

Public involvement: payment and expenses policy

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Next review: February 2029

This document explains why, when and how we pay expenses and involvement payments to members of the public and others who get involved with our work. It is in three sections:

- a policy for out-of-pocket expenses
- a policy for involvement payment
- a list of resources which may be helpful.

Who is it for?

- people who are involved with us as part of one of our strategic groups (eg. Public Voice Forum), patient advisory groups or other public involvement activity, including one-off and ad-hoc involvement.
- people who are not having expenses for participating covered in another way, such as by an employer or another organisation they work with.

All payments under this policy are at the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) discretion. **Before you incur any costs, please talk to your NMC contact** about the application of the policy or the expenses you may need to claim for.

If anything is unclear, please let us know and we will discuss it with you in more detail.

At a glance: public involvement payment and expenses policy

Involvement payment rates

Half day meetings (up to four hours): £82.50

Full day meetings: £165

Hourly rate for ad-hoc or additional involvement: £16.50

Out of pocket expenses

For meetings or activities where you may incur expenses, the NMC can cover the following:

- Travel costs to and from meetings
- Food and drink
- Overnight accommodation if required
- Childcare or carer costs
- Interpreter costs (BSL or language interpreter)
- Personal carers or assistants for disabled people

All expenses must be agreed in advance with your NMC contact. Please go to page Annexe 1 (page 5) for information on when expense reimbursements are applied and the amounts you can claim.

Involvement payment and expenses policy: introduction

What do we mean by public involvement?

1. The NMC sees public involvement as working with members of the public to inform and shape our work.
2. We believe in building in genuine, appropriate engagement and involvement from an early stage and in a meaningful way across everything that we do. It's about getting people involved at the point of understanding problems, developing ideas and identifying where and how we can change for the better.
3. Involvement can happen in many ways – we might ask for your ideas about new policies we're developing; or we might work together to develop materials aimed at members of the public.
4. Your involvement normally leads to some sort of change in the way we do things; your views might inform and influence a policy review, for instance.

Why do we need a policy?

5. The NMC is primarily funded by registration fees paid by the nursing and midwifery professionals on our register. As with all of our work, we are committed to making prudent and appropriate use of NMC resources.
6. We want to collaborate with members of the public and learn from their lived experience of health and social care, as well as working with professionals, students and partners. We respect the time, energy and expertise that people share with us, and we want to ensure we involve individuals from a range of backgrounds and lived experience.
7. You can choose whether or not you are paid for your involvement and ask to be paid a lower amount if it will be detrimental to your circumstances. We can provide you with a letter providing a written explanation of your involvement to show the Jobcentre or benefits agency, if required.
8. We will tell you who your named NMC contact is and how to reach them. Please talk to your NMC contact if you have any questions.

Payment of expenses

9. We don't want you to be out of pocket because of your involvement with us, and as such we will cover any reasonable expenses you incur through your involvement.
10. We will cover travel, subsistence, accommodation, caring arrangements and interpreters where necessary to support participation.
11. Our full policy with details of limits and how to claim can be found in annex 1.

Payment for involvement

12. We value your time, and the skills, experience and expertise you bring to our work. If you are taking part in one of our strategic groups (eg. Public Voice Forum) or an advisory or working group where payment applies, we may provide an involvement payment. We value the contributions you make to our strategic group, and payment is one way in which we aim to support you to participate.
13. Providing payment helps to support inclusion of people who otherwise might not be able to be involved.
14. When we reference involvement, this is distinct from employment by the NMC. While you are engaged with a strategic group you are not employed by the NMC or considered an employee.
15. We would recommend seeking reliable benefits or tax advice (please see annex 3 for resources).
16. Our full payment for involvement policy is available in annex 2.

Annexe 1 – Out of pocket expenses policy

Introduction

1. The Nursing and Midwifery Council is committed to actively engaging with and empowering the public, professionals on the register, partners and others affected by our work wherever possible.
2. Our aim is to actively seek input from those with lived experience to inform and help improve our work. This may be through a variety of methods, including being a member of a strategic group.
3. We respect the time, effort and expertise that people bring to these activities, including sharing their experiences. We want to involve a diverse range of people in our work, and we don't want the people involved to be out of pocket.
4. This policy is for people who are involved with us as part of one of our strategic, working or advisory groups and who do not have their out of pocket expenses covered by another source (such as an employer or another organisation they work for). It sets out:
 - a. Details of what you can and cannot claim for
 - b. How payment will be made
 - c. How long it will take to be paid
 - d. Expense reimbursement process
5. The policy cannot cover all circumstances. If you have queries or would like to discuss the policy in more detail, please get in touch with your named contact at the NMC.
6. Payment of expenses does not create a contract of employment between the NMC and the recipient.
7. In some circumstances, we are also able to make an involvement payment for work with the NMC. See annex two for details.

What can you claim for?

Travel

8. We ask you to use the most economic mode of transport that allows reasonable travel time. If you have accessibility requirements or particular needs, we would be happy to discuss these with you in advance. Any variation from the policy will be considered on an individual case by case basis.
9. If you prefer, we can book your travel on your behalf but we ask for at least four weeks' notice where possible for this to ensure we get the best value for money.

10. Tickets should be booked with fixed departure times unless there is no cost difference or there's a demonstrable need for flexible tickets. Tickets cannot be changed if a meeting finishes earlier than expected.

11. Rail, bus, tube and coach travel will be reimbursed at cost (for standard class travel only).

12. Taxi use is permitted in the following circumstances:

- a. where there is no public transport option
- b. where several people are making the same journey and a taxi would be more cost-effective than the combined fares on public transport
- c. where access requirements would make use of public transport an inappropriate option
- d. in exceptional circumstances, and with prior agreement with us - for example, early morning or late evening travel.

13. Private vehicles may be used where this is more convenient

14. Mileage allowance rates for using a private vehicle or bicycle are set out below:

	Amount reimbursed per mile
Cars and vans	45 pence per mile
Motor cycles	24 pence per mile
Bicycles	20 pence per mile

15. Air travel may be used where it is the most practical and economic means of travel. UK flights should be standard class.

16. We will not reimburse any charges or fines incurred eg. parking tickets or penalty fares.

Daily subsistence (food and drink)

17. We will reimburse costs for food and drink whilst you are working with us within the below limits:

- a. up to £10 against receipts for breakfast – only applies where you need to leave home before 6am.
- b. up to £10 against receipts for lunch – only applies if lunch isn't provided at the meeting or event you're attending. Where applicable, only one claim per day is permitted.

- c. up to £25 against receipts for an evening meal – only applies if you'll be getting home after 9pm or where an overnight stay is required, and an evening meal is not included in the cost of the hotel.
- d. alcohol **will not** be reimbursed under any circumstances and cannot be approved by exception.

Overnight accommodation

18. We will pay for overnight accommodation in the following circumstances:

- a. for the night preceding the engagement if the start time means having to leave home before 06:00.
- b. for the night following the engagement if the finish time means arriving home later than 21:00.
- c. for the night(s) between successive engagements where the accommodation cost is similar to or less than the cost of travel.
- d. for health or reasonable adjustment reasons.

19. Overnight accommodation and meals on Saturdays will not normally be permitted.

20. Regional financial caps are as follows*:

Region	Maximum room rate per night including breakfast
Belfast	£109
Cardiff	£92
Edinburgh	Jan - April £130
	May to September £160
	October - December £130
Central London*	£210

London Stratford	£175
Other	£110

* Regional caps as of January 2026

Child and other caring responsibilities

21. If you require childcare or care for a dependent of any age while attending an NMC meeting or other involvement activity, this will be reimbursed to you up to a maximum daily rate of £65. Alternatively, the NMC can pay the carer directly upon receipt of an invoice.
22. Child/dependent costs will only be reimbursed when the care is not normally in place for that period of time, and it is required to enable you to engage with us.
23. Care costs may only be claimed where you are the parent, guardian or primary carer and have daily responsibility for the child or dependent in respect of whom the allowance is claimed.
24. Where reimbursement is needed to provide care, this is looked at on a case-by-case basis and should be agreed in advance with your NMC contact.

Interpreter

25. We will arrange for an interpreter to attend and support you if they are required to enable you to engage with us fully.
26. This includes language interpreters, Sign Language or other interpreters to support access (for example a palantypist or braille)
27. Please let us know in advance if you require an interpreter.

Personal assistants

28. We will reimburse the cost of a personal assistant accompanying you to a strategic group or event, where it is necessary to allow you to engage with us and participate fully. Alternatively, the NMC can pay directly upon receipt of an invoice.
29. Personal assistant costs will only be reimbursed when the personal assistant is not normally in place for that period of time, and it is required to enable you to engage with us.
30. Travel for a personal assistant will be reimbursed at the same rate as the member of the group.
31. Please let us know in advance if you require a personal assistant.

32. Payment will only be made against a valid invoice addressed to you or direct to the NMC.

Other requirements

33. If you have any additional requirements to support you to engage with us, please discuss these with your named contact as soon as possible.

34. We ask that you do not make any bookings or payments until additional requirements have been agreed.

How will payment be made?

35. Payment will be made by bank transfer into your bank account.

36. If you do not have a bank account please discuss this with your named contact at the NMC as soon as possible.

How long will payment take?

37. It can take up to three weeks for us to process your payment.

Expense reimbursement process

38. Please use the payment and expense form sent to you with this pack.

39. Claims should be submitted to your NMC contact as soon as you can, and no later than three months after the expense was incurred. Claims are paid by bank transfer directly to your bank account.

40. Claims should include the event or meeting name.

41. Claims will be paid within three weeks of receipt of a correctly completed claim.

42. Please submit your claim form to your named NMC contact.

43. Itemised receipts are required for all expenses.

44. Receipts should be scanned to PDF or in photo format and emailed to your named contact along with the claim form. If you would like any support with completing the form, please let us know - we would be happy to help you.

45. We ask that you keep original receipts for 12 months for audit purposes.

Annexe 2 – Involvement payment policy

Introduction

- 1 The Nursing and Midwifery Council is committed to actively engaging with and empowering the public, professionals on the register, partners and others affected by our work wherever possible.
- 2 Our aim is to actively seek input from those with lived experience to inform and help improve our work. This may be through a number of ways, including strategic groups and policy development.
- 3 We respect the time, effort and expertise that people bring to working with us and sharing their experiences. We want to involve a diverse range of people in our work and have an involvement payment to support this.
- 4 This policy is for people who are involved with us as part of one of our strategic, advisory or working groups and are eligible for involvement payment. It sets out:
 - 4.1 Who is eligible for involvement payment
 - 4.2 What you will be paid for
 - 4.3 The amount you will be paid
 - 4.4 How payment will be made
 - 4.5 How long it will take to be paid
 - 4.6 The impact on benefits payment
 - 4.7 The impact on tax payment
- 5 The policy cannot cover all circumstances. If you have queries or would like to discuss the policy in more detail, please get in touch with your named contact at the NMC.
- 6 We will also cover out of pocket expenses which you incur through your involvement with the group. Please see annex 1 for details.

Who is eligible for involvement payment?

- 7 Involvement payments will only be made to members of NMC strategic groups, and working and advisory groups where applicable, who are participating because of their background, lived experience or their connection to a particular community.
- 8 Members of the public who take part in ad-hoc and one-off involvement opportunities (eg. user testing, focus groups) will also be eligible to receive payment.

- 9 We welcome input from partner organisations such as other regulators and charities but involvement and any expenses payments will only be made on request and under the following circumstances:
 - 9.1 the organisation has limited funding/low financial turnover
 - 9.2 and their capacity to engage is limited by low staff numbers and/or high levels of demand on their time.
10. Involvement payments do not create a contract of employment between the NMC and the recipient.

What will you be paid for?

- 10 If you are on a strategic, working or advisory group, you will be paid for attendance at meetings, whether those are in person or virtual. Payment rates normally include time for any required advance reading and preparation unless otherwise stated.
- 11 Payment also applies to one-off and/or ad-hoc public involvement activities outside of strategic or other formal groups.
- 12 You will always be told if payment applies and the amount you will receive in advance.

The amount you will be paid?

- 13 You will be paid the following:
 - 13.1 £165 for a full day engagement (more than four hours)
 - 13.2 £82.50 for a half day engagement (up to four hours)
 - 13.3 £16.50 per hour for ad hoc engagements (to be agreed in advance)

How payment will be made

- 14 Payment will be made by bank transfer.
- 15 Please use the payment and expenses form sent to you with this pack.
- 16 Claims should be submitted as soon as practicable to your NMC contact, and no later than three months after the expense has been incurred. Claims are paid by bank transfer.
- 17 Claims should include the event or meeting name.
- 18 Claims will be paid within three weeks of receipt of a correctly completed claim.

Impact on benefits payment

- 19 If you receive benefits the rules on part time earnings can be complex. The rules set limits on the amount you can be paid and the number of hours you can be paid for.
- 20 Different benefits have different limits and they can change so it is really important to speak to an appropriate professional before you receive payments. Please remember, you can receive payment for involvement as long as it is within limits defined by your benefits.
- 21 If you are receiving benefits because of your health condition or a disability which means you are unable to work, receiving involvement payments does not always need to impact your benefits. However, you will need to make sure that the Jobcentre Plus understand that your involvement with us is not work.
- 22 If you think receiving an involvement payment will have a negative impact on your benefits, please speak to your contact at the NMC. You may wish to be involved without receiving a payment or to receive a lower amount so it is in line with your benefit rules.
- 23 You will be responsible for notifying the DWP or local council if you get any benefits that could be affected by this income.

Impact on payment of tax

- 24 Involvement payments will normally be subject to tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 25 You will be responsible for paying your own tax or N.I. contributions if liable.
- 26 If you receive a pension, involvement payment will be treated as 'taxable income' along with any income from your State Pension and personal/company pensions. This may impact related benefits such as Pension Credits, Housing Benefit and Council Tax support. We recommend speaking to the Pension Service.

Advice on possible benefits and tax impact

27 If you think you need advice on your personal circumstances and any impact involvement payments could have on you, Annexe 3 (next page) provides some sources of information and guidance.

28 Please speak to your NMC contact if you think you might be affected. They cannot provide benefits or tax advice but will signpost you to the best source of guidance for you.

Annexe 3 – Resources

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) England and Wales

You can find your local CAB either on the [Citizens Advice Bureau website](#) or by telephoning 0800 144 8848 (for England) or 0800 702 2020 (for Wales).

Citizens Advice Scotland

Call Scotland's Citizens Advice Helpline free on 0800 028 1456 - you'll reach an interactive service which will connect you to your local Citizens Advice Bureau or one of our other advice services.

[Benefits - Citizens Advice Scotland](#)

Advice NI (Northern Ireland)

Advice NI can provide advice on a range of benefit issues.

Freephone advice helpline **0800 915 4604**

Email for advice advice@adviceni.net

Website [Benefits | Advice NI](#)

Disability Rights UK

Helpful online source of information and advice on benefits. You can also obtain copies of their factsheets and publications by contacting [Disability Rights UK](#) on 0330 995 0400 (this is not an advice line).

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

The NIHR provides useful payment guidance for members of the public considering involvement [Payment guidance for members of the public considering involvement in research | NIHR](#)

HM Revenue and Customs – for income and tax related queries

[HMRC website](#)

Job Centre Plus

[Contact a Job Centre Plus](#)

Pension Service

<https://www.gov.uk/contact-pension-service>

Telephone: 0800 731 0469

Textphone: 0800 731 0464

[Relay UK](#) (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 731 0469

[Video relay service](#) for British Sign Language (BSL) users - [check you can use the service](#)

Welsh language: 0800 731 0453

Welsh language textphone: 0800 731 0456

Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 3:30pm