



Guidance: GP trainees – reimbursement of home to place of work mileage.

Background:

In July 2019, NHS Employers, the British Medical Association and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) agreed to introduce provisions in the terms and conditions of service for NHS Doctors and Dentists in Training (England) for additional mileage/expenses for GP trainees. This provision allowed doctors working in GP practices to be reimbursed for certain travel costs where they are required to use their personal vehicle when notified by the employer that they are expected to perform home visits.

Schedule 11 paragraph 16 currently states:

“Doctors working in a GP practice setting who are required to use their own vehicle on the expectation that home visits may be required to be undertaken shall be reimbursed for the cost of mileage from home to principal place of work, and any associated allowances”.

The lack of clarity in the above paragraph has caused problems for employing organisations as they have attempted to implement the provision. The provision, as previously written, did not meet the intention of the negotiation parties and has been under review since its publication in September 2019. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, discussions on the matter were suspended.

NHS Employers and the BMA have now reviewed and agreed to revise the above. The new provision will be included in version 9 of the terms and conditions of service for NHS Doctors and Dentists in Training (England). However, to avoid further delays with the implementation of the provision, this jointly agreed guidance provides the necessary information for employing organisations to operationalise the revised provisions. The full wording of the provision as it will be within version 9 of the 2016 TCS is set out in appendix A of this document

Furthermore, this guidance provides clarity for doctors working in GP practices and

employers on work scheduling processes, eligibility criteria, how doctors can submit claims and how employing organisations should process these.

Generic work schedule:

The employer or host organisation shall provide the generic work schedule that sets out the pattern and days of work for a doctor working within a GP practice. The generic work schedule will form the basis of the personalised schedules. The generic work schedule or an alternative document will set out the number of expected visits required to be undertaken by a doctor. This will be confirmed by the educational supervisor in the personalised work schedule. The generic work schedule will also include other items such as the scheduled duties of the doctor that will form the basis for a work schedule.

Any days that mileage is incurred on prior to the work schedule, or an alternative document, being issued is to be paid, unless a doctor has been informed at the start of their placement, by a member of practice staff, that they will not be required to perform home visits until further notice. This is because the doctor will have been required to bring their vehicle to work due to the possibility of being asked to undertake a visit.

Personalised work schedule:

It would be expected that the personalised work schedule reflects the opportunities for learning from home visiting. The GP practice, the educational supervisor and doctor will need to agree in the personalised work schedule which days there is an expectation to perform visits for the working week. The personalised work schedule must be agreed before or within four weeks after the commencement of the placement during scheduled hours of work. As per schedule 4, paragraph 30, an employer or practice may need to amend the specified home visit days within the doctor's work schedule, in response to a change in the circumstances of the doctor, or service delivery needs.

Where a home visit is undertaken which has not been included in a fixed work schedule or is over and above that agreed in a work schedule any such claims would need to be agreed locally and verified by the GP trainee supervisor or practice managers.

Eligibility criteria:

- This provision is restricted to doctors working in GP practice(s) who are required to use their own vehicle for home visits when working in a GP practice placement only.
- This revised provision was agreed and implemented on 27 November 2020 and, all claims can be made from this date onwards. Any claim(s) made under this provision can be made where there is a clearly defined expectation that a home visit will be undertaken; plus, any associated allowances incurred through meeting this requirement.
- Reimbursement will need to take into account any excess mileage allowances paid to the doctor working in the GP practice under relocation policies. Doctors can submit claims for a single journey under both policies, however, doctors will

- not be reimbursed twice for the same mile travelled.
- The claims will cover the cost of home to place of work and return journey
 - There is no cap on eligible mileage except where there is an interaction with excess mileage allowance provisions.
 - The Reserve rate, of 28p per mile, will apply.
 - No deduction of normal commuting costs from value of mileage claims. As such, reimbursement of claims will be treated as a taxable benefit.

Submission and processing of claims:

Employing organisations will need to consider the following points before processing claims:

- Determine and agree an expense system locally to manage reimbursement claims.
- Identify and communicate with existing and prospective doctor(s) who are and will be working within GP practices.
- To ensure all claims are processed within a reasonable timeframe, an employer may need to consider a deadline date for the submission of all claims. However, doctors must be given a minimum of three months from the date of when the mileage was incurred to submit a claim. This will allow practices to approve claims and then be passed to LET's for payment.
- The doctor will need to sign a declaration that verifies their home address (or the address where they are commuting from if that is different), inform the employer of whether or not they are making excess mileage claims and the amount of excess mileage claimed, notify the employer of any changes to their bank/personal details and that they have used their own car with the appropriate insurance cover. The claim will need to be verified and signed off by a GP trainee supervisor, practice manager or a member of staff who is authorised to validate claims from the GP Practice.

Supporting FAQ's

Q- Will this provision apply to FY2 doctors in a GP placement?

Yes, this will apply to all doctors on the 2016 terms and conditions of service in a GP placement who are required to undertake home visits.

Q- How will this be communicated to GP managers and educational supervisors?

NHS Employers will be working with HEE on necessary communications with practice managers and education supervisors to ensure they are made aware of the guidance for this provision.

Q- Do work schedules need to be re-issued if these have already been sent to doctors?

No, this can be clarified in the personalised work schedule.

November 2020

Appendix A

Revised GP home to base mileage provision, as to be included within version 9 of the 2016 TCS

16. Doctors working in a GP practice setting who are required to use their own vehicle on the expectation that home visits may be required to be undertaken shall be reimbursed at the reserve rate, as specified in table 7 of the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook, for the mileage of their return journey from home to principal place of work, and any associated allowances as described in paragraph 23 below.

- a. The days on which a doctor may be, expected to perform home visits should be specified within their generic work schedule or an alternative document providing advance notification that home visits may be required. Further specificity, as required, around when a doctor is expected to perform home visits should be added to the personalised work schedule when the doctor agrees it with their educational supervisor.
- b. When submitting claims for home to base mileage, in line with local processes for claiming expenses, a doctor must either:
 - i. Attach their work schedule to the claim form, or any alternative written advance notice they have been provided by their practice, which specifies the days on which they are expected perform a home visit.
 - ii. Or obtain validation from a GP practice staff member that that they had been advised they would need their own vehicle available due to the potential requirement to perform a home visit that day, when claiming home to base mileage for a day not specified in their work schedule, or any alternative written advance notice the doctor has been received from their practice.
 - iii. Where no detail has been provided within the doctor's generic and personalised work schedules, or any alternative written advance notice, then the doctor must submit a claim for all the days on which they took their vehicle into work due to the possibility of being required to perform a home visit. This claim must be validated by the practice manager or a member of staff who is authorised to validate claims from the GP Practice.

23. Doctors who necessarily incur charges in the performance of their duties, in relation to parking, garage costs, tolls and ferries, shall be refunded these expenses on production of receipts, whenever these are available. However, charges for overnight garaging or parking shall not be reimbursed unless the doctor is entitled to night subsistence. This does not include reimbursement of parking charges incurred as a result of attendance at the doctor's principal place of work, except for where the charge is in relation to the performance of the duties described in paragraph 16 above.