

If you are referred to hospital or other NHS premises for non emergency tests or treatment you will normally be expected to make your own way there.

Some people are eligible for non emergency patient transport services (PTS) which provide free transport to and from hospital for people who have a medical need for it.

If you are not eligible for PTS you may be eligible to claim a refund of reasonable costs of transport to hospital or other NHS premises through the schemes outlined below.

1. Means Tested Scheme

If you are in receipt of any of the following you may claim help with travel costs:

- If you or your partner receive any of the following qualifying benefits
 - Income Support
 - Universal Credit
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit

(Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance Contributory and Disability Living Allowance are not eligible as they are not income related)

- If you are a war pensioner and the hospital treatment is for your pensionable disablement.
- If you are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate.
- If you are named on a valid HC2 certificate under the NHS Low Income Scheme. Individuals can claim help under this scheme using form HC1 which can be picked up at Community Pharmacies, GP Practices, Citizens Advice Scotland officers or Jobcentre Plus offices
- If you are named on a valid HC3 certificate you might get some help with travel costs.

2. Treatment outwith Scotland - Discretionary Scheme

If you travel outwith Scotland for authorised NHS planned treatment and care, NHS Forth Valley operates a discretionary scheme to assess and reimburse reasonable expenses incurred where appropriate.

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Which Patient Expenses Can Be Refunded?

You can claim for reasonable costs of travel and accommodation for NHS authorised treatment. Refunds will normally be based on what would have been the cheapest suitable mode of transport for your circumstances which in most cases will be public transport. Refunds for some expenses including taxi fares, air fares and escorts require clinical authorisation and these are detailed below.

• What form of transport can I use?

If you travel by car and your claim is approved you will be reimbursed for fuel costs at a mileage rate based on direct distance from home to the treatment centre. The rate of reimbursement is based on the HMRC Fuel Advisory Rate for a petrol engine 1400cc to 2000cc. The reimbursement rate for each financial year will be determined by the Advisory Rate from 1st March.

Where travelling by public transport you should take advantage of any eligible promotions, concessions or discounts where available and use the most cost effective ticket options including advance booking.

If you require a taxi due to health related mobility or a clinical condition this must be supported in writing by clinical staff for a refund to be made.

Air travel can also be refunded if it is the most economical or most appropriate form of transport based on medical needs supported in writing by clinical staff.

• Accommodation Costs

Where you require an overnight stay associated with your treatment, you can claim for the cost of accommodation up to a maximum allowable room rate. Breakfast costs can also be reimbursed within the maximum allowable rate however other meal costs are not refundable.

If you are travelling for an appointment outwith Scotland, you should check in advance if the hospital has available accommodation, which can often be cheaper than other alternatives.

• Escort

You can claim travel costs for an escort if a member of clinical staff confirms in writing that it is medically necessary for someone to travel with you. For children's treatment, costs incurred by an adult escort can be refunded without requirement for clinical authorisation.

For overnight inpatient stays, an escort will be entitled to claim costs equivalent to those associated with admission and discharge only.

• Visitors to patients in Hospital

Travel costs incurred by visitors to hospital cannot be refunded, except for the Parent/Guardian of a baby resident in a Neonatal Unit.

The Parent/Guardian of a baby resident in a Neonatal Unit should refer to the Neonatal Expenses Fund Guidance at www.mygov.scot/neonatal-expenses-fund or make enquiries at the Ward or Cash Office.

- **Travel and Accommodation**

Patients are responsible for arranging their travel and accommodation. When you receive an appointment time, you should plan your journey and any overnight stay as economically as possible taking into account the appointment time and expected length of stay. If you choose more expensive travel or accommodation options a partial refund can be made.

How to Make a Claim

You can claim help with travel costs for up to a **maximum of 3 months** retrospectively from appointment date.

- **Travel Within Scotland**

For treatment within Scotland, claims can be made to the hospital cashier office based at Forth Valley Royal Hospital. This cash office serves all NHS FV sites including Community Hospitals.

The cash office opening hours are as follows:

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| Monday, Tuesday & Thursday | 10am – 12.30pm | 1.30pm – 4.30pm |
| Wednesday | closed | |
| Friday | 10am – 12.30pm | 1.30pm – 3.30pm |

Alternatively, claims can be sent by post to the Cash Controller (tel: 01324 673650) at the following address:

Cash Controller
Financial Services
NHS Forth Valley
Falkirk Community Hospital
Westburn Avenue
FALKIRK, FK1 5SU

Claims must be supported by proof of benefit entitlement.

Expenses claims for treatment within NHS Forth Valley Hospitals must be supported by a Patient Travel Claim Form, issued and completed by clinic or ward staff, to evidence the patient's attendance at hospital.

- **Travel Outwith Scotland**

For costs related to treatment outwith Scotland, send a totalled list of expenses claimed along with all receipts and copy of appointment letter plus any relevant clinical authorisation and bank details (sort code and account number) to the Cross Boundary Finance Department (tel: 01786 457224) at the following address:

Cross Boundary Finance Department
NHS Forth Valley
Carseview House
Castle Business Park
Stirling, FK9 4SW

- **Exceptional Circumstances**

In exceptional circumstances you can make a request in writing explaining the circumstances and providing full details of total anticipated costs to the Director of Finance, NHS Forth Valley, Carseview House, Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4SW requesting special consideration.

Claiming a refund of Travel and Accommodation Costs



