

Policy

Researchers: NHSBT Patient and Public Advisory Group (PPAG) Reimbursement Policy for Research Related Tasks.

Objective

This document outlines the guidelines for the reimbursement of expenses and payment for time processes incurred by members of the NHSBT Patient and Public Advisory Group (PPAG) and public contributors when contributing to research related tasks.

As a minimum we request that out-of-pocket expenses for all PPAG members are covered by the Research Team when participating in specific projects. This should be included in any grant application; many grant awarding bodies will not consider an application which does not include consideration for PPIE involvement. This will include, but not exclusively, pre- project activities, reviewing documents and joining any management/steering committee. For example:

- the costs of travelling, and if necessary, subsistence, to attend a meeting organised by the Research Team or Research Governance Office for NHSBT PPAG related events
or
- research specific tasks (please note this will need be paid by the research project team from the project specific grant).

This document tells you:

- what expenses the research team must cover or reimburse;
- what NHSBT regards as reasonable expenses;
- how expenses can be paid directly by NHSBT or through reimbursements;
- how to make a 'payment for time' payment;
- how long the payment process should take;
- what to do if there is a problem.

Further information is also included in the appendices

Changes in this version

New Document.

Roles

Who does this policy apply to and who can access the NHSBT PPAG?

This policy applies to all Researchers and external contributors with a link to NHSBT wanting to work with the NHSBT PPAG. Currently, in order to access the NHSBT PPAG a Researcher or external contributor must have a link/affiliation with NHSBT. An affiliation can be via several avenues, for example working

with one of the NIHR BTRU's, an NHSBT Principal Investigator or any department within NHSBT; such as the Clinical Trials Unit (CTU) or Component Development Laboratory (CDL) etc. Someone on the project team needs to have an NHSBT email address, if this is not the case, please contact us at: PPAG.Research@nhsbt.nhs.uk to discuss if your project is one that we can help support.

Process Description

1. Covering PPAG Members expenses

Expenses that are reasonable and necessary will be covered by the research team are explained below. NHSBT expects an offer to reimburse PPAG members for out-of-pocket expenditure that they have already incurred. For example, by claiming back money that they have paid out due to involvement in a research related event or activity. This may be travel or subsistence if it was a long meeting/long distance to travel. If you are unsure what this means in practical terms for subsistence, please do ask. As a general rule, it is if the travelling is over a time which would normally be considered a mealtime. If a PPAG member needs/asks to be reimbursed for expenses, they will need to provide original receipts (or photographs of original receipts) for everything that they outlaid. **Please be sure they know this in advance of being invited to contribute.**

1.1 Expenses the Research Governance Office / Research Team will cover

1.1.1 Travel costs

- Public transport: bus, underground, and trains at standard class or cheaper day rates. If the meeting start time set by the research team requires a PPAG member to travel at peak times, this cost has to be covered or a ticket purchased on behalf of the PPAG member.

1.2 Expenses the Research Governance Office / Research Team may cover (subject to conditions)

1.2.1 Travel costs

- PPAG members are expected you to travel by the most cost-effective mode of transport, however, if a meeting time is set where they must travel at peak times, this will be covered. If a PPAG member chooses to use their own car, mileage will be paid at the standard rate of 59p per mileⁱ;
- Car parking fees may be claimed where these are unavoidable, and where using own car is necessary (see above). NB.// Parking or speeding fines do not qualify for reimbursement;
- Taxis are reimbursed where the circumstances justify the costs incurred;
- For any other transport arrangements, PPAG members will need to obtain prior agreement from the Research Governance Office or research team (for example, flights).

1.2.2 Accommodation

Meetings should always be booked at times that avoid any overnight stays if possible. In exceptional circumstances, where an overnight stay is unavoidable or required, expenses may be reimbursed, or accommodation booked on behalf of the PPAG member. PPAG members are requested to discuss this with the research team prior to booking and the research team should make this clear to any public contributor.

NB If PPAG Members choose to stay with a relative or friend, either before or after a meeting, we are not able to cover any of their costs that may be incurred.

1.2.3 Meals and other refreshments

For meetings and events run by the Research Governance Office we will usually provide meals, snacks and other refreshments. Research teams are also strongly encouraged to do this, as it is usually cheaper than reimbursing PPAG members for the individual refreshment's costs.

Where meals and other refreshments are not provided by the research project teams, PPAG members are requested to retain their receipts, to be included in their reimbursement expenses claim. These expenses may include meal and refreshments when away more than 5 miles from home on PPAG business for more than 3 hours over a recognised mealtime (including over mealtimes while travelling).

Costs for alcoholic drinks will not be reimbursed.

Breakfast (early start)	Must be receipted: - When leaving home prior to 6am AND - Away for more than 5 hours	£5.00
Breakfast (overnight)	Breakfast on an overnight stay must be booked with accommodation where possible. If this is not possible, the claim must be receipted.	£10.00
Lunchtime Meal	More than 5 miles away from home and away for more than 5 hours, including the time between 12:00 and 14:00	£5.00
Evening Meal	Away from base for more than 10 hours and does not return home until after 19:00	£25.00

1.2.4 Expenses relating to internet access and the printing of documents at home, for review

The changes for the Research Teams from mainly face-to-face meetings to online meetings/events/workshops has meant PPAG members using their own internet connection and printing facilities to access and print off documents for review. The Research Governance Office advise where possible that a research team should offer a nominal payment of no more than £10 towards this cost per study, however, it is not mandatory and do we still provide voluntary only opportunities. It will be made clear to PPAG members when advising an opportunity, if it is on a voluntary or paid basis, so that they know what they are signing up for in advance.

Please discuss any of the discretionary payment items between public contributors and Research Teams early on in the relationship to ensure complete understanding by both parties.

1.3 How Researchers make payments to PPAG Members & Public Contributors via NHSBT's finance processes

Reimbursed expenses and payment for time payments are paid directly into a UK bank or building society account. *NB.// the use of other payment methods, e.g., cash or cheque payments are not possible via NHSBT processes, due to financial audit purposes.*

If PPAG members pay for their own expenses and are to be reimbursed after the event (out-of-pocket expenses), they are required to complete and submit the online [Expenses Claim Form](#) (this will be sent automatically to them when they agree to support a research team if it is set up via the NHSBT PPIE

coordinator(s)). The PPIE Officer will contact the research team, to agree the expenses claimed, and will begin the reimbursement process, for the claim to be paid within 20 working days of receipt. Claims are paid by an electronic transfer system directly into their bank account. Claims that are made without receipts will not be paid.

For both 'payment for time' payments and expense reimbursement payments, the PPIE Officer will forward to the research team either a blank or part complete 'Manual Payment Request Form' (FRM/FS/AP/001/1). This is a standard NHSBT process. This form will need to be reviewed and any additional information included, prior to returning to the PPIE Officer (ppag.research@nhsbt.nhs.uk). This form is an internal NHSBT document and is **not** to be circulated to members of the public. It should only be completed and reviewed by internal staff. Completed Manual Payment Request forms will be stored on the G drive by the PPIE Officer.

Information to be included on the Manual Payment Request Form to ensure payment is made in a timely way includes:

- Cost Centre and nominal code for project (if known/ required)
- Claimants full name
- EITHER The Claimants Address, if paying for the first time as they will need to be set up as a 'supplier' OR the Supplier Number assigned to the PPAG member, if they have been paid before.
- The authorised budget holder's signature

The PPIE Officer will review the forms and will then send the required documents to the NHSBT 'Financial Services Manager & Local Counter Fraud Specialist' contact, in Finance: These documents are:

- A completed and signed Manual Payment Request Form
- A PDF copy of the Cognito Expenses Claim Form or an invoice if provided by PPAG member. *If an invoice is used instead of the Cognito Expenses Claim Form, the PPAG members bank details (including their account number, sort code) will also need to be provided.*

In most cases, Finance will aim to process a claim within 20 working days, however, this may take longer on some occasions.

It should be noted that it is good practice to:

- To book travel and accommodation on behalf of the PPAG member to avoid individuals incurring the upfront cost and therefore being temporarily out of pocket.
- Offer members of the public the option of asking for payment at a lower amount or declining a payment and offering to volunteer.
- Offer members of the public another acknowledgement for contribution e.g., vouchers, access to facilities, access to training.
- Inform the member if they 'Pay As You Earn' PAYE tax, this payment is liable for tax payment, and
- Where a person who is registered self-employed NHSBT will ensure they are aware they will be responsible for their own tax (offering the [CEST tool](#) as a way to determine their status)

2. Payment for Time for PPAG members and Public Contributors

As the NHSBT PPAG moves to align more closely with the HRA and NIHR's payment policies, NHSBT will be using a tiered system, where our research opportunities will be advertised as paid or voluntary. This must be clearly outlined in the initial PPAG advert for a research opportunity.

Payments for paid opportunities will vary from project to project, this may be a fixed payment for the day/half day attendance, an hourly rate or any other format agreed in advance. The amount of money to be paid will be outlined and agreed to, prior to a participant attending an event in person or online.

The NIHR's guidance for setting amounts for payment for time can be found here:

- [NIHR public contributor payment policy | NIHR](#)
- [Payment for Public Involvement in Health and Care Research: A guide for organisations on determining the most appropriate payment approach | NIHR](#)

When paying a patient and public contributor for their time, their attendance at these specific events must be recorded for the financial audit trail. The lead researcher for the project or the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) Coordinator for the project, is responsible for obtaining signed confirmation of their attendance in person at the event, meeting, or clinical study. However, the lead researcher for the project or the PPIE Coordinator for the project can sign by proxy when attendance is via tele/video conference. Their attendance at the meeting is noted on the Manual Payment Request Form, when completing this for a 'payment for time' payment.

3. What if there is a problem?

In all cases, if there is a problem, such as a delay in receiving reimbursed expenses, or the amount paid is incorrect, you should contact the NHSBT PPIE Office by email at PPAG.Research@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Definitions

- N/A

Related Documents / References

- N/A

Appendices

A: Brief 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.

CHAPS

CHAPS payments (Clearing House Automated Payment System) is a United Kingdom real-time payment process used for transferring sterling. Funds are cleared the same working day.

Covering expenses

When we talk about covering expenses NHSBT will give you back (reimburse) the money you have spent.

Member of the public/ Public Contributor

By member of the public, we mean patients, potential patients, carers and people who use health and social care services as well as people from organisations that represent people who use services.

Out-of-Pocket expenses/expenditure

The term out-of-pocket expenses refers to expenditure that is required to enable you to take part in an event or activity. At NHSBT this includes travel costs, meals and refreshments.

Reimburse / reimbursement

Money that is given back to you because you spent it in order to take part in an activity. For example, paying back your travel fares for going to a meeting.

If you would like to know more about what we do, please contact us:

Email: PPAG.Research@nhsbt.nhs.uk

PPIE Officer Mobile Phone Number: 07554111742

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-travel-mileage-and-fuel-allowances/travel-mileage-and-fuel-rates-and-allowances>