

# Volunteer Expenses Policy

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<b>Contact for Review:</b> Corporate Affairs				

<b>Prepared by</b>	This Policy has been prepared and reviewed by the CCG Communications and Engagement Team Senior Managers.
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	This document has been impact assessed by the CCG. No issues have been identified in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.
<b>Consultation</b>	
<b>Authorised by</b>	Remuneration Committee Remuneration & Terms of Service Committee
<b>What is it for?</b>	This policy is written to set out some guiding principles and practice around working with volunteers and the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses volunteers may incur.
<b>Who is it aimed at and which settings?</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	
<b>Other relevant approved documents</b>	Not applicable.
<b>References</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Training and competences</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	This policy will be monitored and reviewed for effectiveness on a regular basis.

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Version Number</b>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. NHS North Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Groups (the CCGs) are membership organisations led by family doctors that plan and buy health services for their local populations. CCGs have a duty to operate within the limited budget they are given, whilst commissioning for quality and best value.
- 1.2. The CCGs consider working in partnership with patients and the public to be central to the way that we work. We are committed to ensuring that public and patient voices are at the heart of shaping our healthcare services.
- 1.3. This policy is written to set out some guiding principles and practice around working with volunteers and the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses volunteers may incur. The policy applies to individual patients/carers and members of the public who help the CCGs with our work (not to paid staff of other organisations) and covers patients and the public who are residents of North and South Norfolk.
- 1.4. The CCGs define 'volunteering' as "any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives". [[www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy](http://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy)]
- 1.5. The CCGs recognise that all the people who live and use services within their areas can offer individual feedback on their experiences and as such are 'experts by experience'.
- 1.6. The CCGs aim to ensure that patients and the public are not financially out of pocket when they support our work. This policy sets out when and what financial support is available to patients and the public who are involved in our work, in line with our duty to ensure the best use of public funds.
- 1.7. By 'covering expenses' we mean reimbursing the costs that are incurred by a volunteer whilst being involved in activities for the CCGs. Out of pocket expenses should be covered, this includes (but not limited to) travel and carer support where necessary. Further guidance can be found in section 2 and Appendix 1. We only support volunteer activity and do not pay involvement fees.

## 2. CATEGORIES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS

- 2.1. The CCG has the following approach of financial support for volunteers:
- 2.2. **Category A** – public meetings. This applies to open access public meetings or surveys/questionnaires where participants choose to attend in line with their personal interest areas. Examples of this type of engagement would include the CCG's Annual General Meeting and Stakeholder events, Governing Body meetings, a public meeting, or where CCG staff seek to engage with people in public spaces e.g. libraries, shopping centres asking people if they would like to contribute views or input. No financial reimbursements are offered.
- 2.3. **Category B** – reimbursing out of pocket expenses. This is the CCG's usual arrangement for volunteers' input into CCG work providing patient and service user voice, feedback and perspectives. It applies when the CCG is inviting input into specific programmes of work.

Examples of this would include volunteers being participants/delegates at discussion forums, events, workshops, being part of a wide range of committees and reference groups e.g. the CCG's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Panels. Full details of what out of pocket expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim can be found at section 9 and Appendix 1.

- 2.4 Supporter & Advocacy Organisations** – in regard to the above mentioned categories supporters or advocates attending for volunteers who would not otherwise be able to take part in the engagement will be reimbursed for their expenses using the form in Appendix 1 if agreed in advance with the relevant CCG. A supporter or advocate will not be reimbursed their expenses if they are attending an event as a paid employee representing their own or their organisations views.

### **3. SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN RECEIPT OF STATE BENEFITS**

- 3.1. The CCGs actively seek a diverse and inclusive approach to involvement. We recognise that many of our volunteers have on-going health conditions and may often be in receipt of state benefits. The CCGs seek to ensure that being in receipt of benefits does not constitute a barrier to involvement.
- 3.2. In general, volunteers who are claiming out of pocket expenses only can do so without an adverse impact on their benefit entitlements.
- 3.3. However, people who receive anything that might be deemed to be earnings or income by Her Majesty's Custom and Revenue service (HMRC) may put their benefit entitlement in jeopardy. Rules and regulations around receiving income whilst in receipt of benefits vary significantly according to individual circumstances, because of this we do not intend to provide detailed information on the different conditions for individual benefits in this guide.
- 3.4. Individuals will have a responsibility to ensure that they have checked with the relevant agencies. A person should also speak to their benefits advisor or Jobcentre Plus to discuss their individual circumstances. It is the responsibility of the individual and not the CCGs to comply with the conditions of their benefits.

### **4. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

- 4.1. The CCGs usually look to cover expenses for volunteers who are working with us as individuals. Paid workers from voluntary organisations who attend workshops, advisory groups and consultation events are expected to seek support from their own organisations. However, representatives from small, user-led organisations may be supported with out of pocket expenses where they are not able to access any other public funds. Where these organisations find that meeting the costs of participation is likely to cause difficulty, they should contact the meeting organiser to discuss in advance.
- 4.2. Volunteers may also be involved in working with a number of organisations, for example with a local authority, voluntary sector organisations and or other neighbouring CCGs. If the Volunteer is claiming expenses from one organisation for involvement in a specific piece of work, they may not claim expenses from other organisations for the same piece of work.
- 4.3. When the CCG is working jointly with other organisations (for example the Department

of Health, local authorities, or Public Health England), it should be made clear to volunteers in advance which organisation is responsible for expenses. The expenses policy implemented in these circumstances will be that of the lead organisation that is responsible for paying volunteers expenses.

- 4.4. Organisations that represent service users will be responsible for their own administration costs and overheads and other associated costs that fall outside the scope of this volunteer expenses policy.

## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 5.1. A designated representative of the CCG will be responsible for:

- receiving claims;
- validating claims;
- submitting claims through the CCG finance process for payment; and
- providing a hard copy of forms for volunteers as required.

- 5.2. Volunteers and/or their advocates will be responsible for:

- providing bank account details to the designated CCG representative to enable set up for manual payment;
- submitting a completed volunteer travel expenses claim form together with valid receipts where applicable to the designated CCG representative;
- using and organising the most cost-effective method of travel, for example, if using a bus, to obtain a day ticket if more cost-effective, car sharing where possible and use of a taxi only when absolutely necessary; and
- informing any relevant agency of expenses payments that may affect any benefits they receive.

## **6. WHAT IS NOT COVERED BY THIS POLICY**

- 6.1. Travel expenses of individuals attending open public meetings (e.g. Annual General Meeting of the CCG) without specific invitation from the CCG to attend to assist in CCG business.
- 6.2. Travel expenses for representatives of voluntary, community or faith organisations whose expenses are funded from another source.
- 6.3. Any fines incurred while en route to or from valid CCG business (eg parking or speeding)
- 6.4. Loss of personal belongings.
- 6.5. Damage to vehicles while en route to, in attendance at, or en route from valid CCG business.
- 6.6. Items that are covered by other forms of funding (e.g. free childcare places)

## **7. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 7.1. The policy will be reviewed annually or as required.

- 7.2. The CCGs reserve the right to review this policy at any time. All payments are made in good faith and form no formal contract between the CCG and the volunteer.
- 7.3. The CCGs' auditors may review samples of claims at any time and where there is evidence to suggest an inappropriate claim may have been made the CCGs reserve the right to investigate further and refer to the respective CCG's anti-fraud specialist.
- 7.4. Individuals must declare all payments as necessary to HMRC and the CCG has no responsibility to engage with HMRC in any circumstances on a volunteer's behalf.

## **8. COVERING OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES**

- 8.1 The CCGs will reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by volunteers supporting us as long as they do not exceed the agreed rates (see Appendix 1 below).
- 8.2 There may be instances where the costs of participation are a barrier to involvement. The CCGs will encourage volunteers to discuss their participation needs in advance so that we can explore solutions together. Assessment of such situations will be on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.3 All claims will be made using the form in Appendix 1 below and given to the CCG representative responsible for organising the event/meeting for processing.

## **9. Carers and support workers**

- 9.1. The CCGs recognise that in some circumstances volunteers will need to arrange for carers/support workers to accompany them to a meeting, or to take over caring responsibilities while they are at a meeting (including child care, care of family members with disabilities). The CCGs will meet the expenses/costs of carer/support workers that are reasonable for the local area, and we will cover the requirements of the carer/support worker who accompanies the volunteer in line with the guidelines above. We will also cover the hourly costs of the carer/support worker where these costs are not normally covered elsewhere (for example via service user support payments from other public funds e.g. social services). Where reimbursement is needed for carers/support workers, this is looked at on a case by case basis and should be agreed in advance with the meeting organiser.
- 9.2 Where the CCGs are reimbursing the cost of care or support workers to support participants to attend, this should be delivered by a registered worker. For the avoidance of doubt, the carer or support worker is engaged by the volunteer and not by the CCGs. The CCGs will reimburse actual expenditure based on receipts/invoices submitted with expense claims. The receipt/invoice should provide details of the carer's registration and/or professional organisation providing the care.

**APPENDIX 1**

**EXPENSES CLAIM FORM – PATIENT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**



**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Telephone number:** .....

**Event:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Travel Costs**

Return travel by public transport/taxi £.....

Car mileage, distance travelled, including return journey

..... miles @ 45p per mile £.....

Motorcycle mileage, distance travelled, including return journey

..... miles @ 24p per mile £.....

Return travel by bicycle including return journey..... Miles @ 20p per mile £.....

**Carer/Childcare Costs**

Total costs arising of carer/childcare arrangements to allow volunteer to attend event need to be agreed in advance

Register number of Registered/Approved Carer ..... £.....

**Total amount claimed:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Signed:** .....

**Authorised by CCG representative to confirm that the above mentioned volunteer travelled to the meeting/event as stated above:**

.....

**Rules and regulations around receiving income whilst in receipt of benefits vary significantly according to individual circumstances. It is the responsibility of the individual and not the CCGs to comply with the conditions of their benefits.**