

### 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.

### How can I get further information?

The hospital you are receiving treatment from can advise you about making a patient travel claim and 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:

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust: [www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk)

NHS Plymouth: [www.plymouthpct.nhs.uk](http://www.plymouthpct.nhs.uk)

Or the national NHS website:

[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, If you are receiving NHS funded treatment. As there are no cashier facilities at these sites, claims must be made using an HC5(T) refund claim form.

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

Please contact the relevant Patient Advice and Liason Service (PALS).

- Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust: 01752 517657, or email [pals@phnt.swest.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@phnt.swest.nhs.uk)
- NHS Plymouth: 01752 435204. or email [pals.pct@plymouth.nhs.uk](mailto:pals.pct@plymouth.nhs.uk)

## Help with travel costs

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

### What is the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme?

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HCTS) is part of the NHS Low Income Scheme which also covers other expenses such as prescriptions and glasses. Through it, financial help is available for patients who are referred for NHS Treatment by their GP (or sometimes by their dentist). Patients can not claim for visits to GP surgeries, dentists for routine care, and most A&E attendances..

### 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 Jobseekers 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

If you are on a low income but not in receipt of these specific benefits, you may still qualify for a full or partial refund and can apply for an assessment by using an HC1 'Claim For Help With Travel Costs' form which is available from the [Cashiers Office, Level 07, Derriford Hospital](#).

To make a claim on the day of your appointment or admission please go to the [Cashiers Office, Level 7, Derriford Hospital](#). Alternatively if you are attending the [Royal Eye Infirmary](#), please go to the [General Office, Ground Floor, Royal Eye Infirmary](#).

### 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. Patients are expected to take advantage of any concessionary fares, and taxi fares will not normally be paid unless agreed in advance as medically necessary by your doctor. For patients using their own cars, the refund (petrol rate) is 13p per mile and tolls and car parking charges may also be refunded.

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

You must provide your hospital appointment card or letter, original copies of any receipts and proof that you are on the correct benefit, or your HC2, HC3, 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 of the appointment or admission.

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

The Cashiers Office is open as follows:

Monday – Thursday	09:30 - 16:30
Friday	09:30 – 16:00

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 which is available from outside of the [Cashiers Office, Level 07, Derriford Hospital](#). . Please note refunds paid in this way take several weeks to process.

### 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.