



Reimbursement, Reward and Recognition Policy

- involving patients, carers and the public

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Review and Amendment Log / Version Control Sheet

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1 Introduction

NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is committed to proactively seeking and building continuous and meaningful engagement with its patients and their carers, as well as with the wider public in the Wakefield district, to shape services and improve health. The CCG's Communication, Engagement, Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy sets out its plan to involve patients and the public in all areas of its work, to ensure decisions are based on local needs and priorities. Where possible the CCG must demonstrate how patient feedback is acted on to influence change and improve services. Our Annual Engagement Report outlines how the CCG has achieved this.

Many individuals and groups already give up their time and provide the CCG with energy, enthusiasm and expertise without any formal structured support, reward or recognition. This policy sets out the principles and practice for the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses. It also suggests some of the ways the CCG can reward and recognise the contributions and skills of patients, carers and citizens who are involved with the CCG. The policy also includes some ideas about how the CCG might choose to provide incentives for the public to be involved.

This policy should encourage people to feel supported and valued for their contribution. Some individuals and groups experience many barriers to involvement and are therefore less likely to have the opportunities to be listened to and influence the CCG that others have. This policy should enable these groups to become more actively involved with the CCG and ensure the CCG is responsive to the needs and preferences of a wider range of communities and individuals.

This policy sets out the responsibilities for **all** staff. It explains the implications for benefits, employment law and tax. It is intended to explain the process to staff and support local people to make an informed choice about receiving expenses, rewards or incentives and what this may mean for them.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with members of the public and includes their ideas about how they would like the CCG to reimburse, reward and recognise their contributions. It also includes feedback from staff and their ideas about how the CCG can improve the ways it involves patients and the public.

In the previous development of the policy, Jobcentre Plus was consulted to ensure the CCG is fully aware of how reimbursement of expenses and provision of rewards for the public can impact on benefits and HM Revenue and Customs rules. What Jobcentre Plus and/or the HM Revenue and Customs view as income, as opposed to what is commonly thought of as out of pocket expenses, is not straightforward.

2 The principles of good practice

Both a staff procedure and accompanying public guide for reimbursement and rewards will be developed and regularly updated, in line with Department of Health recommendations and in consultation with the CCG's Finance

Department and Jobcentre Plus. This procedure and guide will include information about how quickly expenses will be paid, the rates of reimbursement and the necessary paperwork

- Paperwork to claim reimbursement is kept to a minimum. Where paperwork is necessary to safeguard both staff and members of the public, it should be accessible and easy to understand.
- Each team/service should ensure there is an adequate budget available to cover the costs associated with reimbursing, rewarding and recognising patients and members of the public.
- Members of the public will not be left out of pocket or put at risk of being financially worse off as a result of their involvement.
- Members of the public are given the right information at the right time to be able to make an informed choice about how and on what terms they want to be involved.
- Individuals receiving benefits should be provided with the right information and support to prevent a breach of their benefit conditions. Breach of benefit conditions can result in benefits being stopped.
- The contribution made by members of the public can be recognised and valued in a variety of ways, such as being thanked, receiving positive feedback and acknowledgement, training or seeing the impact of the work and changes made as a result of their involvement with the CCG.
- A wide range of people with different needs and experiences are encouraged and supported to be involved. The way reimbursement of expenses is settled should not create barriers that deter people from being involved.

3. Payment

Nationally there is a difference of opinion about whether or not the NHS should pay members of the public to be involved. The decision is left up to each individual organisation. Payment in this sense means to hand over money (including gift vouchers) to members of the public for services given to the NHS.

In response to feedback from members of the public, including a group of young people, who were involved in the development of this policy, the CCG has decided not to pay for involvement. This is for the following reasons which were raised by members of the public:

- It might compromise independence, honesty and people's motivations for being involved
- It would undermine the ethos of volunteering and citizenship
- The CCG can show appreciation in other more appropriate ways
- Members of the public are just that, members of the public – they should not be expected to do the equivalent of a paid job – if a post is required then a paid post should be created.

This applies to involvement activity, which is distinct from market research initiatives (eg large scale market research projects which require demographically representative data.). Similarly projects which use incentives to encourage healthy lifestyle choices or uptake of services would not be considered as patient and public involvement

4 Reimbursement

4.1 When should people be reimbursed?

Members of the public who have accepted an invitation by the CCG to take part in a meeting, training event, interview panel or a defined task or work programme should be reimbursed any pre-agreed out of pocket expenses.

Expenses will **not** routinely be reimbursed where an individual chooses to attend an open public meeting, eg the CCG's Annual General Meeting.

4.2 Types of expenses

4.2.1 Travel

Reimbursement for travel will be offered in full for any pre-agreed involvement. This may include travel tickets, mileage and taxi fares. Where possible, taxi journeys must be booked by the CCG and not individually by members of the public. Taxi companies should be checked to ensure they hold the vulnerable adults certificate.

If an individual is using their own transport for involvement purposes (not including journeys made from and to home) they must be covered on their vehicle insurance for business mileage.

4.2.2 Subsistence

Members of the public can be provided with meals during the course of their involvement if it is over a lunch or evening period. This should not affect benefits. People should also be offered the opportunity to bring their own food to meetings if they prefer.

4.2.3 Administrative

If an individual has agreed to undertake specific tasks that require administration, the costs for stationery, postage, photocopying, administrative costs and telephone calls should be met. A receipt must be provided for all these expenses. This will not affect benefits. In some cases and with approval from the Finance department, alternative arrangements can be made to avoid people having to use their own money for such purposes.

4.3 Costs incurred from replacement care and individual support needs

To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved, the CCG will reimburse pre-agreed costs incurred to enable an individual to participate, such as interpreters, signers for people who are deaf or personal care assistants. However, the exact arrangements should be discussed between the individual and the CCG and agreed in advance.

Childcare and substitute care costs will only be reimbursed when the care is provided by a Registered Person(s). Evidence of this will be required.

4.4 Expenses for individuals in receipt of Social Security benefits (including care costs for people who are caring and on benefits)

People in receipt of benefits are obliged to inform Jobcentre Plus about any change of circumstances. This includes being reimbursed for pre-agreed out of pocket expenses by the CCG, even though the reimbursement of expenses for volunteering has no impact on benefits.

Being in receipt of benefits such as Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Employment Support Allowance, Universal Credit etc. does not preclude people from becoming a volunteer and their participation should not affect their entitlement to such benefits. Expenses incurred whilst undertaking such activity are not normally deducted from an individual's benefit payment. Jobcentre Plus however, do require the details of an individual's participation along with any expenses received to ensure the participation is voluntary and the expenses received relate to this activity. Expenses received for paid work are treated differently.

A condition for receiving Jobseekers allowance is that a person has to be available for work. Involvement with the CCG is allowed providing it does not restrict the participant's possibility of taking suitable employment. Jobcentre Plus advise individuals receiving any Social Security Benefit to contact them if they are considering being involved with the CCG.

Members of the public can be reimbursed for travel expenses from home to where they are carrying out involvement work. The benefit system does not treat these expenses as income (providing they are actual and not rounded up amounts).

The provision by the CCG of travel cards, tickets or taxis (through an account with a taxi firm) or the provision of petrol (through an account at a garage) does not affect benefits in any way and can be a useful way of enabling some individuals to increase their involvement. If the CCG gives a member of the public money to purchase travel cards etc. this will not apply and the money could be treated as earnings by Jobcentre Plus.

4.5 Who should be reimbursed

Anyone who gives their time and skills to the CCG or supports others in their involvement should be reimbursed for their expenses.

4.6 Staff responsibilities

The procedure previously mentioned will be available on Skyline. For advice and to ensure engagement is co-ordinated the engagement team should be contacted during the planning phase of activities.

- Agree a budget for expenses and who will sign for the expenditure. Request petty cash at least 2 weeks in advance of the day they will be needed.
- Reimburse expenses to people who have made an agreement with the CCG about getting involved and have been invited to take part in a meeting, training event, interview panel or a defined task or work programme.

- Discuss with an individual the costs they are likely to incur in the course of their involvement before the involvement starts.
- Be prepared to reimburse a range of expenses, not just travel.
- Reimburse expenses at the current rates.
- Be consistent.
- It should be considered necessary practice for patients and members of the public to fill out an expenses claim forms and provide receipts for all expenses that are to be reimbursed. Available on Skyline.
- Reimburse expenses for the exact amount, not an averaged amount or a rounded up amount.
- Provide help for people who find forms difficult to fill in.
- Make the public guide for reimbursement and reward available to members of the public. It will be available on the CCG website: <http://www.wakefieldccg.nhs.uk/>
- Make sure that staff who are authorised signatories are available at meetings so expenses can be reimbursed without delay.
- Reimburse travel expenses in cash on the day. Where this is not possible because there are larger costs, supply expenses forms and a freepost envelope. However, you must arrange reimbursement in cash if an individual does not have a bank account.
- Consider covering costs in other ways, eg provide stationary packs and freepost envelopes, make meeting rooms available to patient groups at no cost.
- Provide individuals with a named contact for them to discuss any expenses queries with.
- Engage with members of the public in ways that respect the choices individuals make and do not compromise their independence. Public transport should be the preferred option and you should encourage members of the public to use public transport rather than automatically ordering or approving the use of a taxi.
- Consider the use of community and volunteer transport schemes to support attendance at larger events.
- Do not make expenses routinely available at open public meetings where individuals are there in their own right, wanting to express their views.

5 Rewards

For the majority of people who are involved with the NHS, making a difference to people's lives and improving services is the reward they are looking for. However, in some cases an additional reward is appropriate, something tangible which is of value to an individual or group. Examples involve subscription to a health magazine, funds to attend a conference or learning event, funds to visit other areas of the country and meet similar projects or communities of interest, stationery or equipment to support a community/patient group.

Because these rewards are offered to support individuals and groups to be involved they will be ignored for benefits purposes. However, due to the many types of rewards offered to members of the public and the fact there are numerous benefits whose rules seem to differ slightly, Jobcentre Plus would always suggest that people in receipt of benefits who may be offered a reward talk to them first to allay any concerns they may have.

5.1 Who should be rewarded

Where possible, a group rather than an individual should be rewarded. This is in recognition of the hard work that goes into achieving change through collective efforts. The achievements of committed groups can sometimes go unnoticed if they are overshadowed by an individual spokesperson for a group.

Individuals should **not** be rewarded for attendance at meetings where they represent their group or community of interest. Rather, the CCG should consider rewarding people for specific achievements, when individuals/groups have:

- Achieved change in a particular service area or community
- Demonstrated personal growth and achievement
- Produced discrete pieces of work, for example outcomes from community research, mystery shopping etc.

5.2 Staff responsibilities

- Discuss with members of the public at the earliest opportunity to determine the most appropriate type of reward.
- Rewards should not include any form of cash payment.
- Link the reward to the involvement activity.
- Understand that making a difference to health services and to the lives of others is often the reward people are looking for.
- Help patient and community groups who are already making a difference by, for example, purchasing some equipment for them, funding a project, putting on an event for them, helping them to promote their work, providing administrative support or giving them ongoing access to decision makers.

6 Recognition

Members of the public will be routinely recognised for their contributions and the CCG will be clear what impact members of the public have made to improving services, developing staff and changing ways of working. It is also important that we recognise the skills and expertise that the public bring to the CCG.

6.1 Who should be recognised

Anyone who gives their time and skills to the CCG or supports others in their involvement should be recognised for their contribution.

6.2 Different ways of recognising contributions

The CCG can recognise the contributions and skills of patients and members of the public in many different ways but most importantly by thanking them for their contribution either in person or writing or both. Some other examples include:

- Prompt feedback

- Opportunities to learn new skills (access to internal CCG staff training and other learning events where appropriate and relevant)
- Information to support learning about decision-making processes and the structure of the NHS, democracy, participation and citizenship
- Planning involvement and putting budgets aside for particular projects,
- Inviting those involved to attend the same learning events as staff, joining staff at, eg conferences, training days
- Holding an annual patient and public involvement celebration event which includes an award ceremony
- Media coverage of success stories and good practice
- Nominating local people/projects for national awards in PPI and other appropriate schemes
- A thank you in person or in writing
- References to support job and volunteering applications
- Certificates of attendance at training days (although care should be taken not to diminish their value by over-use)
- Quoting what local people have said in publications.
- Listing individuals who have contributed in publications

6.3 Staff responsibilities

- Say thank you.
- Tell people at the beginning, how feedback will be given and where possible, commit to a timescale
- Actively feed back to patients and the public as well as putting what changes have happened in writing.
- Involve patients and the public from the beginning.
- Provide opportunities for the public to influence decisions and challenge decision makers.
- Recognise collective achievements where possible, rather than singling individuals out.
- Contribute to the annual patient and public involvement event to celebrate achievements.
- Deliver feedback in a variety of ways, including on the CCG's website and in the press.

7 Incentives

It is important to understand the reasons why people get involved. This can help staff to plan patient and public involvement activity and encourage more people to take part.

7.1 Who should be incentivised

Anyone who gives their time and skills to the CCG or supports others in their involvement should be incentivised if needed and appropriate after discussion with them in recognised of their contribution.

7.2 Staff responsibilities

- Provide opportunities for members of the public to meet with senior staff.
- Understand that helping people and communities and making a difference are what motivates people to be involved.

- Help members of the public to make a difference, make sure changes are made as a result of involvement.
- Hold events with the public to give feedback about changes.
- Widely publicise what has been achieved because of public involvement – success breeds success.
- Use accessible venues in local communities.
- Go out to community groups rather than expecting them to come to the CCG.
- Use simple, jargon free language.
- Contact the Engagement Team for advice if you are in doubt about whether your work with local people is market research or involvement.

8 Overview of rates

The following table details the proposed reimbursement rates to be offered for involvement fees and out-of-pocket expenses.

The final decision about the sum to be reimbursed rests with the programme lead, or budget holder in charge of costs for an event.

Type	Level of payment
Child care costs/Care Cover/PA	By arrangement with production of a copy of registration and with prior agreement
Replacement Carer	By arrangement and subject to prior agreement
Bus or train fares	On production of valid receipt
Petrol costs (car mileage)	Same reimbursement rates as for staff (may be a rate which is non-taxable)
Taxi fares	By arrangement
Stationary, phone calls necessary for the involvement task	Cost price

9 Arrangements for review

This policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of the latest version and will be carried out by the Engagement Team.

Patient and Public Involvement Expenses Claim Form

Meeting / Event:

Date:

Name of Applicant:

Address:

Postcode

Contact Tel Number:

E-mail Address:

Mr/Mrs/Miss

Travel Expenses

Method travel E.g: car	Date	Details of meeting	Journey		Single/ return	Amount claimed
			From	To		
					TOTAL	£

(Please attach receipt, used train and bus tickets as evidence of journey)

Other Expenses

Expense Eg: carer, administrative	Date	Amount
		TOTAL £

(Please attach receipt, as evidence of expense)

Claimant Declaration:

I declare that the information given on this claim form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that action may be taken against me if I make an incorrect claim. I consent to the disclosure of relevant information on this form for the purposes of fraud prevention, detection and investigation. I also confirm that by claiming car mileage I hold a valid driving licence, that the car has a current MOT certificate and is fully insured.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Authorising Officer

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Cost code:

