

Reimbursement of Expenses for Public, Patients, Carers and Volunteers Policy

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Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is one consistent system for individuals to claim expenses and to ensure timely reimbursement so that people giving up their time voluntarily to contribute to the ICBs work are not financially disadvantaged in attending groups or meetings.
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Author (inc Job Title):	Kirsty Hollis, Associate Director and CEO Business Partner and Elaine Collier, Deputy Director of Operational Finance
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1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Under the Health and Social Care Act (2022), Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) has a legal duty to involve the public including patients, their carers and representatives in :-

- The planning and commissioning arrangements for services that may affect them.
- The development and consideration of proposals for changes in the commission arrangements where implementation would affect the way services are delivered to individuals or the range of services available
- Decisions affecting the operation of the commissioning arrangements where such decision would have an impact.

1.2 The ICB is committed to involving the public, patients, carers and volunteers in its work and supports the principle that people should not be out-of-pocket when working with the organisation.

2. Purpose / Aims and Objectives

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is one consistent system for individuals to claim expenses and to ensure timely reimbursement so that people giving up their time voluntarily to contribute to the ICBs work are not financially disadvantaged in attending groups or meetings.

2.2 The policy is to also inform ICB staff so that they have clarity on what patients and public representatives can expect in terms of reimbursement and the process to follow when submitting claims.

3. Scope of the Policy and Definitions

3.1 This policy covers most occasions when the ICB will reimburse reasonable expenses for public, patients, carers and volunteers. This will be where the ICB has invited people to work with the organisation and asks them to confirm their intention to attend such events or meetings . This includes, but is not limited to:-

- Attendance at public and patient participation groups;
- Attendance at planning and strategic meetings such as programme and project Boards, steering groups and working groups;
- Specific meetings relating to the delivery of services, focus groups and other communication activities
- Meetings and events relating to the procurement of healthcare services, where patients and carers are contributing to the development of service specifications.

3.2 This expenses policy **does not apply** where the public attend a launch or event which is open to everyone (eg public meetings, Board meetings, Annual General

Meetings etc), or other meetings without specific invitation to assist in ICB business. This policy **does not apply** to people receiving payment from other organisations for their participation in ICB work, eg members of voluntary or community organisations.

3.3 All expenses must be agreed **in advance** with the ICB officer who has invited the individual to be involved with a particular group, project or meeting. It is the responsibility of the ICB officer to inform participants and to whom expense claim forms should be submitted.

3.4 The following definitions are applicable throughout this policy:

Term	Definition
Public	A resident of the geographical footprint of the ICB, who has taken part in activities at the request of the ICB
Patient	An individual, who has received, is currently receiving or has the potential of receiving an ICB commissioned service
Carer	An individual (aged 16 or over), who has provided, currently provides or intends to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis to another individual
Volunteer	Any individual who has been recruited and registered to perform volunteer tasks within the premises or an area served by the ICB
Patient Participation Groups or Activities	Meetings, events or activities organised by the ICB, where the view of the public, patients, or carers are sought by a particular service or by the ICB as an organisation.
Travel Expense	The distance of direct travel between the individuals designated place of residence and the place of the ICB related business and the return journey

4. Supporting people in receipt of state benefits

4.1 The ICB actively seeks a diverse and inclusive approach to involvement. It recognises that those who participate in ICB activities, by the nature of their participation, may have on-going health issues and may be in receipt of state benefits. The ICB seeks to ensure that being in receipt of benefits is not a barrier to involvement.

4.2 In general, participants who are claiming out-of-pocket expenses only, can do so without an adverse impact on their benefit entitlements.

4.3 However, people who receive anything that might be deemed to be earnings or income by His Majesty's Custom and Revenue Service (HMRC) may put their benefit entitlement in jeopardy. Noting that breach of benefit conditions can result in an individual's benefits being stopped. It is the responsibility of the individual to have checked with their benefits advisor or Jobcentre Plus

and ensure that by receiving expense reimbursement, they will not breach the conditions of their benefit.

5. What expenses are covered?

- 5.1 Claims for expense reimbursements will only be accepted when submitted on the relevant claim form (Appendix 1) **and** supported by receipts where applicable.
- 5.2 Claims **will not be paid** if they are submitted more than three calendar months after the meeting or event

Travel Expenses

- 5.3 The following travel expenses will be reimbursed, providing receipts are attached to the claim (**Appendix 1**)

Expense	Reimbursement
Mileage	Costs for use of a car or motorcycle will be reimbursed at the current reserve rate (public transport rate) at 28p per mile or the temporary reviewed rate as published on the following website:- Mileage allowances FAQs NHS Employers
Bus or Train Fares	Patients and the public can claim the cost of the cheapest standard class ticket possible. A ticket receipt must be obtained and attached to the expense claim form. Where advance rail tickets have been purchased and the meeting is subsequently cancelled, where reimbursement cannot be claimed from the rail company, the ICB will reimburse the expense.
Car Parking Fees	Receipts must be attached to the expenses claim form
Taxis	In exceptional circumstances and if a taxi is the only appropriate form of transport (for example but not limited to, accessibility purposes, where there is no alternative transport or to avoid numerous changes of transport, or to avoid carrying heavy luggage or equipment) The ICB will use discretion in dealing with requests. This must be agreed in advance of the event or meeting by the responsible ICB officer. A receipt must be obtained and attached to the expenses claim form.
Pedal Cycle	Cost will be reimbursed at 20p per mile
Toll or tunnel charges	Reimbursed in full on production of a valid receipt and the cost is incurred on the shortest route of travel
Passenger allowance	Where the claimant provides transportation to another individual attending the same event other than themselves or

	their designated carer. Cost will be reimbursed at 5p per mile.
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- 5.4 It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that their vehicle insurance policy covers their journeys as a result of their involvement with the ICB and that their driving licence is valid.
- 5.5 The ICB bears no responsibility for accidents or incidents whilst the individual is in transit to or from and ICB event or meeting.
- 5.6 The ICB will still reimburse travel costs incurred when a meeting has been cancelled at short notice and where the individual was not informed of the cancellation prior to travelling.

Accommodation

- 5.7 Although it will not be usual to cover the cost of accommodation, there may be some activities that start at a time when an overnight stay prior to the event or meeting would be beneficial.. Examples of this may include, but are not limited to:-
- Without an overnight stay, the individual would need to leave home before 06:00 hrs to arrive at the event.
 - Where individual's may have conditions or disabilities that make travelling for too long in one day difficult
 - The cost of travel, overnight accommodation and subsistence is cheaper than rail travel on the day of the event (taking into account advance booking options)
- 5.8 Accommodation requirements must be discussed and agreed in advance with the responsible ICB officer with an audit trail being maintained for reference.
- 5.9 Where possible, it is the responsibility of the ICB officer to book accommodation, having liaised with the individual regarding their particular requirements, through ICB process. Where this is not possible and the individual books and pays for their own accommodation, this will be reimbursed at cost up to a maximum of £100 per night for hotels outside of London and £150 per night for hotels booked in London. Both limits are inclusive of bed and breakfast and VAT. No other charges are applicable, without exception.
- 5.10 Individuals who require the support of a guide or assistance animal will be booked into user friendly accommodation and any additional cost for their assistance animal will be reimbursed.

Subsistence / Meals

5.11 If the activity requires individuals to be away from home for a significant period of the day, reimbursement for meals may be made on actual cost and on production of a valid receipt, up to the maximum limits as described below:-

Breakfast (where the individual had to leave their permanent place of residence before 07:00hrs)	Up to £5.00
Lunch	Up to £5.00
Evening meal	Up to £15.00
NB Maximum reimbursement in a 24 hour period	Up to £20.00

5.12 These rates include the cost of food and drinks, but in accordance with NHS policy, the purchase of any alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

5.13 Where refreshments and food are provided at the event or meeting, subsistence allowance will not be paid.

5.14 Please note that tips (for example in restaurants or taxis) will never be reimbursed and remain solely at the individual's discretion.

Other Expenses

5.15 If an individual needs additional support to enable them to attend meetings, such as accompanying carer costs, carer costs, childcare or interpreters, this will need to be discussed and agreed in advance with the relevant ICB officer and reasonable expenses may also be covered. Evidence of costs incurred such as receipts will need to be provided. An audit trail will need to be kept to show what expenses have been agreed in advance.

5.16 In general, the cost of office supplies for example if an individual prints off papers for meetings in their home environment will not be reimbursed. Where an individual requires printed copies of papers for meetings or policy documents these for accessibility purposes, these can be requested from the responsible ICB officer. If for any reason this is not possible, an agreement may be reached with the responsible ICB officer and an audit trail of the agreed reimbursement kept. This agreement may not exceed £5.00 per month.

6.0 What expenses are not covered?

6.1 This policy does not apply in the following circumstances:

- Individuals attending open public meetings, launch events or other meetings which are open to everyone (eg public meetings, Board meetings and Annual General Meetings) or other meetings without specific invitations to assist in ICB business;
- Individuals giving views through questionnaires or interviews;

- Individuals receiving payment from other organisations for their participation in ICB work, eg members of voluntary or community organisations
- First class travel (but individuals can pay the difference between standard and first class travel themselves)
- Any fines for driving transgressions incurred whilst in on route to or from the event or meeting
- Any parking fines incurred (including fines issued on hospital sites) whilst working with the ICB
- Loss of personal belongings
- Damage to vehicles whilst on route to, in attendance at, or on route from the ICB event or meeting

7 Approaches from organisations outside the ICB for public, patient or carer representation

- 7.1 Other organisations should make it clear what involvement they are asking the representatives for. They should also be clear what expenses or payments are available.
- 7.2 If the request is coming from another organisation, it is expected that they will pay for an individual's travel and out-of-pocket expenses. If they are requesting a representative from the ICB, then this must be discussed with the ICB in advance of confirmation of attendance being issued
- 7.3 If the organisation does not have its own expenses policy, or no clarity has been agreed on expenses, no assumption should be made that the ICB will refund any costs incurred. It will be the responsibility of the individual to accept or decline the offer to be involved.

8 Payment Process

- 8.1 The following process should be followed for reimbursement of expenses.
- a. Submission of an expenses claim consisting of the signed expenses claim form (**Appendix 1**) and accompanying receipts must be made to the authorising ICB officer within three months of the event or meeting taking place. Submission may be either electronic with scanned copies of receipts or paper copies with the actual receipts attached. Where scanned copies of receipts are submitted, they must be retained for a period of 12 months and be produced should this be requested by the ICB.
 - b. Expenses will then be approved by the appropriate ICB officer.
 - c. Payment to individuals will be made via bank transfer into the individual's bank account. No cash reimbursements will be made.

9 Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 ICB Officer

- To advise participants on the type of expenses they can claim and the process they should follow;
- To receive and submit the approved new-participant set up form (**Appendix 2**) and submit to the finance team for set-up on the payment system
- To agree expense entitlements in advance of any meeting and to maintain an audit trail of this agreement between the officer and the individual;
- Validate the individual's driving licence and insurance details on first submission and as required subsequently by the ICB
- To receive, validate and approve any expense claims in accordance with the scheme of delegation;
- To submit authorised expense claims to the finance team for processing

9.2 Chief Finance Officer (or nominated individual)

- To monitor all costs and ensure enough budget is set aside to cover costs;
- To report on expenditure related to engagement to the Audit Committee in accordance with the agreed frequency

9.3 Nominated Finance Team / Individual

- Set up the individual on the ICB's finance system to enable payment
- Submit expense claims through the ICB's finance process for payment

9.4 Participant Responsibilities

- To ensure that they have the appropriate insurance cover on any vehicle they use while undertaking ICB business
- To discuss expenses in advance with the relevant ICB officer
- To keep receipts of travel undertaken for ICB business and to submit the original document in support of any expenses claim
- To make requests for payment promptly, within three months of the meeting or event.

10 Equality and Health Inequalities Impact Risk Assessment (EHIIRA)

10.1 The ICB is committed to ensuring that it treats all individuals fairly, equitably and reasonably and that it does not discriminate against individuals or groups. Accordingly an Equality and Health Inequalities Impact and Risk Assessment (EHIIRA) has been completed specifically related to this policy.

10.2 If you have any concerns or issues with the contents of this policy or have difficulty understanding how this policy relates to you or your role, please discuss them with the ICB Officer who is engaging participation.

11 Monitoring, Compliance, and Review arrangements

11.1 This policy will be ratified by the ICB Board.

11.2 The policy will be reviewed every three years or as and when nationally, there is a change to the reimbursement rates which have been stipulated in this policy

11.3 The policy will be published on the ICB website

11.4 The Audit Committee will monitor compliance with the policy and will receive a report at a frequency to be agreed detailing Public, Patients, Carers and Volunteers expense expenditure.

12 Consultation

12.1 The ICBs Public Engagement Forum have been consulted on the contents of this policy whilst in draft.

12.2 Fourteen responses were received of which 79% rated the policy as either good or very good. Four comments led to amendments being made to the draft policy, but these were either minor clarifications or suggestions as to where the process could be strengthened.

13 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Expenses Claim Form

Patient, Public and Volunteer Expenses Claim Form

Name	
Address	
Vehicle Registration (if applicable)	

Details of personal car journeys

Date	Passenger Names (if applicable)	Details of Journey	Miles Travelled	Reimbursement Rate	Total Claim
		Total			

Details of other expenses (must be accompanied by a valid receipt)

Date	Type	Details	Amount
		Total Amount	

I declare that in signing this form, I confirm that I understand that to knowingly make an inflated or false claim for expenses or other payment could be classed as fraud. I declare that this a true and accurate reflection of the agreed expenses incurred by me. I have read the terms and conditions contained within the Public, Patient, Carers and Volunteer Expenses Policy and believe that I am entitled to make this claim in my role as an approved participant.

Declarations

I declare that the information given on this travelling expense form is correct of the best of my knowledge and I understand that if I knowingly provide false information, I may be liable to prosecution and/or civil proceedings

I consent to the disclosure of information on this form to NHS Protect, a division of the NHS Business Services Authority, for the purpose of the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of fraud and any other unlawful activity affecting the NHS

Tick or N/A

I confirm that the motor vehicle for which I have claimed a mileage allowance for is fully and appropriately insured. The vehicle is maintained at all times in road-worthy condition and complies with the requirements of the Road Traffic Acts.

I confirm I hold a valid driving licence (if applicable)

I am responsible for declaring this income to HMRC or other income providers (eg Jobcentre Plus, or insurance companies who may provide income to me as an individual)

Signature of Claimant		Date	
Signature of authorised ICB manager		Date	
Print Name		Designation	

Appendix 2: New Volunteer Set-up Form

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Vehicle Registration (if applicable)	
Driving Licence Number (if applicable)	

Bank Name	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
Name on Bank Account	

Signature		Date	
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