

Official

Publication approval reference: C1164

To: NHS Trust and Foundation Trust CFOs / FDs

Office of the
Chief Financial Officer

NHS England and Improvement

Skipton House
London
SE1 6LH

Dear Colleagues,

23 March 2021

Patient Car Parking

I am extremely grateful to all trusts for the support you have given to your staff with the provision of free parking during the pandemic, and to the local partners who have offered car parks free of charge to NHS staff.

Hospital car parking should be free for NHS staff during this pandemic. Please continue to deliver this commitment using the funding you have been provided with. From its introduction in March 2020 and until October 2020, any loss of income was covered by the COVID-19 reimbursement provided to trusts. Since October 2020, funding for the delivery of free staff parking has been included as part of trusts' overall system allocation, and this funding will now continue and be included in H1 system envelopes.

The Government has also committed to make hospital car parking free for those in greatest need. This is a requirement in the standard NHS contract and should be implemented. We allowed a grace period from the original implementation date of January 2021. We ask that the contractual requirement is met during April. Funding will be included in H1 system envelopes. I set out below the definitions of those covered by that commitment to enable you to progress delivering that obligation:

Disabled people: this is for holders of a valid Blue Badge attending hospital as a patient or visitor, or for a disabled person employed by the hospital trust. Disabled patients and visitors receive free parking for the duration of their attendance at, or visit to, the hospital. Disabled employees receive free parking while at the hospital for purposes relating to their employment.

Frequent outpatient attenders: free parking will be provided to all out-patients who attend hospital for an appointment at least three times within a month and for an overall period of at least three months. A 'month' is defined as a period of 30 days.

Parents of sick children staying overnight: this is for a parent or guardian of a child or young person, under 18 years of age, who is admitted as an inpatient at hospital overnight. They receive free parking between the hours of 7.30pm and 8am while visiting the child. This would apply to a maximum of two vehicles.

Staff working night shifts: this is for members of staff with a shift commencing after 7.30pm and ending before 8am. They receive free parking for the duration of their shift.

I know that car park capacity remains a challenge for many trusts and you may not have been able to focus in year on capital car parking schemes. We have a number of schemes in train and, with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), are in principle open to considering other schemes in 2021/22 and beyond within the DHSC capital settlement. We will work with you to evidence particular capacity concerns and the most appropriate way to mitigate these, for example, through additional capacity or technological solutions.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Julian Kelly
Chief Financial Officer
NHS England and NHS Improvement