

*Developing people
for health and
healthcare*

**Relocation and
Associated Expenses -
Guidance for
Doctors & Dentists in
Training in the Midlands**

August 2019
Interim Version

Foreword

1. This document sets out the arrangements for the payment of relocation and associated expenses for doctors, dentists and Public Health trainees in accredited HEE training programmes (to be referred to as trainees) appointed to take up post in the Midlands Region on or after 1 August 2019. This will be used by all NHS Trusts who employ trainees in accredited HEE training programmes.
2. The 2016 national Terms and Conditions of Service (Schedule 11, paragraph 28) state that “assistance with relocation expenses, including removal or excess mileage, shall be provided to doctors but the conditions under which expenses are reimbursable and the amount which may be claimed are subject to negotiation and agreement at a local level **except** where another body has responsibility for providing the assistance”. Health Education England accepts this responsibility and therefore the Employer will administer these arrangements on behalf of HEE.
3. The Employer is responsible for administering claims made by Foundation Doctors, Specialty Trainees, GP Trainees and Dentists in training for Relocation and Associated Expenses and then recharging Health Education England as required.

Purpose & Guiding Principles

4. The purpose of this document is to provide clear, reasonable and consistent assistance to all trainees who face the financial costs of moving house to take up training and who are disadvantaged as a result of training programmes which cover large geographical areas.
5. The guiding principles behind the provision of relocation expenses is that a trainee should not be financially disadvantaged by reasonable costs incurred through a move in the interests of the service, or to further their training. However, trainees are not expected to profit materially from public funds used for reimbursement in respect of relocation and associated expenses.
6. These arrangements and the maximum financial allowance payable do not include any costs incurred as a result of accommodation provided following night duty shifts and on call commitments, etc which should be provided by the placement organisation under appropriate Health & Safety policies.
7. HEE will support and facilitate the implementation any national agreements which are developed in relation to green/sustainable approaches to travel and transport in the context of these arrangements.

Eligibility

8. All trainees in training grades from Foundation Year One onwards, who meet the criteria to relocate to take up appointment of a training post **or** who have to rotate to different geographical areas as part of their training programme should be eligible to claim expenses as set out in this document.

Funding Provision for Removal and Excess Mileage

Reimbursement will be provided to an agreed maximum sum for all categories of expenses outlined in this document, inclusive of all removal and associated expenses and excess mileage claims. The maximum sum is £8,000 for the entire period of postgraduate training with up a total of £1000 of the overall maximum sum able to be claimed by trainees in their foundation years (irrespective of where the foundation training took place). The amount claimed during foundation training will be deducted from the overall maximum. For income tax exemption information, please visit the HMRC website at <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-relocation>

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10. It is envisaged that this will allow a trainee to move into the region from other parts of the country or allow a trainee already living in the region to move to a more central location which facilitates commuting to all or at least the majority of the educational placements on the training programme.
11. Where during the course of employment a trainee relocates to a geographical location deemed to be further away from their training programme place of work they will not be entitled to claim any additional excess mileage incurred.
12. Throughout the course of their training programme, eligible trainees may claim excess mileage at the nationally agreed Public Transport Rate when their journey from home to their place of work exceeds 20 miles each way. This recognises the requirement for trainees to be based at different hospitals and other places of work during the duration of a training programme which may cover a significant geographical area and will recompense trainees for expenses that are deemed unreasonable.
13. Any excess mileage claims payable will be subject to the overall maximum expenses limit of £8,000. Individual trainees who can demonstrate exceptional circumstances, for example married or cohabiting trainees who “shared” removal costs; extended training programmes for sub specialist trainees or significantly long commutes due to rotation placements/personal circumstances will be able to apply for additional recompense via the Postgraduate Dean.

Criteria to Claim Removal Expenses

14. In order to be eligible for removal expenses, trainees will be expected to move a minimum distance of 30 miles from the old residence and to live within a ‘reasonable commute’ (which is considered to be a maximum of 20 miles each way using AA Route Planner) of the majority of the hospitals/placements on their rotation.
15. All removal and associated expenses will be reimbursed from UK port of entry only, with the exception of offshore islands such as the Isle of Man, the Isle of Wight and the Scilly Isles for those trainees appointed to a training programme which includes one or more Isle of Man rotations.
16. Trainees appointed via Inter Deanery Transfer will not be entitled to removal expenses except under exceptional circumstances and this must be agreed in advance with the Postgraduate Dean.

Removal Claims

17. The property for which reimbursement of removal and associated expenses is to be made should be of a broadly comparable standard.
18. Trainees who are buying their first property can only claim the cost of removal of furniture and effects (up to a maximum of £500) and for expenses relating to a search for accommodation. No other expenses will be reimbursed in these circumstances.
19. House purchase costs will not be reimbursed to first time buyers or applicants whose existing property is not being sold.
20. One failed purchase may be reimbursed where the trainee is not responsible for the abandonment of the transaction, or the trainee’s withdrawal is entirely reasonable. However, this reimbursement will be included in the maximum limit for reimbursement.
21. Where two trainees are moving together, the maximum allowance claimable for one relocation is £8,000 (ie the allowance is per move not per trainee).

Excess Mileage Claims

22. It is recognised that most training programmes will involve trainees working at numerous placements over a period of up to several years which may cover a significant geographical area and it is accepted that it is not reasonable or practicable to expect trainees to relocate upon every rotation. HEE will therefore provide recompense for excess mileage expenses incurred as a result of rotation when their home to place of work is more than 20 miles each way.
23. The mileage costs that may be paid under these circumstances is the mileage from home to the new place of work less 20 miles (trainees are not eligible for reimbursement of mileage costs for the first 20 miles of their journey as this is not defined as 'excess travel').
24. Under existing NHS Terms and Conditions of Service, only mileage expenses are reimbursable in respect of excess travel - ie there is no entitlement to reimbursement for toll or parking charges. Consideration will be given however, to trainees who are unable to avoid toll charges travelling to their place of work.
25. Trainees appointed via Inter Deanery Transfer are entitled to claim excess mileage as per the arrangements set out in this document provided that their permanent residence is within the local HEE footprint.
26. Payment of excess mileage costs should not be agreed where, in the judgement of the employer and following agreement with HEE via the Postgraduate Dean, the journey time and/or the distance involved is likely to be detrimental to the safety of the trainee, and/or to the satisfactory performance of the trainee's duties/where patient safety will be affected. Excess mileage claims should normally be limited to 50 paid miles each way per day (ie a total of 70 miles each way) or a maximum commute of one hour and fifteen minutes each way (with the exception of inclement weather, accidents etc). It is recognised that individual circumstances will vary and therefore trainees who wish to exceed these normal limits should discuss their personal position with the employer in the first instance.
27. Where daily travel distances are agreed to be excessive, alternative arrangements will need to be considered which address the needs of both the trainee and the service. This may include temporary accommodation expenses subject to a maximum allowance of £650 per month inclusive of one journey home each week. NB: These expenses will be included within the maximum allowance payable of £8,000 except in exceptional circumstances as set out in paragraph 13.
28. Individual trainees cannot sub-let or accept any monies for their permanent residence if claiming temporary accommodation allowance.

Process for Claiming & Reimbursement of Removal Expenses & Excess Mileage

29. Trainees who wish to claim re-imburement of removal expenses should refer to their employer for guidance on local process. Trainees should seek confirmation of eligibility for reimbursement as soon as possible and certainly before incurring any costs and no later than within one calendar month of commencement in post.
30. There is no requirement for the Employer to accept responsibility for expenses incurred if the trainee does not confirm eligibility for re-imburement as set out above.
31. Reimbursement will not be made until the trainee takes up the appointment.
32. Trainees should submit actual expenses claims within three months of the expenditure being incurred.

33. Original receipts in respect of removal expenses will be required as proof of outlay against authorised expenditure. Reimbursement will not be made to third parties. Receipts are not required for excess mileage claims.
34. Removal expenses for reimbursement include costs associated with:
 - Expenses during search for accommodation
 - Expenses associated with house sale/purchase
 - Continuing Commitments
 - Expenses on removal
35. The detailed list of removal expenses eligible for reimbursement and excluded expenses are set out in Appendix 1.
36. Any subsistence claims associated with removal will be paid at the rates set out in Section 18 of the national terms and conditions handbook.
37. Trainees who wish to claim reimbursement of excess mileage/temporary accommodation as set out in paragraphs 22-28 should complete the relevant claim form on a monthly basis.

Commitment of Undertaking by Trainees

38. Trainees who apply for and receive assistance for relocation and associated expenses will be expected to sign an undertaking which confirms that:
 - They are fully aware of the conditions of the arrangements
 - They will notify the employer if they are seeking to recover any expenses (in part or full) from another source, for example partner's employer, excepting any legitimately incurred expenses that were not reimbursed by the trainee's employer
 - They will only submit legitimate and valid receipted claims for reimbursement
 - They will repay the appropriate proportion of any expenses received should they leave their training programme within two years of commencement (excluding Foundation Trainees who would be required to repay the appropriate proportion of any expenses received should they leave their employment within 18 months).
39. Should a trainee resign from their training programme within 2 years, they will be required to repay any expenses received abated by 1/24th for each calendar month of service completed unless the PG Dean formally waives this requirement (exceptional circumstances only).

Appeals procedure

41. Any trainee who feels that he/she has been unfairly treated in relation to their claim for Relocation and Associated Expenses may write to the Postgraduate Dean setting out the reasons for the appeal. The Postgraduate Dean will review each case based on any written evidence submitted and will provide a written response within 4 weeks. There will be no further right of appeal.

Review

42. These arrangements will be subject to further review on 1st April 2020 as part of the national review of the DHSC Education Tariff guidance and HEE's desired approach to move towards a single consistent approach to relocation and associated expenses arrangements.
43. HEE will engage with the BMA and other key stakeholders in this review.

Expenses for Reimbursement under the HEE Removal & Associated Expenses Guidance

Search for New Accommodation

- Whenever relocating, trainees are entitled to be reimbursed for a maximum of two preliminary visits to the area of their new employment in search of accommodation.
- Expenses for preliminary visits may be reimbursed; these cover accommodation and subsistence for a maximum of four nights and return travel at public transport rate or standard rail fare, for the trainee and their immediate family. This re-imburement is included within the maximum allowance available.

House sale

- Solicitors' fees
- Estate agents' or auctioneer's fees
- Incidental legal expenses

House purchase

- Solicitors' fees
- Estate agents' or auctioneer's fees
- Finder's fees
- Stamp duty (reimbursed to the order of the lower value of either the old permanent residence sold or the new permanent residence purchased)
- Land registration fees
- Survey fees
- Incidental legal expenses

Storage & Removal of Furniture & Effects

- Storage of furniture and effects costs for up to a maximum of 12 months where the necessity for storage arises from the move
- Extra costs of insuring furniture in transit or in store will also be met as appropriate
- Costs of removal of furniture and effects from the old home to the new home which can include a packing/unpacking service.
- NB: Before storage and/or removal of furniture is agreed, three competitive quotations should be obtained for approval by the Employer. Re-imburement will be limited to the lowest quote. For small removals, reimbursement of a self-hire vehicle and fuel would be acceptable

Travel Expenses on Removal

- Trainees and their dependants may be reimbursed for travelling expenses incurred on removal from the old accommodation to the new property accommodation at public transport rate, or standard rail fare.
- Trainees can claim for one return visit to their old property to supervise the removal. This will include one day's paid leave plus mileage at public transport rate/standard rail fare and subsistence.

Continuing Commitments

- Whilst the old property remains unsold, reasonable additional accommodation costs may be reimbursed. Reimbursement will be for the lower of either the monthly mortgage on the old property or the monthly mortgage/rent on the new property for a maximum of 12 months.
- Trainees who have not found suitable accommodation in the new area and who are in accommodation separated from their family due to not being able to re-locate immediately may be reimbursed the travel costs of weekly visits either by the trainee to the family home or by immediate family to the trainee, at public transport rate or standard rail fare for a maximum of 12 months. NB: Travel costs are only to port of entry if outside of UK.
- To be eligible for re-imbursement under these provisions, trainees should expect to be required to demonstrate that they are actively marketing their former property at a realistic price/are actively seeking suitable accommodation in the new area or have a valid reason why they cannot relocate immediately. Such reasons might include partner's employment, childcare, schooling, or elderly dependents.

Excluded expenses

The following categories of expenses are excluded from re-imbursement:

- Interest on bridging loans
- Increase in insurance premiums
- Redemption fees
- Costs of moving livestock and other animals

NB: Any of the expenses set out above which are claimed for re-imbursement will be included within the maximum allowance available.