

## **Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre**

# **Public involvement and engagement guidance on payment for expenses and offer of payment for time for individuals registered with the involvement community**

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## Introduction

Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre Public Involvement and Engagement team are committed to valuing and enabling the involvement of the public in the Health and Care Research Wales infrastructure and beyond, and has a duty to ensure appropriate use of public funds. Direct payment or the reimbursement of expenses and payment for time are some ways in which we ensure that members of the public have an equal opportunity to get involved.

This document provides guidance to individuals registered with the involvement community where the financial support is being provided by the Public Involvement and Engagement team, outlining specific rates for expenses and payment for time. It has been developed with reference to INVOLVE's guidance on policy development for payment and recognition: [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/developing-a-policy-for-payment-and-recognition/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/developing-a-policy-for-payment-and-recognition/) and provides information on what to expect before, during and after your involvement, and the processes for claiming payment for time and expenses during that period.

The offer of a payment (sometimes referred to as an honorarium) is not considered a contract of employment, it is a form of recognition of **individuals'** registered with the involvement community contributions. The administration of reimbursement and payment adheres to the Powys Teaching Health Board procedures as host of the Support and Delivery Centre.

## 1. Who is this policy for?

Individuals registered with the involvement community who are involved by taking part in, or contributing to a specific event, training course, meeting, activity, or piece of work aligned with the Health and Care Research Wales infrastructure.

This policy does not apply to people who are engaged for employment.

## 2. Expenses

### 2.1 How will we cover your expenses?

We have a pre-approval process which ensures that any expenses have been agreed before the involvement activity and before any costs are incurred to the Individual registered with the involvement community.

Wherever possible, best practice is that we will book and pay for expenses in advance. This ensures that the individuals involved are not out of pocket and enables us to obtain good value for money with public funds. **Individuals** involved who do not have a bank or building society account must ask to have expenses booked and paid for directly by the Public Involvement and Engagement team.

In order to ensure that we have sufficient funding available we will pay expenses when:

- the individual registered with the involvement community has completed a pre-approval form and liaised with the team prior to the activity;
- the potential expenses have been approved and agreed in writing;
- the **individual** registered with the involvement community can provide evidence of expenses incurred in the form of receipts (following the activity)
- the team considers that the expenses are reasonable, appropriate and associated with the activity

Please note that the Department for Work and Pensions has introduced legislation that means that all forms of exact reimbursed expenses for service user involvement are ignored for the purpose of calculating entitlement to any state benefit. It is therefore helpful to keep a copy of your claims for reimbursed expenses in case you need this to show the Jobcentre at some time in the future.

## 2.2 What expenses are covered?

### Travel

#### Train

The Public Involvement and Engagement team will book and pay for travel expenses in advance of any agreed involvement activity.

In certain situations it may not be possible for the team do this in advance of an activity. **Providing the expected travel expenses have been pre-approved as part of the pre-approval of expenses process**, the following expenses may be reimbursed.

- Standard class rail fares (not first class), cheaper day or other reduced rail fares where possible, **supported by receipts**

In certain situations a member may be in possession of a rail travel card which allows them to purchase tickets at a discounted rate. In these circumstances please discuss with the team at the pre-approval stage in order for that member to arrange their own travel.

#### Car

We encourage the use of public transport where possible, but when necessary the tariff for car users which are in line with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) policy are:

#### Type of vehicle

Cars and vans	45p per mile
Motorcycles	24p per mile
Bikes	20p per mile

For the shortest practical route calculated on AA route planner.

An additional 5 pence per mile will be paid for each additional passenger carried if that passenger is also involved in the activity. If a carer or personal assistant is travelling with the involved individual in the same car, no passenger mileage is payable for the carer / personal assistant.

If the involved individual extends or deviates their journey to incorporate an activity not related to the involvement activity, this excess mileage cannot be claimed. However, if a different route is taken on the day due to circumstances out of the individual's control, this must be made clear on the claim form.

## Other travel tolls and parking

Taxi, bus and underground fares will be reimbursed as well as incidental expenses of a journey, including tolls and parking, when circumstances justify the expenditure incurred and they are at the cheapest rate available and are supported by receipts. Parking or speeding fines do not qualify for reimbursement.

## Accommodation

The team will always endeavour to book this in advance. Please contact us to request this **at least two weeks prior to the activity**. The team have encountered difficulties securing accommodation during peak times; as much prior notice as possible is helpful. In the exceptional circumstance where the team have not been able to book and pay for accommodation in advance of the activity, **accommodation can be booked by the involved individual as long as the cost has first been approved by the team**.

Accommodation costs can be reimbursed as follows:

- For outside of London, the cheapest available accommodation that is sufficient for the **involved individual's** needs, not usually exceeding £100 per person, per night including breakfast and VAT. Any accommodation exceeding this £100 amount must be pre-approved by Public Involvement and Engagement team.
- For London, the cheapest available accommodation that is sufficient for the **involved individual's** needs, not usually exceeding £150 per person, per night including breakfast and VAT. Any accommodation exceeding this £150 amount must be pre-approved by the Public Involvement and Engagement team.
- If you choose to stay with friends or relatives we are not able to cover any of these costs.

## Subsistence

Meals, refreshments and snacks are generally provided at an event. However, meal costs can be covered when an involved **individual** is absent from home and more than five hours travel from their home by the shortest practical route.

Costs for meals, snacks and **non-alcoholic beverages** will be reimbursed **providing the expected expenses have been pre-approved as part of their pre-approval of expenses process**:

- Breakfast up to £5.00 (only if five hours away from home, including the breakfast period of 07:00 to 09:00)
- Lunch up to £5.00 (only if five hours away from home, including the lunchtime period of 12:00 to 14:00)
- Evening meal up to £20.00 (only if ten hours away from home and returning home after 19:00)

The team has a duty to ensure appropriate use of public money and will presume the right to question any excess journey time. If the involved **individual** chooses to take a longer route or travelling method then the team cannot pay for meals if the journey is extended past the journey time that is expected. The team will not reimburse meals taken after 21:00 unless they deem it absolutely necessary for participation in the activity.

### Alternative carer or childcare costs

If the **involved individual** is usually a carer or supports someone, getting involved may mean they would be separated from someone who normally depends on them to be there. The team can cover the cost of providing necessary alternative care whilst they are getting involved in pre-approved activities. Specific details may be required to ensure the team are able to support this fully.

We are able to reimburse carer or childcare costs if you are unable to pay directly. To request this, individuals registered with the involvement community should contact the team at least two weeks prior to the activity to go through the pre-approval process.

### Accompanying carer/personal assistant

If it is necessary for an informal, unpaid carer/personal assistant to accompany the individual who is participating in pre-approved involvement activities (for example if the individual is disabled), the carer/personal assistant's expenses may also be reimbursed. Specific details may be required to ensure we are able to support fully.

Administration of these costs follows the same procedure as for individuals registered with the involvement community.

### Other costs (equality and diversity)

To ensure involvement is accessible to all, the team will consider covering reasonable costs in addition to those shown above, which may include interpreters, signers for deaf people etc. This should be agreed prior to the involvement activity/meeting and will follow the same procedures as above.

### Reimbursement for individuals registered with the involvement community with disabilities

**Individuals** registered with the involvement community with **disabilities** may claim for reasonable extra accommodation/travel/subsistence facilities to support them in pre-approved involvement activities (for example the need for help from a porter or hire of a hoist or other equipment to support accommodation). **The team must be asked to agree these potential costs in writing as part of the pre-approval of expenses process**, before the individual undertakes an involvement activity.

## 3. Offer of payment for time

### 3.1 Rates

From April 2019 opportunities advertised by Health and Care Research Wales will be categorised to reflect the time commitment, experience, knowledge and support required. More information on the categories can be found [here](#). Some categories of involvement will involve the team offering a payment for time, expertise and skills for pre-approved involvement activities.

**Adverts will always make it clear what payments, if any, will be offered. Payment for time is not offered for training activities or attendance at conferences.**

The rate of payment that may be offered is:

Up to £20 for each hour of public involvement activity which could include stipulated preparation time, attendance at meetings and participation in teleconference or skype meetings.

### 3.2 If you are receiving state benefits

#### What do you need to do?

**Individuals** registered with the involvement community who are in receipt of state benefits may not be able to accept all or part of fees due to benefit conditions, which may set absolute limits on the amount which can be paid over a certain period of time.

**Individuals** registered with the involvement community should read the **Guidance for people who are in receipt of state benefits and considering involvement in research:** [www.healthandcareresearch.gov.wales/network-member-resources/](http://www.healthandcareresearch.gov.wales/network-member-resources/) and check the amount that they may be able to accept without benefits being affected and about the procedures that they must follow because these are required by Jobcentre Plus.

It is the **individual's** registered with the involvement community responsibility, if receiving certain state benefits, to obtain permission from Jobcentre Plus to accept payments, prior to undertaking any involvement activities.

If you inform us how much you can accept, the team can adjust an offer of payment for time.

Alternatively, you can offer involvement on a voluntary basis if that is your wish.

#### How we can help

The team will allow **individuals** registered with the involvement community as much time as is needed to become fully informed of the benefit rules and decide how to proceed. Jobcentre Plus procedures may take up to two months to complete.

The team can help by providing **individuals** registered with the involvement community with two (of three) standard letters.

**The first letter 1)** is for people who receive **Employment and Support Allowance, or Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance or Income Support for incapacity or Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support or Universal Credit** who are to be involved.

The letter explains about service user involvement being different to work and why it cannot be used to assess capacity for work; that people are offered support as required by their mobility and care needs, that people can stop involvement at any time as required by Jobcentre Plus. Links to Jobcentre Plus guidance for staff 'Advice for Decision Makers' are provided.

### **Plus**

**The second letter 2)** makes an offer of payment WHEN the person has the full information about their benefit conditions and limits on weekly earnings. The letter sets out any predicted frequency of involvement events. The letter states that reimbursed expenses for service user involvement are ignored by benefit rule and provides a link to the DWP guidance for Jobcentre Plus staff.

### **Or**

**The third letter 3)** offers voluntary involvement if that is what the member has chosen.

**Individuals** registered with the involvement community *can enclose these letters with the PW1 form if notifying Jobcentre Plus or take these letters to their fortnightly meeting with their personal advisor at the Jobcentre or attach these letters to their monthly online claim for Universal Credit.*

### **Independent Confidential Advice**

We can also help **individuals** registered with the involvement community to receive independent, confidential advice on benefits and involvement as we have subscribed to a Citizens Advice Bureau helpline called the 'Involvement Helpline'. This includes advice on the member's benefit conditions in respect of the involvement that is offered; any proposed payments and any proposed reimbursement of expenses incurred, including the cost of personal assistants and/or facilitators. **Individuals** registered with the involvement community who are interested in using this free service should contact 01234 330604 quoting PIEW and that they are an individual registered with the involvement community.

## 4. Responsibility for tax payments

Health and Care Research Wales has been advised that the registered involvement community are not employees and therefore tax will not be deducted from payments. However you should check if any of the state benefits you receive are taxable and together with payments for involvement may count towards your annual taxable Personal Allowance of £12,500 (to April 2020). Your income is not taxable if it is below your Personal Allowance. A list of taxable benefits is provided by HMRC at the following links:

1. Taxable: [www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/eimanual/EIM76101.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/eimanual/EIM76101.htm)
2. Non-taxable: [www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/eimanual/EIM76100.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/eimanual/EIM76100.htm)

If your total income exceeds your Personal Allowance you should advise your local Tax Office at the end of the financial year (April 6) as you may have to pay some income tax.

## 5. Submitting your claim for fees and expenses following their pre-approval

- a) For your first claim we will ask you to complete a bank details form (BACS) and return it to us
- b) The next step is to complete the claim forms which will be sent to you
- c) Attach all of your relevant receipts

Post to: Public Involvement and Engagement Team, Health and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre, Castlebridge 4, 15-19 Cowbridge Road East, Cardiff CF11 9AB.

Claim forms should be submitted as soon as possible and preferably within 4 weeks of the event or activity which the claim relates to. **Claim forms submitted more than 8 weeks following the event or activity which the claim relates to will not be authorised for payment.**

Payment for time and expenses will be authorised, once they have been checked against the expected costs as part of the pre-approval of costs process. Payment of the claim is then managed by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership on behalf of Powys Teaching Health Board.

Payment for time and fees will be reimbursed through the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership by BACS within 6 weeks of receipt of the submitted claim form. Remittance information will be sent to the claimant by post /or email.

Please note that reimbursed expenses for service user involvement are ignored as income. If at some point Jobcentre Plus wants proof that payments into your bank account are reimbursed expenses, please ask us for a copy of the reimbursed amounts that we have paid.

**The team has a duty to ensure public funds are used appropriately, and will not authorise payment of:**

- any claims which are not in line with these guidelines;
- any claims without valid receipts
- any claims for involvement activities not attended / undertaken

## **6. Contact details**

For further help and assistance please contact the Public Involvement and Engagement team at:

Heath and Care Research Wales Support and Delivery Centre  
Castlebridge 4  
15-19 Cowbridge Road East  
Cardiff  
CF11 9AB

Telephone: 02920 230457

Email: [research-involvement@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:research-involvement@wales.nhs.uk)

## **7. Jargon buster**

### **BACS**

BACS (originally an acronym for Bankers' Automated Clearing Services) is a United Kingdom scheme for the electronic processing of financial transactions. BACS payments take three working days to clear - they are entered into the system on the first day, processed on the second day, and cleared on the third day.

### **Personal tax allowance**

This is the amount of income you can receive in a financial year before tax will start to be deducted. The amount may be higher if you are married or are registered blind.

### **State benefits (or welfare benefits)**

These are payments made by the government to support people who have ill-health or a disability that limits their capacity to work, or people who are unemployed and looking for work, or people who are caring for another person. Benefits have to be applied for, and certain conditions have to be met for those benefits to be awarded and to be continued. The conditions vary for different types of benefits.

### **Taxable benefits**

Some benefits are subject to tax, others are not.

## Tax return form (self-assessment form)

When you have received money that has not already been taxed by an organisation, you may need to complete a tax return form (sometimes called a self-assessment form). It is often used by people who are self-employed. If you receive a salary this is usually taxed, but if you have earnings, for example from consultations you have been involved in over the year, this may have to be declared to the tax office using this type of form. The tax office will only want to be informed if your taxable income is more than your tax threshold or allowance. The tax office will then use the information to calculate the tax you owe the government.