

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme

Quick guide for patients



This advice and guidance is for patients attending the John Radcliffe, West Wing or Churchill Hospitals in Oxford or the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS) is a Department of Health scheme which allows patients on a low income or specific benefits to claim their travel costs to hospital.

Who can claim

Patients are eligible for reimbursement if they are in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- **Income Support** (evidence required, e.g. award letter)
- **Guarantee Pension Credit** (evidence required, e.g. award letter)
- **Jobseeker's Allowance** (income based)
- **Income Related Employment & Support Allowance** (evidence required, e.g. award letter)
- **HC2 Certificate** (full help) to cover dates attending hospital
- **HC3 Certificate** (partial help) to cover dates attending hospital
- **Working Tax Credit** (should hold valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate)
- **Child Tax Credit** (should hold valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate)

If you are on a low income but not in receipt of any of the above benefits you may be eligible to claim using forms HC1 and HC5. These forms are available from the Cashiers Offices.

How to claim

On the day you come to hospital, you or your representative can take the following documents to the Cashiers Office.

- ✓ Completed HTCS claim form, obtained from and signed by a member of staff in the clinic, department or ward.
- ✓ Proof of entitlement (as described in the previous section). The Cashiers Office will tell you if you need to bring this with you on other occasions.
- ✓ Valid receipts for public transport and/or car parking.

Payment will only be made if ALL the relevant documents are presented.

Claims **must** be made within three months of the date of appointment. **Retrospective payments** claimed by post will be paid by cheque.

What will be paid

Public transport	This will be calculated on the cheapest form of public transport available, including concessionary and promotional fares.
Private car	This is based on the current rate per mile to and from the patient's home address, plus car parking charges. (Patients cannot claim for penalty notices). Google Maps is used to determine the shortest mileage. The mileage rate paid is published by the Cashiers Office.
Voluntary Car Service (VCS)	Reimbursement for patient travel only (not any additional charge made by the operator). You must provide a receipt from the volunteer driver.
Taxi	As a rule taxi fares will not be refunded, but will be paid at private car rates as above. Patients will be assessed on an individual basis.

Escorts

Patients may claim for the travel cost of one escort if this is considered **medically** necessary. To claim for the cost of an escort the relevant section of the HTCS claim form **must** be completed by a member of the **medical** staff.

Fraud

Fraud is unacceptable in the NHS and the Trust has in place a robust mechanism for checking claims. If fraud is suspected it will be reported to our local Counter Fraud Specialist.

Appeals and complaints

If you are unhappy with a decision to refuse payment, or with the amount you have been reimbursed, please write to:

The Senior Cashier Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust
Churchill Hospital
Headington, Oxford OX3 7LJ

Other useful information

Cashiers Offices

John Radcliffe Hospital
Level 3, main hospital
Tel: 01865 221602

LG2, West Wing
Tel: 01865 231009

Churchill Hospital
East Entrance
Tel: 01865 225023

Horton General Hospital
Tel: 01295 229044

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

John Radcliffe / Churchill Hospitals 01865 221473 / 740868
Horton General Hospital 01865 229259

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme Policy and Guidance is available on the Department of Health website: www.dh.gov.uk

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

Senior Cashier
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Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust
Oxford OX3 9DU
www.oxfordradcliffe.nhs.uk

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