

**Health and Social Care Board's
Patient Travel Policy
Stakeholder Engagement Exercise**

15 January 2015

Accessibility statement

Any request for the document in another format will be considered.

Any request for the document in another language will be considered.

Cantonese

該文件的任何要求用另外一種語言表述，我們也會予以考慮

Hungarian

Figyelembe kell venni bármely, a dokumentum más nyelven történő biztosságára vonatkozó kérelmet.

Latvian

Tiks izskatīti visi pieprasījumi iesniegt dokumentu citās valodās

Lithuanian

Bus atsižvelgta į visus prašymus pateikti dokumentą kita kalba

Mandarin

任何要求以其他语言提供该文件的请求都将予以考虑

Polish

Prośby o udostępnienie niniejszego dokumentu w innych wersjach językowych zostaną rozpatrzone.

Portuguese

Será tido em consideração qualquer pedido do documento noutra idioma

Romanian

Va fi luată în considerare orice solicitare privind furnizarea documentului în altă limbă

Russian

Любой запрос о предоставлении документа на другом языке будет принят к рассмотрению

Slovak

Zvážime každú žiadosť o poskytnutie dokumentu v inom jazyku

Tetum

Hahusuk ruma atu dokumentu ida-ne'e bele disponível mós iha lian seluk sei hetan konsiderasaun.

Contact: E mail: patienttravelconsultation@hscni.net

Written: Patient Travel Team - Consultation

Commissioning Directorate

Health and Social Care Board

12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS

Telephone: 02895 363171

Contents

1	Summary Document	4-9
2	Responding to this stakeholder engagement exercise	10-11
3	Your Views – The Response Questionnaire	12-15
4	Appendix 1 – Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Confidentiality	16-17
5	Glossary of Terms	18

1. SUMMARY DOCUMENT

HSCB Patient Travel Policy

Introduction

There are three main ways by which residents of Northern Ireland may receive planned (as opposed to unplanned or emergency) treatment outside Northern Ireland. These are:

1. Treatment arranged by a patient's Health and Social Care Trust Consultant and funding approved by the Health and Social Care Board. This is known as an Extra Contractual Referral (ECR).
2. Treatment outside the UK arranged by an individual patient using the S2 (E112) for mandated treatment within the EU.
3. Treatment outside the UK arranged by an individual patient using the EU Directive on cross border healthcare (Article 56)

For more detail on entitlement using EU regulations or directives please contact the National Contact Point, Health and Social Care Board, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS, Email: patient.travel@hscni.net, Tel: +44 (0)28 9536 3152. More information can also be found at:

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/>

Entitlement to HSCB assistance with travel arrangements and reimbursement of expenses incurred by patients and their families/carers in accessing treatment outside Northern Ireland will depend on which of the 3 routes outlined above is used. With the exception of the EU Directive route for treatment (option 3 above), the HSCB will assist with travel arrangements and

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

reimbursement of expenses incurred by patients who have been approved for assessment or treatment to facilities outside Northern Ireland.

Background

Each year the Board receives approximately 1300 requests for transfer to healthcare providers outside Northern Ireland. The vast majority of these transfers (around 1100 – 1200) are requested by a local Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) consultant using the ECR process and, for the most part, are to providers within the UK.

The Board's reimbursement policies are intended to provide assistance to patients and their carers attending health and social care appointments outside Northern Ireland, taking into account the distance, the journey time, whether it is a frequent journey, availability, suitability and accessibility of public transport which meets the medical needs of the patient. This HSCB Patient Travel Policy is separate from the DSS support arrangements "Hospital Travel Costs Scheme" for attending hospital appointments in Northern Ireland.

The purpose of this engagement exercise is to produce a single comprehensive policy document summarising the assistance that the Board can make available to patients and carers. The reimbursement under this policy is not means tested and comparison with other health authorities shows it to be the most generous reimbursement scheme in the United Kingdom.

This policy document is intended to explain clearly the services that the HSCB patient travel team will provide and the process for submitting claims as well as the level of financial assistance provided by the HSCB. The policy

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

provides direction and guidance to health and social care staff involved in arranging patient travel.

The Patient Travel Policy affects approximately 2,400 individuals, patients and escorts each year, who seek assistance or reimbursement for travel, accommodation and subsistence related to care and treatment outside Northern Ireland.

This document summarises the key points of the scheme. The full guidance document is available at:

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/publications/Policies/>

Summary of Key Points

Travel	<p>Air travel will normally be arranged and paid for directly in advance by the Board. However, patients can request to manage their own travel arrangements in which case they will be reimbursed by the HSCB (up to a maximum amount) on receipt of proof of costs.</p> <p>In the case of land travel, patients and escorts are expected to use public transport where possible. In exceptional circumstances the use of private taxis will be considered for the whole or part of the patient/client journey. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the public transport rate for mileage.</p>
Accommodation	<p>Patients are expected to arrange their own accommodation and submit valid receipts to the HSCB for reimbursement.</p> <p>Exceptions to this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-booking and direct payment of accommodation by Board staff will be considered where the patient can demonstrate financial hardship or other exceptional circumstance.• Initial one night's stay will be arranged for parents travelling with a paediatric patient.

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

	<p>HSCB will reimburse to a maximum of £85 per room single occupancy and £95 based on 2 people sharing. The Board takes into account London tariff increases and verifies reasonableness with its travel agent provider. These amounts payable will be kept under review.</p>
Subsistence	<p>Patients/Carers may seek reimbursement for the cost of meals or other incidental expenses.</p> <p>Current Policy Where reimbursement is sought individuals are asked to retain and submit receipts to support claims. These will be scrutinised and, where approved as reasonable, will be reimbursed in whole or in part.</p> <p>Proposed change In order to remove the need to retain and submit receipts the Board will make available a daily allowance of £15 per approved adult (£5 for children under 5) to cover expenses other than travel and accommodation.</p>
Escorts	<p>The Board will fund one patient escort where this is justified on the basis of clinical need as specified and agreed with the referring HSCT consultant. In exceptional circumstances and where recommended by the referring HSCT consultant additional escorts may also be funded (but see Paediatric Transfers below).</p>
Paediatric Transfers	<p>Belfast Trust has responsibility for paediatric transfers (travel and accommodation) The arrangements for paediatric travel is the same as that for adults with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First night accommodation will be booked for paediatric patients and their families. • The HSCB will approve both parents to travel with children. • Taxis will be considered for paediatric patients and escorts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where a child is travelling for treatment which requires a local or general anaesthesia. ○ Where there is clinical justification demonstrated by the referring consultant. ○ Public Transport is generally the most cost

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

	<p>effective option however a taxi can be used when it is the most cost effective option.</p>
Use of Air Ambulance	<p>Air Ambulance transport is normally authorized by the referring HSCT clinician and may be used where patients are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically ill with a life threatening condition requiring clinical support 2. Seriously ill but stable requiring clinical support 3. Stable and not in need of clinical support but transferring by air ambulance for time critical factors (e.g. Donor organ) or qualifying for other exceptional clinical reasons. <p>Air Ambulance transfer is not appropriate to be used in any other circumstances.</p>
<u>Repatriation</u>	<p><u>Repatriation of Deceased Individuals</u> The HSCB will cover the costs of repatriation of deceased individuals who have been sent outside Northern Ireland for planned treatment organised by the HSCB.</p> <p>In these circumstances the Board may fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard coffin for transportation purposes • Embalming • Removal of remains from funeral parlour or hospital mortuary to airport/seaport. • Return journey to NI for the remains booked at economy rate • Professional fees incurred by the undertaker outside Northern Ireland. <p><u>Repatriation of Living Individuals (discharged patients)</u> The HSCB will cover the cost of repatriation for living individuals in the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patients who have been sent outside Northern Ireland for planned treatment organised by the HSCB 2. Patients who are normally resident in Northern Ireland and receiving unplanned NHS treatment in Britain where there is an urgent clinical reason why transfer to Northern Ireland is necessary

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

	<p>The HSCB does not fund the repatriation to Northern Ireland of individuals on holiday or a business trip who suffer an accident or serious illness abroad. The EHIC scheme covers emergency or immediate necessary treatment within EEA state systems. It does not cover repatriation and individuals are advised to ensure they have appropriate travel insurance before travelling abroad.</p>
--	---

Equality and Human Rights

Throughout the policy development consideration was given to equality and human rights. In addition and in accordance with the statutory duties screening was undertaken and the conclusion was that a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. The screening highlighted there were no major implications requiring a full Equality Impact Assessment. The outcome will be published in accordance with the requirements of the legislation. The outcomes of the screening exercise are also available at <http://www.bso.hscni.net/services/2522.htm>

2 Responding to this stakeholder engagement exercise

You can respond by e-mail or letter.

Before you submit your response, please read Appendix 1 about the effect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on the confidentiality of responses. If you require the documents in another format or language please use the contact details below.

Responses should be sent to:

E-mail: patienttravelconsultation@hscni.net

Written: Patient Travel Team - Consultation
Commissioning Directorate
Health and Social Care Board
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BS

Telephone: 028 95363171

Responses must be received no later than 5.00pm on Friday 27 February 2015.

The questionnaire can be completed by an individual health or social care professional, stakeholder or member of the public; or it can be completed on behalf of a group or organisation.

3 Your views - The Response Questionnaire

Please tell us if you are responding on your own behalf or for an organisation by placing a tick in the appropriate box:

I am responding: as an individual

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

I am responding on behalf of an organisation

If responding on behalf of an organisation please complete this table:

Name:	
Job Title:	
Organisation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Textphone:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	

May we contact you should clarification be required on your response?

Yes or No (please tick a box)

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

Questionnaire

The HSCB will take account of the comments received in this consultation to further develop the policy. The comments will also inform a guidance leaflet for patients travelling for treatment outside Northern Ireland.

		Yes	No	
1	Have you had any personal experience of patient travel service and/or reimbursement from the HSCB?			
	If yes please do you wish to make any other comments about your experience:			
		Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree
2	Do you agree that the arrangements for travel and reimbursement are clear and appropriate?			
	Would you like to add any further comment:			
3	If you do not agree that the policy is clear and appropriate please identify the area(s) in which further clarity is required			
	(a) Travel			
	(b) Accommodation			
	(c) Subsistence			
	(d) Escorts			
	(e) Paediatric Transfers			
	(f) Use of Air Ambulance			
	(g) Repatriation			

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

	(h)Other			
4	The Board will use the comments received to develop a patient travel guidance leaflet for treatment outside Northern Ireland, which will provide detail on (a) to (h) above, after the policy has been finalised. Are there any particular issues which you have not mentioned in this response that you would like to see included?			
		Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree
5	<p>The Board’s current policy on subsistence is that patients/carers may seek financial assistance retrospectively to cover the reasonable cost of meals or other incidental expenses. Individuals seeking reimbursement in this way are asked to submit receipts to support their claims.</p> <p>The Board is proposing to simplify the process by removing the need to keep and submit receipts. Instead, the Board will make available a daily allowance of £15 per approved adult (£5 for children under 5) to cover expenses other than travel and accommodation. These levels are based on the average payments currently being made.</p> <p>Do you agree the proposed change would be helpful and reasonable?</p>			
	Would you like to add any further comment:			

Any Further Comments:

Equality implications

1. This policy was screened for equality and human rights considerations.

A full copy of the screening exercise is included as part of this stakeholder engagement exercise. For further detail see

<http://www.bso.hscni.net/services/2522.htm>

Comments:

2. If you have any suggestions on how the proposals could better promote equality of opportunity, human rights or good relations please give details.

Yes

No

Comments:

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

3. If you have any additional evidence to support the equality and human rights screening activity give details below.

Yes No

Comments:

Responses must be received no later than 5.00pm on Friday 27February 2015

Responses can be emailed to: patienttravelconsultation@hscni.net

Or post to:

Patient Travel Team - Consultation
Commissioning Directorate
Health and Social Care Board
12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS

Thank you for your comments.

4 Appendix 1 - Freedom of Information Act 2000 – confidentiality of consultations

The Health and Social Care Board will provide a summary of responses following completion of the stakeholder engagement process. Your response, and all other responses, may be disclosed on request. The Health and Social Care Board can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this exercise.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Health and Social Care Board in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Health and Social Care Board cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- the Health and Social care Board should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in

Stakeholder Engagement Exercise

connection with the exercise of any of the Health and Social care Board functions and it would not otherwise be provided;

- the Health and Social Care Board should not agree to hold information received from third parties “in confidence” which is not confidential in nature;
- acceptance by the Health and Social Care Board of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner’s Office (or see web site at: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>).

Glossary of Terms

HSCB	Health and Social Care Board
Board	Health and Social Care Board
HSCT	Health and Social Care Trust
ECR	Extra Contractual Referral
S2 (formerly E112)	The S2 (or E112) route is one where an individual seeks access to state-funded treatment in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland.
The EU Directive	<p>The EU Directive route is one where an individual (i.e. not the Board or the HSC Trust) seeks access to treatment in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland in either the state or private sectors. Unlike other options, this arises where the Board considers treatment is available locally or within the rest of the UK within a reasonable time, but a patient has nonetheless opted to seek treatment elsewhere.</p> <p>In essence, you are able to seek healthcare services in any EU state, as long as you would have been eligible for the same services in Northern Ireland.</p>
EEA	European Economic Area
EHIC	European Health Insurance Card
Escort	An escort is someone clinically necessary to accompany the patient to and / or from the receiving Trust or healthcare setting.
Paediatric	Term used to describe medical services which specialise in the care of children.
Repatriation	Return of patient or deceased to Northern Ireland