

Policy for Involvement Payments and Reimbursement of Expenses

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N.B. This policy has been developed in line with NHS England guidance.

Work will continue with partner organisations to try to establish consistency across the Health and Care Partnerships.

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Policy for Involvement Payments and Reimbursement of Expenses

Content Page	Page No:
1.0 Introduction	5
2.0 Implementation and Monitoring	5
3.0 Purpose	5
4.0 Principles	6
4.1 Benefits for volunteers	6
4.2 Benefits of reimbursing volunteer expenses	7
5.0 Entitlement to Expenses or Involvement Payments?	7
5.1 Categories of Financial Support	7
5.2 Reimbursement of Expenses	8
5.3 Involvement Payments	8
6.0 Eligibility of reimbursement	8
6.1 Exclusion criteria	9
7.0 What can be paid?	9
7.1 Out of pocket expenses	9
7.2 Public transport	9
7.2.1 Bus	9
7.2.2 Rail and underground	9
7.3 Taxi	10
7.4 Air travel	10
7.5 Personal car usage	10

Content Page

Page No:

7.6	Reimbursement for food/refreshments	10
7.7	Overnight stay	11
7.8	Payment in advance	11
8.0	Claiming process	11
9.0	Involvement Payments	11
9.1	Rates of payment for Involvement are	12
Appendix 1		
	Expenses Claim Form	13

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Policy for Involvement Payments and Reimbursement of Expenses

Bradford City, Districts and AWC CCGs

1.0 Introduction

This policy has been created to cover the volunteering and involvement expenses requirements for three Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). These are NHS Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven CCG, NHS Bradford City CCG and NHS Bradford Districts CCG (collectively referred to throughout this document as the CCGs).

The CCGs are committed to working in partnership with patients and the public to ensure their voice is heard throughout the commissioning process of the health services in the Bradford District and Craven area. The CCGs fully acknowledge the skills, experience and knowledge which volunteers can bring to the commissioning process. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways such as, collecting insight and feedback and also working with patients and the public to review and co-design services.

The CCGs are committed to removing financial barriers to involvement and ensuring volunteers are reimbursed for genuine out of pocket expenses. This policy will explain the financial support available for the volunteers and those who take part in our patient and public involvement activities.

The policy sets out some guiding principles and practice around reimbursing expenses and paying involvement payments.

The Policy applies to individual patients, carers and members of the public who help the three CCGs with our work. It covers patients, carers and members of the public who are resident in Bradford District and Craven. This policy does not apply to our work with patient and public organisations (such as national or local charities or voluntary and community organisations).

2.0 Implementation and Monitoring

The Senior Management Team is responsible for formal approval and monitoring compliance with this policy. The CCGs' Head of Engagement is responsible for approving involvement payments, and overseeing the budget for patient/public involvement expenses claims.

3.0 Purpose

This policy seeks to ensure that staff across the CCGs follow a consistent approach to reimbursing expenses and offering involvement payments when working with members of the public, patients and carers.

- Covering out of pocket expenses – by ‘covering expenses’ we mean reimbursing the costs that are directly incurred by individuals whilst volunteering or taking part in involvement activities for the CCG.

Involvement payments – by ‘involvement payments’ we mean a payment offered to individuals (such as People’s Board members) who participate in roles with a significant input of time, skills and expertise. They are always agreed in advance and need approval from the Head of Engagement. Involvement payments should be offered in addition to reimbursing expenses.

4.0 Principles

The CCGs can benefit greatly by engaging with the communities that make up their patient population. As patients and the public can play a key role in the development of NHS services.

Good engagement can enhance the CCGs understanding enabling them to work towards meeting the needs and expectations of their diverse communities.

Some of the benefits of involving (engaging) your local communities in reviewing and commissioning health services are:

- Understand what people’s experiences are of local health services
- Identify areas for improvement and good practice
- Understand the experiences of the diverse communities which can help tackle health inequalities
- Allows CCGs to commission services that are fit for purpose, cost effective, good quality and effective
- Good engagement gives credibility to the commissioning decisions of the CCGs
- Increases accountability of commissioners in respect to improving patient outcomes
- Partners (such as the People’s Board) bring with them rich skills and in-depth knowledge of the diverse communities they work in and have links with
- The CCG has a statutory responsibility to involve, as outlined in the Health and Social Care Act 2012

The CCGs have a constitutional duty to engage with their patients when it comes to reviewing and commissioning health services.

4.1 Benefits for volunteers

Volunteering not only benefits the CCGs but also has huge benefits for the volunteers, such as:

- Being involved in different areas of work can increase skills and knowledge – even leading to qualifications

- Can tackle social isolation and creates opportunities to meet new people and build friendships
- Gain confidence by trying something new and gain a real self of achievement
- Can be a stepping stone into employment or training opportunities
- Can create a sense of community

4.2 Benefits of reimbursing volunteer expenses

- It removes financial barriers that could prevent people from getting involved
- It enables a broader range of people to get involved
- Reimbursing volunteers demonstrate the CCGs commitment to encouraging patient and public involvement

5.0 Entitlement to Expenses or Involvement Payments

5.1 Categories of Financial Support

Not all engagement activities will offer reimbursement of expenses. In line with NHS England guidance, the CCGs have categorised the financial support available, and types of involvement role:

Category A: No financial support.

Category B: Out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed.

Category C: Out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed AND an involvement payment is offered.

In line with the NHS England Policy, the CCGs have categorised the different participation opportunities we offer into four different types of roles. These roles have been linked to the categories of financial support, as follows:

Role 1: People choose to respond or comment on open access engagement opportunities, for example responding to online surveys or attending public meetings. Expenses Category A (no financial support from the CCGs). No expenses can be claimed.

Role 2: People are invited to attend workshops / events / focus groups on a 'one off' basis. Expenses Category B (out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed).

Role 3: Members of the public, patients or carers take part as a member of regular working group meetings. Expenses Category B (out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed).

Role 4: Members of the public, patients or carers are in 'Expert Advisor' roles that demonstrate strategic and accountable leadership and decision making activity – e.g. People's Board members. Expenses Category C (out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed AND an involvement payment is offered).

5.2 Reimbursement of Expenses

Volunteers are entitled to claim back reasonable expenses to ensure they are not out of pocket as a result of taking part in CCG engagement and involvement activities.

These include: Travel by public transport will be reimbursed when tickets (showing cost of travel) or receipts have been provided (see section 7.2). Volunteers are also eligible for food and refreshments expenses reimbursement (conditions apply).

Full details and exclusions are in section 7.

Expenses will normally be paid on the day of the claim, however, for those who volunteer regularly (for the CCGs) they can claim expenses on a monthly basis. To do this, the Volunteer Expenses form should be completed and submitted to the Patient Experience and Engagement Manager. Non-mileage expenses will be reimbursed against production of receipts, bus tickets, etc.

5.3 Involvement Payments

Involvement Payments are made to the individuals who take on 'Expert Advisor' roles and are paid for their input, such as their time, skills and expertise. This includes but is not limited to People's Board members

The CCGs greatly value the in-depth partnership working with the People's Board, and recognise the time and commitment needed for true co-production in commissioning. Involvement payments are intended to recognise and reward not only People Board member's attendance at meetings, but the preparation and wider engagement with communities and networks – as reflected in the People's Board role and responsibilities document.

Other members of the public, patients or carers may also take on 'Expert Advisor' roles – eligibility for involvement payments will be agreed by the Head of Engagement.

6.0 Eligibility of reimbursement

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement for out of pocket expenses when:

- They attend any sessions/meetings/events (invited by a general invitation) organised by the CCGs
- They are recruited to get involved in any work organised by the CCGs
- They are invited to a meeting/event/session

IMPORTANT NOTE: State Benefits and Claiming expenses for volunteering:

The CCGs actively seek a diverse and inclusive approach to involvement. We recognise that many people who get involved with us may have ongoing health conditions and / or disabilities and may be in receipt of state benefits. We seek to ensure that being in receipt of state benefits does not constitute a barrier to involvement.

In general, people who are claiming out of pocket expenses only can do so without an adverse impact on their benefit entitlements. However, people who receive anything that might be deemed to be earnings or income by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs service (HMRC) or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – including an involvement payment – may put their benefit entitlement in jeopardy. In addition, participation in any involvement activity can be seen by JobCentre Plus as evidence of readiness for work.

It is extremely important, therefore, that CCG staff work transparently and sensitively.

It is the responsibility of the individual to comply with the conditions of their benefits, and not the CCGs. However, we have a responsibility to provide information which enables individuals to make informed decisions before taking part in engagement activities, especially about whether to accept an involvement payment.

CCG staff should advise people who are receiving state benefits to seek independent advice before they accept any involvement opportunities. We will support people to find the most appropriate solution for their circumstances.

Anyone claiming state benefits should seek advice from the benefits agency or the Citizens Advice Bureau. The CCGs can support concerned individuals by providing a letter detailing the volunteering activity undertaken as well as the out of pocket expenses incurred.

6.1 Exclusion criteria

- This policy does not cover meetings that are held in public, e.g. CCG monthly Governing Body meetings where individuals are attending without specific invitations
- It also does not cover payment of expenses for individuals who are representing an external organisation
- It does not cover meetings/events etc. that have been organised by other organisation(s)
- The CCG will not refund expenses such as computer, telephone, stationery costs etc.
- The CCGs will not refund charges for illegal/unlawful parking, parking on private property and overstay penalties/charges
- The CCGs will not be responsible for any fines or penalties for any unlawful parking or driving
- Tips in restaurants and taxis etc. will not be reimbursed.

7.0 What can be paid?

7.1 Out of pocket expenses

Public and patients are encouraged to get involved and support the CCGs by volunteering. All volunteers are eligible and entitled to claim out of pocket expenses. All claims made will need evidence of expenditure, these may be in the form of receipts and parking tickets etc.

Volunteers can claim the following out of pocket expenses during the course of agreed involvement and participation:

7.2 Public Transport

7.2.1 Bus:

Travel on buses will be reimbursed when tickets (showing cost of travel) or receipts have been provided.

7.2.2 Rail and Underground

The CCGs will usually book standard class train and underground tickets taking into account the individual's needs. While the CCGs will usually book the train and underground travel tickets the CCGs understand that on some occasions this will not be possible. First class travel will only be booked in certain circumstances, such as if there is a medical or disability need.

7.3 Taxi

Taxi fares will not be reimbursed unless travel by taxi has been prior agreed with the CCGs. This may be in circumstances where:

- There is justification on grounds of decrease in costs as compared to other forms of travel for example if several people are traveling in one taxi.
- The volunteer is concerned about their personal safety
- It is on the grounds of medical or disability needs.

Volunteers would need to produce receipts (receipts can be requested from the taxi driver) in order to be reimbursed.

7.4 Air Travel

The CCGs will only pay for the Air travel in extremely rare circumstances - for instance if travel by air is considerably cheaper than other forms of transport – all costs will be taken in to account such as car parking etc. The booking of air travel will only be undertaken by the CCGs.

7.5 Personal Car Usage

Car mileage for travel between home and the place of volunteering is paid. Please see below for rates of payment for reimbursement of travel expenses:

	First 10,000 business miles in the tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 in the tax year
Cars and Vans	45p	25p
Motorbikes	24p	24p

The cost of car parking can be claimed by producing a parking receipt/ticket.

The CCGs take no responsibility for any damage caused to any private car, motorbike or any other vehicle. The volunteer needs to ensure that their vehicle is insured, taxed and is legally road worthy.

The above travel expenses are claimable for travelling to and from the place of volunteering.

7.6 Reimbursement for food/refreshments

Food and refreshments expenses can be reimbursed in following circumstances:

- Receipts needs to be provided and attached to the claim form where requested
- Need to be volunteering for more than 5 hours continuously
- Alcohol purchases will not be reimbursed.

Please see below for reimbursement rates for volunteers:

Breakfast (only if the volunteer has left their home before 7am)	Up to £5
Lunch	Up to £5
Evening Meal	Up to £12.50
Maximum claim in 24 hours	£20

7.7 Overnight Stay

An overnight stay will only be paid for when this has been arranged with the CCGs. The CCGs will arrange payment via their own payment procedures. The CCGs will take into account the volunteer's specific requirements e.g. fully accessible room.

7.8 Payment in advance

Expenses may be paid in advance, but only in exceptional circumstances and will need prior agreement by the CCGs. Each claim for advance payment will be dealt with individually by the CCGs. All receipts will still need to be produced once the money has been spent and any left over money must be returned to the CCGs.

8.0 Claiming process:

The volunteer can claim travel expenses by completing the expenses form (see appendix 1) and by providing receipts. However, if the volunteer is unable to provide receipt(s), as in the case where the volunteer has bought a day rover and needs this for their return journey or is using their own car and is claiming mileage. Then in this case the volunteer needs to complete the travel expenses claim form (Appendix 1) and give a brief explanation on the form why the receipts are not being attached. With regards to claiming for food and refreshments it is the responsibility of the volunteer to provide receipts. Once the receipts have been provided the volunteers will be reimbursed in cash, if there is sufficient petty cash. If not then a request will

be made to the finance team who will send out a cheque in the post to the volunteer. There is a 2 to 3 weeks time scale for the production of a cheque.

A volunteer who volunteers on a regular basis and is embedded within the CCGs may be added to the CCGs finance system and be reimbursed for their expenses on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. This is subject to production of receipts for each expenses claim.

Volunteers must submit their claims within 2 months of the expenditure. Any claim(s) submitted after 2 months of the expenditure may be declined.

9.0 Involvement payments

As stated in section 5.3 of this policy – involvement payments are made to individuals who are experts in their specific areas of work such as the members of the People’s Board.

9.1 Rates of payment for Involvement are:

Payment per hour	£20
Payment for half day of work	£60
Payment for full day of work	£120

People’s Board members are entitled to a half-day involvement payment for each People’s Board meeting, to cover the meeting attendance and preparation as outlined in the People’s Board roles and responsibilities document. Prior authorisation is needed to attend any activities/meetings on behalf of the People’s Board. Attending meetings/activities that are not authorised by the Chair and the CCGs’ Engagement Team will not be eligible for payment.

People’s Board members can choose to refuse involvement payments if they wish.

Eligibility for other members of the public, patients or carers to receive Involvement Payments must be agreed by the CCGs’ Head of Engagement in advance.

Individual expenses claim form

Name:

Address:

What are you claiming for? (e.g. travel to and from network meeting)

How much did it cost? (bus fare, taxi fare etc)

Is the receipt attached? (Needed for all claims)
If no, why?

Yes

No

AWC CCG

City CCG

Districts CCG

Signed by recipient _____

Date _____

CCG signature _____

For office use

Date reimbursed:

Financial code:

CCGs working together

Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven CCG

Bradford City CCG

Bradford Districts CCG