

RELOCATION & ASSOCIATED EXPENSES FOR DOCTORS IN TRAINING

To be reviewed April 2010

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1. **KEY PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 These guidelines are in accordance with Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service and Paragraph 315 of the Terms and Conditions of Service for Hospital Medical and Dental Staff. They are intended to act as supplementary guidance to the terms and conditions of service and assist with their interpretation and practical application.
- 1.2 Doctors should not be financially disadvantaged by reasonable costs incurred through a move in the interests of the service, or to further their training. However doctors are not expected to profit materially from reimbursements in respect of removals.
- 1.3 Relocation Expenses are at the discretion of the employing Trust and the trainee must discuss eligibility with the Trust prior to taking up appointment and making any claim. Where a Doctor remains unsure about eligibility a completed claim form should be submitted for formal consideration.
- 1.4 These guidelines apply to all doctors in a rotational training programme i.e. Foundation Training Programme (Year 1&2) or Specialty Training Registrar StR (Year 1 to 6) or Core Training Programme (Year 1 & 2). Consideration will be given to the eligibility of GP trainees on a case by case basis.
- 1.5 FTSTA's/LAT's will not normally be deemed eligible for excess travel under para 315 but may be considered for removal expenses. It is essential that where a doctor in this category considers that he/she, in their circumstances, is eligible under the terms and conditions below, he/she should make an application for formal consideration by the Trust.
- 1.6 Any doctor who is entitled or believes they have an entitlement must ensure that they submit their claims on a monthly basis. Any claim received more than 3 months after the travel was carried out will not be processed, the claim will be regarded as having expired and the doctor will not have an entitlement. When doctors have completed their employment with the Trust, claims must be submitted no later than the end of the month following termination of employment.

2. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

Relocation Expenses: Terms and Conditions of Service for Hospital Medical and Dental Staff:

- 2.1 **Para 314:** "The provisions of Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service shall apply"

- 2.1.1 **Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service Para 3:** “Assistance shall be granted to employees who are required to change employing authority, or who otherwise have to move home or incur extra daily travelling expenses, in order to satisfy the requirements of their normal professional training”.
- 2.2 **Para 315:** “Practitioners who are required to move house during a rotational training programme may receive reimbursement of removal expenses in accordance with Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service.

“Practitioners who might be reimbursed for moving house in such circumstances may, however choose not to move home on taking up the second or subsequent posts in a rotation but to travel daily the greater distance between their home and the hospital. Similarly if the practitioner has a home convenient to the hospital in which the second or subsequent post in the rotational appointment is to be held the practitioner may elect to travel the extra distance to the hospital in which the previous post or posts are held. In such cases, the practitioner may be paid excess travelling expenses at the appropriate rate according to the circumstances in which the practitioner’s vehicle is used.”

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR RELOCATION

- 3.1 Financial Assistance may be granted to doctors who as a result of their appointment, are required to move home.
- 3.2 The “required to move” test will normally be met if the doctor lives greater than 40 miles one way from the placement with the Trust. Finance will check mileage for consistency.
- 3.3 The new residence should be within 40 miles one way of the new place of work, and the old residence should be greater than 40 miles of the new normal place of work, in order to be eligible for removal expenses.
- 3.4 The doctor may also be required to move home if the post has an on-call commitment which needs them to live within a specified response time/distance. This will be confirmed by the Trust.
- 3.5 Eligibility for payment of relocation expenses will also take account of the following:
- 3.5.1 Length of contract: Appointments for 2 years or under will be considered for relocation/removal of belongings based on 3 quotations with the lesser being paid up to a maximum of £500.

Appointments for over 2 years with the Trust will be considered for the full removal package. (See Trust's Removal Expenses Policy) .

It is anticipated that contracts for Junior Doctors in training will not exceed 2 years with the Trust and therefore relocation expenses up to a maximum of £500 will apply.

3.5.2 Eligible doctors who meet the criteria and are occupying rented or hospital accommodation immediately prior to beginning employment with the Trust may be reimbursed the cost of removal of furniture and belongings up to a maximum of £500.

3.5.3 If a doctors' partner/spouse is eligible to claim relocation expenses, only one will be eligible to receive relocation expenses.

4. TRAVEL IN LIEU OF RELOCATION

4.1 Doctors eligible to claim relocation expenses may be paid excess travelling expenses as an alternative to moving home.

4.2 Doctors who meet the criteria set out in Section 3 above, who would be eligible for reimbursement of relocation expenses but are for good reason not able to move house immediately, may be paid excess travel from their home to the designated place of work for a mutually agreed period after appointment, provided that the proposed interim travelling arrangement are reasonable and safe.

4.3 The mileage that may be paid under these circumstances is the difference between the mileage from home to the nominated "base hospital" and the mileage from home to the new place of work.

4.4 A doctor moving placement within a rotational training programme may choose, under paragraph 315 of Terms and Conditions of Service (TCS), not to move home but to travel the greater distance between their home and the next hospital on the rotation. To be eligible for excess travel under these circumstances the following criteria will be considered:

4.4.1 The doctor must be employed within a rotation, defined as a series of two or more planned placements within a rotational training programme i.e. Foundation Training Programme F1/2 (Year 1&2) or Specialty Training Registrar StR (Year 1 to 6) or Core Training Programme CT (Year 1 & 2). Confirmation of rotational training appointments will be confirmed with the Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency.

- 4.4.2 The doctor must meet the “required to move test” as set out in Section 3.2. The Trust reserves the right to request a copy of tenancy agreement, mortgage and/or utility bills to confirm a doctor’s resident address if necessary (e.g. if the address on the claim form differs from the address given to the Medical HR Department / correspondence address).
- 4.4.3 Payment of excess travel costs should not be agreed where, in the judgement of the Trust, the journey time and or distance involved is likely to be detrimental to the safety of the doctor and/or to the satisfactory performance of the doctor’s duties. In such circumstances, the Trust will seek alternative arrangements such as support with reasonable accommodation costs for a temporary period of time. Doctors must not travel excessively on a daily basis to and from work. It is their responsibility to ensure their personal health & safety is not put at risk.
- 4.5 The mileage that may be paid is the difference between the mileage from home to their nominated base place of work and the mileage from home to the new place of work, as set out in TCS Paragraph 315. Excess travel is paid at the appropriate rate according to the circumstances in which the doctor’s vehicle is used. Essentially, public transport rate is payable where a car is used where travel by public service would be appropriate*. In other circumstances the (higher) standard rate may be payable. HSS TC8 12/2001 sets out the criteria to be used when deciding which rate is appropriate.
- *Following consultation with a range of parties, including BMA, NIMDTA etc, the Trust recognises that there are current barriers to recruitment of junior doctors owing to the Trust’s geography. While this remains the case, the Trust considers that it is inappropriate to differentiate between doctors who have access to public transport and those who do not. While the recruitment issue remains live, the Trust will consider the reimbursement of travel expenses at standard rate.*
- The ongoing need for this requirement and the extent to which it assists with recruitment will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with the Trust’s Local Negotiating Committee and NIMDTA.*
- 4.6 The doctor will be required to complete a “Relocation / Excess Travel Eligibility for Doctors in Training” form at **Appendix 1** to confirm their rotational details and identify their home address, nominated base place of work and relevant mileage.
- 4.7 The base hospital for Junior Doctors in Training will normally be considered the hospital where the majority of time was spent or the

hospital which is most convenient to the Doctor's home in which he/she has worked or will work (as advised). This must be identified on the Relocation & Excess Travel Eligibility for Doctors in Training form (See Appendix 1). The base selected must remain for the duration of the doctor's training programme across all Trusts.

5. PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Relocation Expenses

- 5.1 Relocation expenses will be reimbursed from UK port of entry only.
- 5.2 Doctors should obtain authorisation for reimbursement of relocation expenses from Medical HR Department at Altnagelvin Hospital or Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital before making any firm arrangements.
- 5.3 Expenses will not be reimbursed unless official receipts or other relevant documentation are provided. Three quotations should be supplied for removals and the Trust will pay the lowest of the 3 quotations, subject to a maximum of £500. For small removals, use of own car / reimbursement of a self-hire vehicle and fuel may be acceptable.
- 5.4 No payment of relocation expenses will be made until the doctor has commenced in post. Claims for reimbursement of removal expenses should normally be made within 3 months of incurring authorised expenditure. Reimbursement will not be made to third parties.
- 5.5 Doctors will be required to sign an undertaking that they may be required to repay a proportion of any relocation expenses received if they leave the Trust prior to fulfilling the contract. The proportion will be in accordance with the worked element of the contract of employment against the total length of that contract of employment.

Excess Travel in Lieu of Removal

- 5.6 Doctors should complete the Relocation / Excess Travel Eligibility for Doctors in Training form at **Appendix 1** and return to the Medical HR Department to check and confirm eligibility.
- 5.7 Eligible doctors will be required to submit a completed Mileage Classification form (applicable only in Southern Sector) and Vehicle Registration Certificate to Medical HR before any expense claims can be processed. Expenses Claim forms should be completed and submitted to Accounts Payable on a monthly basis.

- 5.8 Doctors, during their F2 rotation, if eligible, will be paid excess travel expenses by their Host/Lead Trust. However completed expense claim forms must be signed off and submitted in the normal way in the current place of work.
- 5.9 Doctors who are judged not to be eligible for reimbursement of excess travel will be advised of the reasons for this decision.

6. APPEAL PROCESS

- 6.1 An individual doctor who feels that he/she has been unfairly treated in relation to removal expenses provisions may pursue this matter as a grievance in accordance with the Trust's Grievance Procedure.