



# Healthcare travel costs scheme

## Quick guide for patients

### Help with travel costs

Under the healthcare travel costs scheme (HTCS) financial help is available for patients who do not have a medical need for ambulance transport but need help with travel costs when attending hospital for treatment as an inpatient, or for outpatient appointments.

**Please note:** travel to emergency department (ED) appointments is only covered if in the appointment relates to ongoing treatment under a consultant.

### Who can claim?

Patients in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support (evidence required e.g. current award letter)
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (evidence required e.g. current award letter)
- Income Based Employment & Support Allowance (evidence required e.g. current award letter)
- Working Tax Credit (should hold valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate)
- Child Tax Credit (should hold valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate)
- Guaranteed Pension Credit (evidence required e.g. current award letter)
- HC2 – Full Help Certificate (to cover dates attending hospital)
- HC3 – Partial Help Certificate (to cover dates attending hospital)
- **Children** – Where children under the age of 16 are travelling for treatment, escort costs may be paid for one parent or one guardian attending the appointment with the child. The parent /guardian must bring relevant benefit proof. Children over the age of 16 but under 20 can claim using the parent or guardian's benefit proof but no escort will be paid.



**We do not refund taxi fares unless travel is impossible by other means and the certificate of attendance is authorised by a consultant/medical person.**

## How to claim

Please bring the following documents to the cashiers' office when you come to hospital – **we are unable to make any payments without them.**

- Your relevant award letter or certificate.
- Completed HTCS claim form, signed by clinic/department/ward staff.
- Receipts for public transport
- Car park ticket to be exchanged for an exit ticket.

Out of hours patient travel claims can be claimed at your next appointment or alternatively an HC5 form can be completed and sent in the post to the address on the form. A cheque will be posted to you (cheques may take up to a month to be processed).

**You must claim within three months of the date of your appointment.**

## Where to claim

Please visit the cashier's office at the east entrance of East Surrey Hospital.

**Opening times:** Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4:30 pm

Telephone: 01737 768 511 x6514/6515

HTCS claim forms can be obtained from the cashiers office or downloaded at:

<http://www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/finding-us/help-with-travel-costs>

**Payment can only be made if all relevant documents are presented.**

## What we will pay

### Public transport

You may claim the cheapest form of public transport available, including concessionary and promotional fares.

### Private car

Car travel mileage rate is paid at 23p per mile for round trip and no fuel receipts are necessary. Your car park ticket will be exchanged for a free exit ticket, but you may not claim for any penalty notices.

### Voluntary car service

Reimbursement for patient travel only (not any additional charge made by the operator). You must provide a receipt from the volunteer driver.

### Escorts

You may claim for the travel costs of one helper to come with you, if this is considered **medically** necessary. An HTCS - Escort claim form **must** be completed and signed by a consultant or senior nurse. Unfortunately, without this we cannot pay for anyone else's travel.

### Visiting an inpatient?

You cannot claim help with travel costs if you are visiting someone in hospital. However, visitors in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits may be able to receive assistance in the form of a social fund payment. Further information about this assistance can be obtained from Jobcentre Plus offices.

### Emergency department (ED) patients

You are entitled to claim if you have had to attend ED for a condition that you are already being treated for in our outpatients department, but this has to be for a pre-existing condition. If you have had to attend ED for any other reason then you are not eligible to claim.

### Patient transport

You may be entitled to patient transport, please speak to your consultant, medical team, or senior nurse.

## Things to remember

Please remember that we are here to help with your travel expenses, all mileage is calculated in the same way.

We are unable to reimburse petrol station receipts.

You may reclaim your travel costs from us in person for your appointments – We can only pay backdated claims to a maximum of 3 months.

If you have any claims that are older than 3 months an HC5 form needs to be completed and posted, together with any travel receipts, to the address given on the form. You may make a postal claim up to three months after your appointment has taken place, or longer in exceptional circumstances.

If you have not brought your proof of benefits with you or cannot prove that you have had an appointment with us, then we will not be able to reimburse you. Under these circumstances you can complete an HC5 form (as above).

Please note that all information in this leaflet has been taken from the Department of Health guidelines.

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Telephone: 01737 231 958

Email: [pals@sash.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@sash.nhs.uk)

Write to: PALS, East Surrey Hospital  
Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH

You can also ask a member of staff to contact PALS on your behalf.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats, including larger text. Contact the PALS office for help.