

# Help with travel costs

Did you know that you might be eligible to  
claim help with your travel costs through  
the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme?



If you would like to receive this document in  
large print, Braille, on CD or in any other languages please  
contact the Patient Transport Bureau on 0300 111 21 31.

# Help with travel costs

## What is the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme?

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS) is part of the NHS Low Income Scheme which also covers other expenses such as prescriptions and glasses. Through it, financial help with travel costs may be claimed by patients who are referred for NHS treatment by their GP (or sometimes by their dentist). Visits to GP surgeries and dentists for routine care, as well as most A&E attendances, are not included.

## Who can claim?

If you receive any of the following benefits you qualify for a full refund of necessary travel costs:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Working Tax Credit with Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit with a disability or severe disability element
- Child Tax Credit (if the award letter confirms income is below the relevant threshold)
- Pension Credit - Guarantee Credit
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

If you are not on these specific benefits but have a low income, you may still be eligible for a full or partial refund through the NHS low income scheme. You can apply for an eligibility assessment for this by using an HC1 'Claim For Help With Health Costs' form (for how to obtain one, see page 4).

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## How much can I claim?

If you qualify, you will be entitled to a full or partial refund of necessary travel costs equivalent to the cheapest reasonable method of travel, which in most cases will be public transport. Taxi fares will not normally be paid unless agreed in advance. If patients use their own cars, the petrol rate is 15p per mile, and tolls and unavoidable car parking charges may be refunded.

## What documents will I need to make a claim?

You must provide your hospital appointment card or letter, original copies of any travel receipts, and proof that you are on a qualifying benefit (or proof of eligibility for the NHS low income scheme or NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate, if applicable).

## Is there a time limit for making a claim?

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, claims must be made within three months.

## Can I claim if I am visiting a patient in hospital?

No. The NHS scheme does not cover visitors, but you may be able to apply for a loan or grant from the Social Fund through your local Jobcentre Plus office.

## Can I claim for someone to go with me?

Only if an escort has been agreed in advance on medical grounds or if a child of 16 or under is being accompanied by a parent or guardian.

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### **What happens if the payment office is closed on the day of my appointment or I forget to bring my documents?**

If you are unable to make a claim on the day you attend, you may be able to return for a cash payment at a later date. Otherwise you will need to use an HC5(T) refund form – see further information below. Please note refunds paid in this way take several weeks to process.

### **How can I get further information?**

The hospital where you are receiving treatment can advise you about making a travel costs claim (at most hospitals this will be the general office or cashier's office), and they will be able to supply the correct forms. Information and advice can also be obtained from the NHS helpline on 0845 850 1166, individual hospital websites, NHS Sussex website [www.sussex.nhs.uk](http://www.sussex.nhs.uk), and the national NHS site: [www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/Healthcosts/pages/Travelcosts.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/Healthcosts/pages/Travelcosts.aspx)

### **Can I claim if I am receiving NHS treatment at a private or independent hospital or treatment centre?**

Yes. Cashier Facilities are available at most NHS Hospitals. If you are visiting a treatment centre where there are no cashier facilities claims must be made using an HC5(T) refund claim form as above.

### **What should I do if I am not happy with a decision that has been made about my claim?**

If you feel you have a medical need but have been declined free transport you should in the case of the first appointment, contact the Patient Transport Bureau (PTB) on 0300 111 21 31 who will advise you of the appeals process.

# Help with travel costs

## Arabic

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على نسخة من هذه المعلومات في شكل آخر،  
فكالحصول عليها:

- مترجمة إلى لغة أخرى  
الرجاء الاتصال على: 13121110030

## Bengali

Bfçe kçc AeÉ HLçV l©-f HC abÉ -f-a Qje, EcjqlZül©f:  
▪ AeÉ HLçV ijoju Aeşçca  
aiq-m AeᄀNÉq L-l -k;Nj-k;N LI|e: 0300 111 21 31

## Cantonese

如果您希望得到本資料的其他版本，比如：

- 譯成其他語言  
請聯繫：0300 111 21 31

## Farsi

اگر تمایل دارید این اطلاعات را به صورت دیگری دریافت کنید،  
برای مثال در یکی از فرمت‌های زیر:

ترجمه به زبان دیگری  
لطفا تماس بگیرید با:  
13121110030

## Urdu

اگر یہ معلومات آپ کو کسی اور شکل میں چاہئے، مثال کے طور پر:  
کسی دیگر زبان میں ترجمہ شدہ  
براہ کرم رابطہ کریں:  
13121110030

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## Polish

Gdyby chcieli Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej formie,  
np.:

- Przetłumaczone na inny język  
Prosimy o kontakt: 0300 111 21 31

## Portuguese

Se quiser esta informação noutro formato, por exemplo:

- traduzida numa outra língua  
Por favor contacte: 0300 111 21 31

## Russian

Если Вам необходима эта информация в другом формате,  
например:

- перевод на другой язык,  
пожалуйста, обращайтесь: 0300 111 21 31