Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme
(A guide for patients)
EFFECTIVE FROM 1ST APRIL 2016

This information has been drawn up to assist patients claiming refunds under the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme.

Who can claim

1. Patients or adults with dependent children who are in receipt of Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, Income related Employment Support Allowance, Universal Credits or Tax Credit exemption certificate attending a NHS healthcare appointment only.

2. Patients holding a current HC2 or HC3 form may also claim under the scheme.

3. Asylum seekers for whom support is provided under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. An official letter from the Home Office confirming status as an asylum seeker being supported under the 1999 Act as at the date the travel for healthcare was undertaken must be provided.

4. A child aged 16 or 17 who is in local authority care and is supported by a local authority under section 23B(8) of the Children Act 1989. It covers claimants cost only. An official letter from the local authority confirming their status as at the date the travel was undertaken must be provided.
5. A person living permanently in a local authority care home. An official letter from the local authority confirming their status as at the date the travel was undertaken must be provided.

6. War Pensioners can claim travel costs by writing to: The Treatment Group, Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, Norcross, Blackpool FY5 3WP. A pre-paid envelope is available from Post Offices.

7. If any of the above does not apply to patients but they are on a low income they may still be able to claim by completing a HC1 form.

**How to claim cash at the Cashiers counter**

We are located on the ground floor of the main City Road Hospital building. Claims can be made Monday to Thursday 9am to 4.00pm Friday 9.30am to 4.00pm. If you have a booked afternoon appointment we suggest you claim your fare reimbursement before attending your appointment. The last travel claim is paid out by 4.00pm. We are closed weekends and bank holidays.

Documents required by cashiers to claim at cashiers counters at City Road on the day of the appointment

- Patients appointment card or letter
- Proof of applicable benefit dated within the last twelve months. It is the claimant’s responsibility for ensuring benefit proof is accurate and up to date. The name and address on the benefit document must agree with the hospitals database and must state the full benefit type.
- All tickets and/or an oyster card relevant to the journey.
Claimants must present themselves to cashiers counters to claim as a signature of receipt is required by the claimant. The only exception to this rule is if the patient is a child and the parent signs on their behalf or if the patient has a power of attorney and a letter is provided stating this. Benefit details must state the patients name and the address registered with Moorfields Eye Hospital. If someone else claims benefits on your behalf, you must provide the original benefit letter which states that you are eligible to claim under the other persons benefit.

**What can be paid?**

1. Public transport – the **cheapest** form of public transport to and from the patients address registered with Moorfields Eye Hospital pertaining to the appointment time. The scheme will reimburse the cheapest cost to travel to the hospital and return home. If you have a peak appointment you should purchase a single peak ticket for your journey and a single off peak ticket home. If you have an off peak appointment you should purchase a standard off peak return ticket. Moorfields Eye Hospital will only cover off peak journeys home. If you are eligible for a disabled railcard, you visit Moorfields frequently and live a considerable distance from the hospital the Cashier may be able to reimburse the cost of your yearly disabled railcard if the hospital incurs less costs for your travel with an escort.

2. Car Travel:
   a) An allowance of twenty pence per mile verified on AA route planner website is paid to and from the patients address registered with Moorfields Eye Hospital.
   b) (This is based on advisory fuel rates as per HM Revenue & Customs 01/03/11). A petrol receipt must be presented.
   c) Under certain circumstances, parking expenses may be refunded up to £8.00 per day.
Receipts must be provided for car park costs and road/toll charges. Petrol receipts must be dated within a week of the appointment date.

**Congestion Charge**

By agreement between Transport for London and NHS London, patients may be reimbursed the cost of the London Congestion Charge if the patient meets very strict medical criteria.

Further information on the London Congestion Charge scheme, other exemptions and discounts see below:


Blue badge holders should register with Transport for London for unlimited free travel within the Congestion Charge zone. As they are eligible for free travel within the zone they cannot claim reimbursement from the healthcare travel cost scheme. For further information regarding registration please call 0845 900 1234.

3. Patients registered with a taxicard are eligible to claim for their travel under the scheme by providing their taxicard ID and taxicard and comcab receipt. The maximum amount of swipes allowed by their borough must be used for maximum discount and a receipt for the remaining amount only must be presented to the cashiers for reimbursement. An official receipt must be provided alongside the patients Taxicard ID.

Further information can be found at [www.computercab.co.uk/taxicard](http://www.computercab.co.uk/taxicard)
4. Escort fares:
Patients who are eligible under this scheme can claim for an escort fare for travel by public transport only, under the following criteria.

a) Patients registered as sight or severely sight impaired. (Proof must be shown)
b) Patients registered disabled. (Proof must be shown).
c) A doctor’s letter stating that an escort is considered medically necessary to accompany a patient to and from their home. A new letter must be provided for each claim unless the doctor states that the patient’s condition will not change regardless of treatments received.

Escorts must accompany patients for the entire journey to and from the patients registered address for their appointment. They must escort the patient throughout their entire visit to Moorfields, including visiting the cashiers department when the patient claims travel costs.

Any patients eligible for escort status claiming costs without an escort present will only be paid their travel costs and cannot claim the escort cost at a later date. Costs are only reimbursed from the patients registered address. All tickets must be provided for the claim. Reimbursement for escorts cannot be claimed if the journey is made by taxi or car.

4. Voluntary car service:
Patients eligible under this scheme who use a recognised voluntary car service will be reimbursed at the current rate on production of an official receipt. The driver of the voluntary car service must accompany
the patient for reimbursement and must provide the cashier with their identification badge and an official company receipt.

**Backdated claims**

Claims must be made within three months of the date of travel. Tickets and/or receipts must be kept and presented at the time of the claim. All receipts must provide proof of date of travel and amount of each individual ticket cost.

**Where to claim**

At the Cashiers office which is located on the ground floor in the main hospital when attending your appointment.

If you attend cashiers without proof of benefit or if we are closed please take a HC5 (T) form from the rack outside cashiers. Complete this and forward it to the relevant department as directed on the form with your ticket/s.

If attending outreach sites please send a completed HC5 (T) form to the benefits agency as directed on the form, you must include your hospital number and all tickets/receipts. Please complete part 3 of the form with the address of Moorfields Eye Hospital, 162 City Road, London, EC1V 2PD not the outreach hospital that you attended. The department attended in part two would be the name of the outreach hospital you attended.

If making a postal claim and the patient is a child ensure that the parents/guardians details are also clearly provided as a cheque will be issued if eligible. All postal claims will be reimbursed by cheque by Moorfields Eye Hospital once the claim has been verified by your benefits agency.

**Further Information**
Taxi fares are reimbursed only in **exceptional** circumstances

a) Where there is no public transport available (if patient lives in a rural area). Proof of this must be obtained and presented at time of claim.

b) A doctor’s letter is provided stating a taxi was considered medically necessary for a particular journey. A receipt must be provided before any claim can be paid. Future hospital visits should be made using hospital transport which should be arranged with your GP.

c) Moorfields Eye Hospital approved transport patients attending accident and emergency only and in receipt of applicable benefit. A receipt must be provided before any claim can be paid.

If a patient is unable to travel by public transport then hospital transport should be arranged via your GP.

Leaflet HC12 – “Help with health costs” is available from cashiers or your local jobcentre plus. The leaflet contains a section about claiming fares.

It is a condition of the scheme as laid down by the NHS Executive that staff are required to be vigilant in their operation of this scheme and cases where fraud is suspected will be reported to the Benefits Agency.

The Trust reserves the right to refuse payment in circumstances when eligibility has not been satisfactorily established or where claims appear excessive. Any fraud committed under this scheme including duplicate claims for travel here or any other hospital will be reported to our fraud department, your benefit agency and the government department responsible for the scheme who state below:

*Any patient found to have wrongly claimed for help with health costs will now face penalty charges and, in some cases, prosecution under powers introduced by the Health Act 1999.*
The penalty charge is a civil fine and may be imposed where a patient is found to have wrongly claimed total or partial help with health costs. The penalty charge is five times the amount owed, up to a maximum of £100. This is in addition to the original charge. Payment will be pursued by civil recovery if necessary.

Zero Tolerance

Our staff are here to help you. They have the right to work in safety without fear of verbal, physical or racial abuse. Moorfields will treat with zero tolerance any form of abuse towards its staff. This guide is available on the Moorfields website

http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/hospital-transport

The NHS also have a guide to the scheme

http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Pages/Travelcosts.aspx

Any complaints regarding the scheme must be made in writing to

The Chief Cashier
Moorfields Eye Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust
162 City Road
London EC1V 2PD

S.Christy 01.04.16