

Help with travel costs

Patients (and sometimes an escort) may be entitled to help with travel costs, parking costs and toll charges to health appointments, which are under consultant care or referred by a GP or dentist.

Help is available to anyone on specific benefits:

- Income support
- Income- based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Exemption certificate from Tax Credits

Many other people on a low income, with savings below £16,000 can also have help with costs, but need to apply for a certificate to confirm this, using form HC1.

Refunds of costs for those eligible can be reclaimed at the hospital if you can show proof of entitlement, or by post up to three months after your journey using form HC5(T). You can collect forms HC1 and HC5(T) at hospitals.

To find out more, ask for leaflet "Help with Health Costs HC11 April 2009" from any healthcare service. Devon Primary Care Trust (PCT) policy on refunding travel costs is available on www.devonpct.nhs.uk

Travel cost appeal process

If you are unhappy with a decision about travel costs refunds made by Devon PCT, you can ask to speak to the cashier's line manager to appeal. For further help contact PALS on 0845 111 0080

Comments or concerns

If you have comments or concerns about your healthcare and would like help in confidence, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) of Devon PCT on 0845 111 0080 or pals.devonpct@nhs.net

Further help.

Each major hospital in England has their own PALS which can be contacted via the hospital telephone number or website for help with any concern.

Transport advice for Devon patients from August 2009

This leaflet offers you information on all the options and advice on how to choose the best form of transport for you.

You have the following options:

- Public transport
- Using your own car or going with friends or family
- Taxi
- Community transport/voluntary car schemes
- NHS transport

Please be as independent as you can, leaving supported options for those who need them.

Advice before you choose

This guide provides travel advice only. You should also read any information with your appointment letter, or check with your doctor.

For a copy of this leaflet in another language or format, or further copies, please phone 0845 111 0080



Using buses and trains

Full details of routes, connections and times are available from Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or at www.traveline.org.uk

First time user?

Ask for “a guide to catching a bus or train”, ring 01392 382905 or email devonbus@devon.gov.uk

Got a free bus pass?

Ask for an appointment at a time when you can use it.

Travelling by car/bus to local hospitals

For information on parking, hospital park & ride and local buses:

Barnstaple, North Devon District Hospital, EX31 4JB
01271 311687 www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk

Exeter, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, EX2 5DW
01392 406069 www.rdehospital.nhs.uk

Plymouth, Derriford Hospital, PL6 8DH
01752 792929 www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk

Taunton, Musgrove Park Hospital, TA1 5DA
01823 343536 www.somerset-health.org.uk

Torquay, Torbay Hospital, TQ2 7AA
01803 654303 www.sdhct.nhs.uk

Devon Community Hospitals

There are 26 community hospitals. Details from NHS Direct 0845 46 47 www.devonpct.nhs.uk or www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk

Using taxis:

Some companies have wheelchair accessible vehicles. One fare covers you and friends/family travelling to support you and takes you door to door: often the quickest option. Ask for recommendations from friends/neighbours/community transport. Check costs and reclaim rules at your destination before you book.

Community transport/voluntary car schemes

These offer help to frail, elderly, disabled or rurally isolated people. Schemes use volunteer drivers and provide cars/wheelchair accessible transport and may be able to give some assistance to passengers from their

house to the car and back. They may charge up to 45 per mile. Your local GP surgery or Single Point Of Contact (SPOC: see page 3) can help with local information.

Devon NHS supported patient transport

Advance booking essential. Free transport is available to patients who are considered medically unfit to travel by other means, e.g. whose condition would be affected by other options; who need skilled care on the journey; who need skilled manual handling to leave their home, or anyone who might be at risk or a risk to others travelling by other options. Space for escorts is limited.

Charged car schemes using voluntary drivers are available in some areas. Rules on who can use them and what is charged vary. Cash payment is usually required at the start of the journey. Space for escorts can be booked.

[Journeys to Torbay, Ashburton, Bovey Tracey, Brixham, Dartmouth, Dawlish, Newton Abbot, Paignton, Teignmouth, Totnes hospitals, and specialist clinics elsewhere provided by staff from South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.](#)

Car scheme help is available to those without other options, who cannot use public transport but can travel in a car with assistance from a driver. Book on 01803 654303.

Journeys to other Devon hospitals and other areas

Car scheme help is provided for patients travelling frequently to hospital – 3 or more trips in one week, 10 or more in a month.

Where to get help

Not sure where to start? For information, advice and help to book any option, contact your nearest NHS supported SPOC, open weekdays only.

If you can't use the telephone, you can ask health staff, carers or family members to ring for you.

Exeter, East Devon and Teignbridge	01404 46529
Mid Devon	01884 242099
North Devon	01271 314332
West Devon and South Hams	01822 617525
Plymouth	0845 0539100
Torbay	01803 654303