

Date		29.10.2015		
Policy title		Reasonable expenses for patients receiving healthcare out of area policy		
Author(s)		NyKayla Stockham		
Supporting Executive(s)		Caroline Dawe, Paul O'Sullivan, Fiona Phelps		
Supporting Executive Approval Date		28.10.2015		
Purpose of Policy	✓	Decision	✓	
		Assurance		
		Information	✓	
FOI Status	✓	Public	✓	
		Private		
Category of Policy	✓	Decision	✓	
		Position Statement		
		Information		
Does this document place Individuals at the Centre		Y	N	Yes
Actions Requested		Approved for publication		
Which other committees has this item been to?		Northern and Eastern Planning Delivery Group 14.10.15 Western Planning Delivery Group 28.10.15		
Reference to other documents		NHS Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme		
Have the legal implications been considered?		Yes		
Equality Impact Assessment				
Who does the proposed piece of work affect?		Staff	✓	
		Patients	✓	
		Carers	✓	
		Public	✓	
				Yes
				No
1. Will the proposal have any impact on discrimination, equality of opportunity or relations between groups?				✓
2. Is the proposal controversial in any way (including media, academic, voluntary or sector specific interest) about the proposed work?				✓
3. Will there be a positive benefit to the users or workforce as a result of the proposed work?				✓
4. Will the users or workforce be disadvantaged as a result of the proposed work?				✓
5. Is there doubt about answers to any of the above questions (e.g. there is not enough information to draw a conclusion)?				✓

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes (other than question 3) or you are unsure of your answers to any of the above you should provide further information using **Screening Form One** available from Corporate Services

If an equality assessment is not required briefly explain why and provide evidence for the decision.

NHS Devon CCG has made every effort to ensure this policy does not have the effect of discriminating, directly or indirectly, against employees, patients, contractors or visitors on grounds of race, colour, age, nationality, ethnic (or national) origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief or disability. This policy will apply equally to full and part time employees. All NHS Devon CCG policies can be provided in large print or Braille formats if requested, and language line interpreter services are available to individuals of different nationalities who require them.

Reference to Core Strategies and Corporate Objectives

Core Strategies, we will:	Corporate Objective	Does this report reference to the Core Strategies/ Corporate Objectives	
		✓	X
1. Take joint ownership with partners and the public for creating sustainable health and care services	1.1 Develop people, and those who support them, to value strengths and personal qualities in all that they do	✓	
	1.2 Listen to people and take action on what they say about services	✓	
2. Implement systems that make the best use of valuable health resources, every time	2.1 Innovate to increase productivity and reduce waste	✓	
	2.2 Commission safe services and reduce avoidable harm	✓	
3. Commission to prevent ill health, promote well being and help people with long-term conditions to live well	3.1 Support people to make healthy lifestyle choices and understand the care, treatment and services available to them	✓	
	3.2 Commission services with partners to reduce health inequalities and improve people's lives	✓	

Document Status:	Final
Version:	4

DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY		
Version:	Date:	Comments (i.e. viewed, or reviewed, amended, approved by person or committee)
1	November 2014	Amended by: CCG PALS, CCG Contracting Individual funding request panel
2	August 2015	Amended by: Communications managers Healthwatch Devon Healthwatch Plymouth
3	October 2015	Amended and approved by: Northern and Eastern Planning Delivery Group Western Planning Delivery Group
4	October 2019	Amended name of organisation from NEW Devon CCG to NHS Devon CCG
Authors:	NyKayla Stockham	
Scrutinised by: (name & title) Date:	Northern and Eastern Planning Delivery Group 14.10.15 Western Planning Delivery Group 28.10.15	
Document Reference:	Reasonable expenses for patients receiving healthcare out of area policy	
Review date of approved document:	This policy will be reviewed annually or as appropriate.	

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Linked strategies, policies and other documents	Policy and Procedure for the provision of non-emergency patient transport including arrangements for the reimbursement of patient travel costs under the NHS Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme (HTCS) https://devonccg.nhs.uk/health-services/patient-transport-information
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Historically, there have been no clear guidelines about how NHS Devon CCG will support patients who need financial support to go to healthcare appointments. This has meant that in the past decisions have been made using existing customs and practice and patients have been advised through PALS.
- 1.2 This policy has been written to standardise, make fair and provide definitive guidance on NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group's (NHS Devon CCG) payment of travel and accommodation expenses for patients receiving healthcare out of area.
- 1.3 The National Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme policy on reimbursement of patient travel costs is available separately and is unchanged by this policy.
- 1.4 This policy states that NHS Devon CCG does not routinely pay for or reimburse travel or accommodation costs, however it does signpost and offer support to patients to who wish to seek financial support.
- 1.5 While NHS Devon CCG seeks to provide treatment as close to home as possible, there are arrangements to provide specialist care at regional centres to optimise the care patients receive
- 1.6 'Out of area' is considered to be anywhere outside the NHS Devon CCG footprint

2. Advice and options for patients to seek funding to attend appointments out of area

- The options below should be accessed in order to seek funding for accommodation costs to attend NHS healthcare appointments out of area by the patient or by the carer on their behalf, where patients cannot access treatment locally.
 - 2.1. The patient should seek to arrange appointment times which would avoid the need for overnight accommodation.
 - 2.2. The patient should seek free or discounted accommodation through the hospital or care setting they are attending. Some specialist centres recognise their patients come from a wide geographical area and have schemes to support patients
 - 2.3. The patient should approach the receiving hospital to see if any charitable funds are available, linked to the disease area or ward to assist; this information should be requested from the professional lead, ward manager or the providers PALS team.
 - 2.4. If options 2.1 to 2.3 have been explored and found unsuccessful, funding support may be available from local council and charitable sources please see appendix 1 for further details.

3. National Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme

- 3.1 For travel claims where the patient is on low income/eligible benefits they can use the means-tested Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS) to claim back travel expenses. An up to date list and how to claim is available at:
<http://www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/Healthcosts/pages/Travelcosts.aspx>

4. Exceptions and Appeals

- 4.1 NHS Devon CCG does not routinely reimburse accommodation expenses for patients receiving healthcare out of area. If all of the above avenues have been exhausted and the patient feels they have exceptional circumstances the patient can approach NHS Devon CCG for further signposting by contacting the PALS team on 0300 123 1672 or email pals.devon@nhs.net. PALS may advise approaching the Individual funding request panel for further consideration of their circumstances. Evidence of assistance including the above principles 2.1 – 2.5 being exhausted will be required; also evidence of the inpatient stay will be required. Patients are required to mitigate costs and this is neither a certain entitlement nor guarantee of reimbursement.

5. Exclusions

- 5.1 Subsistence costs including meals, food and beverages will not be funded
- 5.2 NHS funded treatment overseas is outside the scope of this document (please see planned treatment abroad policy)
- 5.3 All new claims will be considered after publication of this policy on the CCG website. Retrospective claims will not be considered.

6. Who to contact / further information

- The Care coordinator or professional lead
- The Inpatient ward's staff and ward manager
- The Patient Advice and Liaison Service at the Provider
- The General office staff at the Provider
- The Patient Advice and Liaison Service at NHS Devon CCG
- Application to appeal through the Individual funding request panel is available through NHS Devon CCG PALS pals.devon@nhs.net

7. Review process

- 7.1 These guidelines will be reviewed annually or as appropriate.

8. Appendix 1 – Signposting to possible funding options

Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Local welfare support is provided by local councils - all have their own criteria, for Exeter City Council see:

<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14608>

For Plymouth City Council see:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/emergencyandwelfarefund>

Some people on low incomes may be entitled to loans from the Department of Work and Pensions through the Social fund.

<https://www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans/overview> or

<http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/moneyandlegal/socialfund/Pages/BudgetingLoans.aspx> or

<http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/moneyandlegal/socialfund/Pages/Overview.aspx> or

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/help-if-youre-ill-or-disabled>

Information about benefits and charitable funds and which ones may be relevant to your situation is available from:

<http://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Application to appeal through the Individual funding request panel is available through NHS Devon CCG PALS pals.devon@nhs.net