

Policy for Engaging with Patients and the Public

(Including Reimbursement of Expenses)

Version 1.0

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Hull Teaching PCT (the PCT) recognises the principle that patients and the public who have knowledge, life experiences and skills specific to the needs of the PCT should not be out of pocket as a result of their engagement on behalf of the PCT. Reasonable expenses incurred for specific engagement, can be reimbursed, subject to satisfaction of appropriate accounting procedures.
- 1.2 Patient and Public Engagement (PPE) has developed and grown in importance since Chapter 4 of the NHS Plan (2000). A number of White Papers have identified the growing importance of PPE, each paper building upon the foundations established in the previous. In 2006, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' described the importance of designing services around the needs of local communities. This initiative was part of a programme of wider reforms focused on improving health, prevention and early intervention and the reduction of health inequalities.
- 1.3 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007) strengthened Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006, specifically drawing a distinction between involvement and consultation. "Each relevant English body must make arrangements, as respects health services for which it is responsible, which secure that users of those services, whether directly or through representatives, are involved (whether by being consulted or provided with information, or in other ways) in:
- a) the planning of the provision of those services,
 - b) the development and consideration of proposals for changes in the way those services are provided, and
 - c) decisions to be made by the NHS organisation affecting the operation of those services."

2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to staff on their responsibilities for the engagement of patients and the public in organisational activities and to provide clarity to Hull PCT Ambassador Members and patients or the public who volunteer to sit on Committees etc.
- 2.2 This Policy aims to clarify, for individuals and PCT staff, when and how it is appropriate to reimburse reasonable expenses incurred.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the PCT, any staff who are seconded to the PCT, contract and agency staff and any other individual working on PCT premises.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Directors

- 4.1.1 Directors are responsible for ensuring organisational compliance with the duty to involve patients and the public in the planning, design and evaluation of services.

4.2 Managers

4.2.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate Engagement activity takes place and that both staff and those engaged voluntarily in PCT activities are appropriately supported and participants are reimbursed where applicable.

4.3 All Staff

4.3.1 All staff are responsible for adequately supporting and recognising the contribution made by patients and members of the public engaged voluntarily in PCT activities.

4.4 Project Leads

4.4.1 Project Leads are responsible for providing the participant with contact details to obtain information on the implications on benefits of receiving reimbursement of expenses. Project Leads also have a responsibility to provide expenses claim forms to participants and support the completion of forms if required and to refund small amounts of expenses from petty cash on the day of the activity (considering availability of petty cash in advance); larger amounts will be paid as quickly as possible in a payment method appropriate for the participant. They will ensure that this is done in a confidential and sensitive manner, acknowledging a need for privacy.

4.5 Participants

4.5.1 Participants are responsible for completing the expenses claim form with all the necessary information and attaching receipts.

5 Definitions

Voluntary Engagement in PCT Activity - An individual taking part in engagement activities as a patient (who is not getting paid for their time as a patient) or member of the public. This could be a Hull PCT Member, who has knowledge, life experiences and skills specific to the needs of the PCT. This engagement may be one-off (or ad hoc) or regular.

Lay Individual – an individual who may participate in Trust activity or engagement including Trust Committees/Sub Committees to provide their individual opinion.

Hull PCT Ambassador - an individual recruited and registered by the PCT as an Ambassador to assist in the inclusion of the views and experiences of patients and the public in decision making through engagement and activity.

Project Lead - The member of staff who is supporting the individual in engagement activity.

6 Equality and Diversity

6.1 The PCT is committed to:

- eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in its Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, and
- designing and implementing services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of its population and workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged.

6.2 To ensure the above, this Policy has been Equality Impact Assessed. Details of the assessment are available on the PCT's website or by calling the PCT on (01482) 344700.

6.3 Where employees have difficulty expressing themselves because of language or other difficulties help should be sought from their Trade Union or other employee representatives or colleagues.

6.4 Consideration should be given to the provision of an interpreter or facilitator if there are understanding or language difficulties (perhaps a friend of the employee, or co-employee).

6.5 Consideration should be given to the participant(s) and the type of engagement/activity to be undertaken in terms of the participant's needs. Such provisions may include the need for an interpreter, translator, alternative formats of documentation or other reasonable adjustments as required.

7 NHS Constitution

7.1 The PCT is committed to:

- the achievement of the principles, values, rights, pledges and responsibilities detailed in the NHS Constitution, and
- ensuring they are taken account of in the production of its Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

7.2 This Policy supports the NHS Constitution and the Value of Working together for patients insofar as the PCT puts patients first in everything it does, by reaching out to staff, patients, carers, families, communities and professionals outside the NHS. It also puts the needs of patients and communities before organisational boundaries.

8 Principles of Engagement

8.1 Involvement

8.1.1 The contribution patients and the public make in voluntary engagement is recognised and valued. This can be done in a variety of ways - for example being thanked, providing positive feedback and acknowledgement, giving practical assistance, or seeing the impact of the work and changes made as a result of involvement.

8.1.2 In addition, volunteers who are registered as Ambassadors will be offered training and personal development opportunities to support the work they carry out.

8.1.3 Patients and the public will be given full details by the Project Lead before the engagement is due to commence to enable them to make an informed choice about how and on what terms they would like to be involved.

8.2 Regular Engagement Activities

8.2.1 Examples may include:

- Ambassadors supporting PCT staff to engage the public and other members at public events
- Ambassadors recruiting new members
- Ambassadors recording and feeding back to the PCT the views and concerns of patients and the public
- Ambassadors signposting people to the most appropriate means of sharing their views, e.g. PALS.

8.3 Ad hoc and one-off Engagement

8.3.1 Examples may include:

- Participation in a focus group
- Speaking at PCT events (e.g. AGM, training events)
- Undertaking patient experience surveys
- Pharmacy visits.

8.4 Reimbursement

8.4.1 PCT Ambassadors or Lay Individuals will not be left out of pocket or put at risk of being financially worse off as a result of their involvement in service improvement.

8.4.2 Involvement/attendance at open public meetings does not qualify for the reimbursement of expenses, e.g. PCT Annual General Meeting, except to PCT Ambassadors or Lay Individuals allocated specific tasks.

8.4.3 A wide range of patients and the public, with different needs and experiences will be encouraged and supported to be involved. The way that reimbursement of expenses is settled should not needlessly create barriers that deter people from being involved.

8.4.4 On the whole, reimbursement of travel expenses does not affect patients and the public in receipt of benefits. However, reimbursement of other expenses e.g. payment for lunch, carers, etc. could affect benefit entitlement. Individuals will, therefore, be provided with information and support to prevent a breach of their benefit conditions, which can result in benefits being stopped. The Provision of Gift Vouchers constitutes payment and may affect benefits. Please refer to the Policy on the use of Free Gifts, Prizes and Incentives for further guidance.

8.4.5 The PCT is committed to offering engagement opportunities to all its population including carers, people with disabilities and those individuals with additional needs. Reimbursement of costs incurred as part of the engagement activity will always be viewed positively and taken into account any financial implications for the individual.

8.4.6 Invitations or other forms of communication should advise participants of the process of reimbursement and the Project Lead should ensure the participant completes the relevant claim for expenses form with receipts attached. Paperwork to claim reimbursement will be kept to a minimum but an audit trail is necessary to safeguard both the PCT and the participant and it should, therefore, be accessible and easy to understand.

8.4.7 Reimbursement will be made in line with the reimbursement rates that have been agreed by a multi-agency group. Hull PCT Reimbursement rates are as follows:

Cars and vans	40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles per annum, and 25p for every mile thereafter
Motorcycles	24p per mile regardless of overall total
Bicycles	20p per mile regardless of overall total
Parking fees	Supported by appropriate receipts
Public transport	At standard rate supported by receipt of a valid ticket

8.4.8 **Parking/speeding fines and/or loss of personal belongings will not be reimbursed by the Trust.**

8.4.9 Reimbursement of other expenses may include: taxi, carer's costs and childcare costs, etc. subject to discussion with the Project Lead prior to incurring the cost. Any agreement to reimburse other approved costs should be billed directly to the PCT by invoice.

8.4.10 In most cases of travel by car, train or bus, the amounts involved are very small and not sufficient to warrant processing through the usual PCT finance system. The Project Lead should, therefore, take an appropriate amount of petty cash to the meeting/event. The Project Lead should be aware of the number of people invited to attend and whether it has been agreed to fund any additional expenses other than travel costs. On completion of the activity the Project Lead should return completed forms and any remaining petty cash to the petty cash holder.

8.4.11 When engagement activity is on-going, an expenses claim form may be issued to participants prior to the activity to be presented to the Project Lead on a monthly basis.

8.4.12 Claim forms for expenses are available on the staff Intranet and on the U: Drive under 'Corporate Templates and Forms'.

9 Ambassador Registration

9.1 PCT Ambassadors will be specifically recruited and those recruited will be required to undergo an appropriate recruitment and registration process, including induction and training.

9.2 Ad hoc and one-off involvement in voluntary unpaid engagement activity does not require the participant to register as an Ambassador.

10 Training and Supervision

10.1 Training and supervision are essential in enabling people to develop their skills and contribute effectively. Where possible, training will be provided jointly with staff to promote shared working, experiences and viewpoints.

10.2 Each engagement activity will have a named Project Lead who will be responsible for identifying the individuals to be engaged and supporting them through the engagement activity.

10.3 Where the engagement activity is one-off or ad hoc, the Project Lead will:

- liaise with the Marketing and Engagement Manager to consider access to the Membership database in order to invite participation
- register the activity and its outcomes on the Engagement Database (if appropriate)
- identify training needs
- facilitate preparation for specific tasks
- offer individual support as and when required
- consider reimbursement of expenses in accordance with this policy
- offer a review of the participation activity undertaken on a regular basis
- ensure that the participants are fully briefed on their role prior to the task being started and that they are given all relevant documentation and background information
- ensure communication and access needs are addressed
- be available to meet with the participants at an agreed time before the activity and address any specific concerns or questions
- ensure the participant(s) are supported fully during the activity
- meet with the participant(s) after the activity takes place
- thank the participant(s) for their involvement and keep them informed of subsequent outcomes.

10.4 Where the engagement activity is regular, the Project Lead will:

- support the PCT Lay Individual/Ambassador with the registration process (if required)
- identify training needs, where appropriate e.g. Equality and Diversity facilitate preparation for specific tasks
- offer individual support as and when required
- consider reimbursement of expenses in accordance with this policy
- offer a review of the participation activity undertaken on a regular basis
- ensure that the participants are fully briefed on their role prior to the task being started and that they are given all relevant documentation and background information
- register the activity and its outcomes on the Engagement Database (if appropriate)
- be available to meet with the participants at an agreed time before the activity and address any specific concerns or questions
- ensure the participant(s) are supported fully during the activity
- thank the participant(s) for their involvement and keep them informed of subsequent outcomes.
- ensure communication and access needs are addressed.

10.5 When engagement activity is on either basis:

The PCT will:

- provide the necessary facilities to enable participants to engage fully
- work flexibly with participants to accommodate any needs they may have.

The Participant will:

- prepare for activities as agreed with the Project Lead
- inform the Project Lead at the earliest opportunity if unable to attend for any reason
- follow guidance from the Project Lead on the general conduct of the activity
- discuss with the Project Lead any concerns they may have about the activity.

11 Exception – One-Off Gifts

11.1 The Department of Health provides guidance for organisations relating to 'one off' gifts, as follows:

'Sometimes service users want to be involved for a particular event or brief activity such as consultation, attendance at seminars or conferences. Providing this is a genuine 'one off' arrangement, and the service user is not employed by the organisation, it is possible to provide a cash gift in appreciation. This is similar to the practice that some market research companies use for example when engaging members of the public in a survey etc. providing the gift is made voluntarily and not in payment for work, and is within the

capital rules for income support, income based job-seekers allowance and Pension Credit, it will not affect any benefits nor be described as payment for work under the 'Minimum Wage Act'.

- 11.2 The PCT will only support this approach where it has proved impossible to engage with patients/public from a specific group without incentives, e.g. pregnant smokers. This applies to NHS staff undertaking the activity and contracted consultancy agencies. Please refer to the PCT's Policy on the use of Free Gifts, Prizes and Incentives for further guidance.

12 Compliance with Trust Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

- 12.1 If the PCT Ambassador/Lay Individual fails to comply with PCT policies and procedures, the PCT may, after appropriate attempts to resolve the situation, ask the PCT Ambassador/Lay Individual to cease their engagement and remove their name from Trust records. This will be confirmed in writing.

- 12.2 In particular, attention is drawn to the PCT's:

- Health and Safety Policy
- No Smoking Policy
- Policy on the Provision of Gifts and Hospitality
- Policy on Offers/Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality
- Policy on the use of Free Gifts, Prizes and Incentives.

- 12.3 The PCT also operates a 'Confidential Reporting Policy' to ensure that people can raise issues of concern without fear of redress. All of these are available on the PCT's Intranet and U: Drive.

13 Confidentiality

- 13.1 PCT Ambassadors/Lay Individual will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, but will only be given access to information required for the specific task, and will at all times follow the Code of Conduct on Confidentiality.
- 13.2 Participants who have not registered as an Ambassador will not be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and will therefore not be given access to information of a sensitive or confidential nature.

14 Identification Badges

- 14.1 Identification badges will be issued to Lay Individuals/Ambassadors and must be worn whilst undertaking any activity. ID badges must be returned to the Trust when the role/service is concluded.

15 Concerns, Complaints and Disputes

- 15.1 If the participant has a concern, complaint or dispute, these should be raised initially with their Project Lead.

- 15.2 If the Project Lead has a concern, complaint or dispute, these should be raised initially with their manager.
- 15.3 If the issue is not resolved, another appropriate manager should be informed (refer to the Associate Director of Corporate Affairs). They can then discuss with those concerned the options available and how to take the matter forward.

16 Bringing the Engagement to an End

- 16.1 The participant(s) have the right to cease involvement with any task at any time, to ask to be removed from the NHS Hull Members' database at any time (if applicable) and to cease to be involved in PCT engagement at any time.
- 16.2 All Hull PCT members have the right to remain on the Membership Database, even when they have ceased to be engaged with a specific task, or as a PCT Ambassador/Lay Individual.

17 Monitoring Compliance with and Effectiveness of this Policy

- 17.1 Compliance with and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored via an annual audit.

18 References

Reward and Recognition (August 2006), Department of Health. Available at www.dh.gov.uk

The NHS Plan (2000), Department of Health. Available at www.dh.gov.uk

Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, Department of Health. Available at www.dh.gov.uk

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007). Available at www.legislation.gov.uk

National Health Service Act 2006 (section 242). Available at www.legislation.gov.uk

19 Associated Documentation

This policy links to the PCT's:

- Standards of Business Conduct and Conflicts of Interests Policy
- No Smoking Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Policy on Offers/Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality
- Policy on the Provision of Gifts and Hospitality
- Safehaven Policy
- Caldicott and Data Protection Policy
- Ambassador Registration Pack
- Policy on the use of Free Gifts, Prizes and Incentives.

20 Review

- 20.1 This Policy will be reviewed two years from the date of implementation.
- 20.2 Minor amendments (such as changes in title) may be made prior to the formal review, details of which will be monitored/approved by the Associate Director of Corporate Affairs in consultation with the Director of Human Resources and Trade Union Representative(s) where relevant. Such amendments will be recorded in the PPG Register and a new version of the PPG issued.