



A Payment Guide for Working with Patients and People

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Introduction



Solent NHS Trust values the experience, expertise and skills of patients, people and community partners who wish to work alongside the trust in the strategic planning, and improvement of health and care. In recognition of people's contribution, the trust is committed to taking a consistent approach to the payment and reimbursement process. This guide sets out when, how, and how much we offer to pay people, and contains information about expenses, and further support.

Why do we offer payment for people who are working in partnership with us?

Solent NHS Trust wishes to recognise people and communities for their work with us. Reimbursing for expenses and payment for people's involvement is proven to:

- Help to remove or minimise the financial barriers that can prevent or discourage people from getting involved.
- Support diversity, as payment may provide a means for people to contribute.

People should not be out-of-pocket due to their involvement, so reasonable expenses will be covered for most activities.

Outline of our approach

This guide outlines the process and expectations for reimbursing and paying people for working with us.

Out-of-pocket expenses

By 'covering expenses' we mean the reimbursement of costs incurred by people whilst involved in activities for Solent NHS Trust. This includes making arrangements on a person's behalf, or directly covering costs which would otherwise be incurred e.g. pre-booking train or bus tickets, or reimbursing expenses incurred by patients. Out-of-pocket expenses covered include (but are not limited to) refreshments, food, travel, accommodation, and carer support.

Offering payment

This means offering payment for people's time and skills (see section 3 on roles). Some of these roles require significant input of time, experience, skills and expertise, and a level of public accountability. Payments should always be agreed in advance and need approval from senior leads. Please note that payments should always be offered in addition to, and not in place of covering expenses. (Please note that we will only cover additional care costs due to your involvement)

Am I eligible for payment?

We offer payment to anyone who wants to work alongside Solent NHS Trust in a personal capacity, in their own time and not as part of job that they are already being paid to do. Roles and categories should be mutually agreed in advance with scheduled payment dates.

There are three different categories for payment (A,B or C) outlined below.

Role One

People choose to respond or comment on open access engagement opportunities or events.

e.g. responding to online surveys or one-off informal conversations in services such as waiting rooms.

Category

No expenses or payment can be claimed.



Role Two

People who attend workshops/events/focus groups on a 'one off' basis.

e.g. research and improvement activity, service line change or community partners

Category

Out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed and a one-off involvement payment is offered. (An hourly rate, above the National Living Wage, see page 4)



Role Three

People who are a member of a regular working group meeting.

e.g. research and improvement project team, service line co-design, gathering feedback, trust-wide improvement

Role Four

People in roles that demonstrate strategic and accountable leadership and decision-making activities.

e.g. interview/recruitment, specific committee, member of board, patient safety partner



Category

Out-of-pocket expenses are covered or reimbursed, and an involvement payment is offered on a sessional basis. In this category, hours can either be in a block of full or half days or spread out across multiple dates. (£75 for up to 4 hours/ £150 for a full day)



Choosing the right role and category

These questions are here to help leads decide which role and category is appropriate.

1. What skills, expertise and experience do you require from people?
2. What are the time commitments, including preparation, reading, travel, communication, and meetings?
3. What level of responsibility do you expect the person to hold?

For category B, the suggested hourly rate would be 10% above the current national living wage.

	23+	21-22	18-20	Under 18
April 2023	£10.42	£10.18	£7.49	£5.28
April 2024	£11.44	£11.44	£8.60	£6.40

For the most up-to-date figures please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Please note: An alternative trust, local, national or institute payment framework or policy can apply, if the participation is funded or agreed. e.g. research grants, fellowships, project schemes or, national initiative.



What else do I need to consider?

Action should be taken to ensure all people can be involved, therefore leads should discuss the invisible costs to people and young people e.g. access to resources, IT equipment, internet access and stationery etc.

For all in-person activities, light refreshments should be provided or substantial food if involvement is over mealtimes. Alternatively, people should be reimbursed for food purchased, e.g. via hospital restaurants or local shops, at a rate of £5.00 per person per meal.

Please note: payment is only one of many ways you can recognise a person's contribution. It is equally important to find other ways to say thank you, e.g. acknowledge their contribution in writing, support people to develop their skills and experience, or provide opportunities to showcase the impact of their involvement.





Guidance for working with children and young people

Payment applies equally to children and young people as to adults (see categories and roles).

As part of establishing any payment or reward for young people (under 16 years old), the young person and their guardian should be consulted about the appropriateness of payment and how it should be made.

If young people cannot be paid via bank transfer, other alternative forms of payment should be discussed and arranged. It is vital to keep checking with children and young people about what rewards work best for them.

It is also important to be mindful of the legal restrictions that limit the times and number of hours that children and young people aged under 16 can undertake a paid activity.

Involvement should not negatively impact on a young person's health, wellbeing, or education.

Ideally, young people will not be involved during school hours, unless agreed in advance with their school and guardian. Timings for involvement should be appropriate for the young person's age.



What do I need to be aware of when being paid?

Payment may affect people's tax and benefits situation and we recommend that people consult a tax and benefits expert before accepting the payment. Legislation related to employment law, tax, National Insurance, and benefits changes regularly so it is important that you keep up to date with current guidance. For free and confidential advice please contact your local [Citizens Advice Bureau](#) (Telephone 0800 144 8848).

It is the responsibility of the person receiving the payment to understand how any payment from Solent NHS Trust may affect their benefits (including pension) and liability for tax and National Insurance. We can be flexible in how we pay, offering alternative forms of payment to meet individual needs. People have the right to refuse payment if they wish.

Payment is not limited. People can be involved in multiple meetings and programmes within Solent NHS Trust and can claim on each occasion. Human resources and finance departments could raise queries about the employment status relating to the payments. Please be aware that, as a trust, we will provide accurate information about reimbursement and payment made, if asked to do so by the DWP or HMRC.

How will I be paid?

1. The lead for the activity will use the questions in section 3, to determine the roles and category of payment.
2. Roles and payment schedules should be mutually agreed in advance.
3. The lead will populate the claim form including role and category based on guide.
4. The claim form is completed, including any expenses by the person involved with the support of the lead. This can be submitted to the lead on a one off or sessional basis.
5. The lead completes the request for payment form (cost codes and signed) and sends to finance department.
6. Payment will be paid directly into the person's bank account, via the BACS system. The use of non-monetary vouchers or gift can be used as payment, but BACS is the preferred method.
7. Receiving payment can take up to 90 days from submission of claim form to the finance department.



Case study examples

One-off survey

Role 1 - Category A

A patient was approached in a waiting area to share their experience of using the service. They answered a short survey, giving verbal responses to questions.

This person did not receive payment for their participation.

One-off workshop

Role 2 - Category B

A service user was asked to attend and share their experience and ideas for an improvement project aimed at reducing the number of missed appointments. This was a one-off session which required no prior preparation from the patient.

This person was paid an hourly rate in accordance with the National Living Wage for their age bracket.

Regular group meeting

Role 3 - Category B

A patient attended a focus group aimed at improving services. This was a regular monthly meeting.

This person was paid an hourly rate in accordance with the National Living Wage for their age bracket.

Recruitment

Role 4 - Category C

A patient was involved in the recruitment of a new member of staff. They participated in the co-design of the job description, the interview selection process and attended interviews for several candidates on one day.

This person was paid £150 per day.

Further support and guidance

Leads and staff can access support and guidance via the Academy of Research and Improvement or the Community Engagement and Experience Team.

This guide has been developed in collaboration with patient, public and communities with Solent NHS Trust and national guidance of:

- [NHS England \(2021\) Working with our patients and public voice partners. Reimbursing expenses and paying involvement payments. Version 3. London: NHS England](#)
- [National Health and Care Institute for Research \(NHIR\)\(2022\) Payment guidance for members of the public considering involvement in research. Version 1.3. London: England](#)

