduate study, specialist postgraduate study).
* travel, subsistence and associated training costs.
* training grant to support the individual’s development which could for example include provision for salary support and supervision/mentorship

The grants can be used by Cancer Alliances to:

* Fund an individual training grant; whereby an individual meeting the criteria applies to undertake learning and development courses or study;

and/or

* Fund training for a group of professionals; whereby the Alliance commissions bespoke

training for a group of professionals to meet an identified need/priority.

Grants can be provided for courses that run for longer than one year, up to the funding

limit of £5000 per person, but the funding is for 2024/25 only, and must be fully spent by 31 March 2025.

We ask that Alliances work with their Trust CNS leads and networks to decide on how best to utilise this funding based on the options and further information details listed in Appendix A.

Examples of appropriate training and development include (but are not limited to):

* Learning/development/non-accredited short courses on specialist areas of practice
* Postgraduate study in specialist area: e.g., PGCert, PGDip, Master’s degree

Areas of study would be expected to be relevant to the development journey and role of the CNS and will likely fall within cancer care, clinical research, education or clinical leadership. This may also include specialist areas relating to specific cancer pathways and patient groups. Other areas may be supported at the discretion of the Cancer Alliance if there is an

understanding of the contribution the development will have on the individual/s/team/service.

Some examples of types of courses and subject matter:

* Specialist areas of learning/development relating to specific aspects of the cancer

pathway.

* Specialist knowledge of the treatment and the management of specific tumour sites.
* Enhanced understanding of personalised care and support planning.
* Advances in cancer treatment e.g.: genomics
* Advanced communication skills training and managing difficult conversations.
* Psychological skills training and support people in distress
* Supporting themselves and their teams with emotional resilience and wellbeing
* Project management and leadership opportunities that support the development of an
* innovation or improvement to patient services.

Funding for study days and conferences should in the first instance be sought from employer

access to CPD funding available for nurses.

It is worth noting that many charities, professional bodies and other organizations offer free

workshops, training and development. Exploring these may widen and add to the opportunities to broaden the knowledge, skills and subsequent care across the cancer alliance footprint.

**How to access this funding**

Cancer Alliances are responsible for submitting applications for this funding on behalf of their partner NHS Trusts. Please use the online application form – the link can be found in the covering email. Please note that applications from individual Trusts and learners will not be considered. Please submit only one return for your Cancer Alliance.

The application window will close at **9am on Tuesday 2 April 2024.**

All applications will be reviewed by the NHSE SE Cancer and Diagnostics Programme team [WT&E]. It is possible that a second application round will run later in the year, subject to available funding but at this stage we aren’t able to confirm this.

Cancer Alliances will have the opportunity to confirm whether they prefer to receive and manage the funding or request this is paid directly to the relevant organisation listed within the application reporting form.

**Expectations of organisations upon application of funding**

* If approved, all investment will be subject to reporting requirements (outlined below).
* If approved, that all funding is managed appropriately in line with individual organisation’s financial management and assurance processes.

**Reporting and monitoring investment**

NHSE SE are required to provide full details of the use of this funding to the national NHSE Cancer and Diagnostics programme so that investment can be appropriately reported. Where funding has been used to support an individual, the national Programme team may keep a database of participant details (to include role, Trust, HEI/training provider).

Organisations receiving this funding will be required to provide twice-yearly updates [Sept 2024 and Feb/March 2025] relating to the status of each individual learner; guidance and templates will be provided later in the year.

**Reference documents**

**NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (2023)**

The long-awaited [NHS England Long Term Workforce Plan](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-v1.2.pdf) was published in 2023, outlining the case for change for all NHS workforce to deliver more patient care than ever before. This plan focuses on three priority areas of Train, Retain and Reform, which aims to make sustainable progress on core priorities for patients.

**Who to contact if you have any queries on this offer?**

The NHSE SE Cancer and Diagnostics Programme - [england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.canceranddiagnostics.se@nhs.net)

**Appendix A -** **Frequently Asked Questions**

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| **Question** | | **Response** |
| **What is the funding period?** | All grants must be utilised within the 2024/24 financial year, so by 31 March 2025 | |
| **What is the aim of the funding?** | **The aim of this funding is to support:**  New in post’ Cancer CNS who have had training and development needs identified at the point of their appointment; | |
| Experienced nurses, who are aspiring Cancer CNS and have already undertaken some development, but wish to participate in further development that supports their progression | |
| Aspiring and existing Cancer CNS who wish to access Masters level / advanced training and education to develop specialist clinical, leadership, education and / or research capabilities as identified for their development | |
| Cancer CNS [aspiring or existing] with areas of professional development as identified by their respective Cancer Alliances and cancer services which will in turn provide a workforce pipeline | |
| **How can this funding be utilised?** | * Option 1: provide individual grants of up to £5,000 per person to undertake learning and development at postgraduate or advanced level, or | |
| * Option 2: purchase education/training for a group of aspiring/existing CNS to meet an identified need, or | |
| * Option 3: A combination of the option 1 and 2 | |
| **What can this funding be used for?** | Course fees (postgraduate or advanced development programmes for  example), advanced communication skills, master’s level postgraduate  study, specialist postgraduate study. Plans should be for a single activity  or programme. Where the application is for a modular programme, details  should be provided of each module. | |
| Travel, subsistence, and associated training costs | |
| Training grant to support the individual’s development which could for example include provision for salary support and supervision/mentorship | |
| Grants can be used to fund salary or backfill costs as part of facilitating the individual to attend the course; Full details should be provided on the application. | |
| **What can’t this funding be used for?** | Funding for study days and conferences should in the first instance be sought from employer access to CPD funding available for nurses.The funding cannot be used to purchase kit & equipment | |
| **What are the requirements of accepting this funding** | By submitting an application, managers are agreeing to release this person for training. | |
| Saving for extenuating circumstances, non-completion of any training may incur NHSE seeking return of some or all of funding given | |
| Following completion of the identified training need, the participant will be  expected to demonstrate capability and integration of their new skills into local service provision. Participants may also be able to evidence career progression, for example by subsequent development into a specialist / advanced practice role. | |

1. https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-v1.2.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)