
Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care (HASC) September 17th 2009

Report of the Lead Officer to the Committee

Car Park Charges

Purpose of report

1. To consider findings of research as requested by Council in relation to car park arrangements in place at other NHS Hospital Trusts across England.

Background

2. At the meeting of the Council held on 27th April, 2009, a Notice of Motion in the following terms was approved:

That this Council further notes the level of car park charges at Russell's Hall, Corbett and The Guest Hospitals, which places an additional financial burden on some in our community when visiting loved ones in hospital or attending for treatment/appointments.

This Council therefore resolves to:-

- (1) Request the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (DGOHFT) to undertake, in conjunction with the provider, an urgent report to examine car park charges and in doing so looks at other trusts that have either reduced or removed charges for certain categories of patient/visitor.
 - (2) Request that the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care also approach trusts that have reduced or removed car park charges in order to learn from their experiences.
3. At its meeting on 7 July, the Committee acknowledged the importance of accessible car parking to ensure fair access to services and good patient/staff experience, and as such agreed to pursue the Council's request; the findings of this research are presented at Appendix 1 for consideration.

Finance

4. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report at this stage.

Law

5. The relevant statutory provisions regarding the Council's Constitution are contained in Part 11 of the Local Government Act, 2000, together with Regulations, Orders and Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
6. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives statutory provision to Authorities with Social Services responsibilities to review and scrutinise, via the appointed Health Scrutiny Committee, health services provided or commissioned by Local Authorities and local NHS bodies.

Equality Impact

7. This report complies with the Council's equality and diversity policy. Moreover, the work of the Committee is an important way for the representatives of local people to ensure that the voice of local people is heard and acted upon in the provision of statutory health and social care services.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - considers the attached research findings and comment as appropriate and;
 - agree to consider a further report following a meeting with the Trust in order to conclude this matter.

Brendan Clifford

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Brendan Clifford – Assistant Director DACHS

Lead Officer Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care

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Background Papers

76. Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.
77. The Minutes of the Meetings of the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care held 2008/2009 municipal year and the reports submitted to those meetings.

APPENDIX 1

Comparative analysis of other Trusts' car park arrangements

Identifying the sample

To ensure effective comparative analysis against the main Russell's Hall site, Table 1 summarises details of car park arrangements in-place at Foundation Trust (FT) Hospitals serving Local Authorities within Dudley Council's 'family group'. The 'family group' was defined using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CiPFA) nearest neighbour model based on a number of key socio-economic indicators, including:

- Mortality rates
- Population
- % of population aged 0 to 17
- % of population aged 75 to 84
- % of population aged 85 plus
- Output area base population density
- Taxbase per head of population
- % unemployment

In addition, the table identifies those Trusts whose car park facilities are run by autonomous agencies; DGOH's main site is managed by the Facilities Management arm of Interserve, which is provided under a concession agreement as part of a Private Finance Initiative¹ (PFI) agreement with its developer.

Please note that although the Trusts serving Wolverhampton, Walsall and Coventry areas do not have Foundation Trust status, they were however included in the table as the nearest regional comparators.

¹ A method of providing funds for major capital investments where private firms are contracted to complete and manage the projects. These contracts are typically given to construction firms and last a long time, sometimes up to 30 years. The public services are leased to the public and the government authority makes annual payments to the private company

National guidance and initiatives

Guidance

In April 2009 the NHS Confederation, which represents 99 percent of NHS Trusts in England, issued a report entitled 'Fair for all, not free for all: Principles for sustainable hospital car parking'.

The NHS Confederation supports the right for Trusts to determine their own car parking and transport arrangements within current regulations and good practice, in order to:

- ensure that patients and staff who need to park on site can do so
- ensure that NHS finances are focused on patient care
- reduce the impact of healthcare on the environment

The Confederation's report sets out a number of examples of good practice in car parking and transport in the NHS and suggests five principles for fair car parking:

- Have a travel plan for users of all types of transport.
- Control parking fairly, with concessions for those whose health conditions or work commitments mean they have to park frequently or at anti-social hours.
- Show car park and transport costs and how charges are invested.
- Consider how transport can reduce the impact of the NHS on the environment.
- Be open and involve patients and the public.

It should be noted that whilst politicians may be under pressure to intervene following decisions to abolish charges in Wales and Scotland, policy in this area remains **non-prescriptive**.

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme

The scheme replaced the Hospital Travel Costs scheme in 2008, following the commitment made in the White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, to extend the scheme to: "include people who are referred by a health care professional for treatment in a primary care setting, providing that they meet the existing low-income criteria." (Section 6.68).

This is a **mandatory** scheme and allows certain eligible groups a full or partial refund of their hospital travel costs. This depends on status, and the three following conditions must be met:

- The claimant must be a patient who is (a) in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits or allowances specified in the 2003 regulations, or (b) be named on a NHS Low Income Scheme certificate HC2 or HC3
- The journey undertaken must be made to receive services under the National Health Service Act 2006, which are not primary medical or primary dental care service, where the individual was referred by a doctor or dentist
- Where a doctor or dentist has provided the primary medical or primary dental services which lead to the referral for non-primary care services, those services must not be provided on the same visit and in the same premises as the primary medical or primary dental services which lead to that referral

For more details please see 'Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme - Instructions and guidance for the NHS' published by the Department of Health.

Learning

It should be emphasised that the findings are based entirely on returned information from individual Trusts and information available on the respective websites presented in Table 1.

Regular Tariffs

Presented below is a tabulation of the regular car tariffs in operation across the comparator FTs which includes the average cost per period for the sample:

Foundation Trust	Hours					
	0 to 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	All day
Stockport NHS Trust	£2.00	£2.00	£3.00	£3.00	£4.00	£4.00
Wirral University Teaching Hospital	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	-
Rotherham Foundation Trust	£1.60	£1.60	£2.10	£2.10	£6.50	£6.50
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals	£2.30	£2.30	£2.30	£2.30	£3.20	£3.20
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals	£0.70	£0.70	£1.20	£1.20	£2.20	-
Dudley Group of Hospitals (Russell's Hall site)	£1.10	£2.20	£3.50	£3.50	£3.50	£3.50
Royal Bolton Hospital	£1.90	£1.90	£1.90	£1.90	£4.50	£4.50
Tameside Hospital NHS	£1.60	£2.10	£2.60	£2.60	£5.20	£5.20
Average Cost	£1.65	£1.85	£2.33	£2.33	£3.89	£3.36

The table indicates that DGOH's fee for up to two hours parking is under the average cost of all comparator Trusts. However, the figures also show its tariff for a stay between 2 and 4 hours is above the average cost.

It merits noting that, other than Dudley, Sheffield Teaching Trust (emboldened) is the only FT in the sample with contracted car park facilities – its two sites are managed by Excel Parking and ISS Mediclean.

Concessionary arrangements

The nature and availability of concessions nationally is inconsistent, which is to be expected given the lack of prescriptive guidance in this area. There are however, some clear commonalities e.g. visitors of inpatients receiving oncology treatment and those in high dependency units.

Concessionary arrangements in-place at DGOH allow up to a maximum of 50% reduction of fees each time the car park is used.. This is broadly consistent with its closest comparator Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, in terms of its Estate Management, where a concessionary parking permit is available to those regularly visiting the hospital for a prolonged period. That is, the relative must have been an inpatient for 3 weeks. However, unlike DGOH it does operate a free parking policy for any patient in its Specialist Cancer Treatment Unit; **it should be noted that apart from this exemption, no other FT in the sample with car park arrangements in-line with DGOH reported the availability of a concession allowing free parking.**

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Trust works closely with Macmillan Cancer team to ensure free parking provision for those relatives visiting patients during end of life stages of care.

Only one FT reported to participate in and actively promote the HTCS.

A number of Trusts, including Wirral University Teaching Trust, operate a simple concession referral system. This involves the Ward Manager or Nursing Staff referring long stay visitors to support staff to make arrangements for the appropriate concession.

According to returned information, Coventry and Warwickshire is the only Trust to operate a car park charge capping policy; whilst it is not an FT, it merits noting that its car park management agreement is congruent to Dudley's Trust i.e. run by an autonomous service provider (ISS Mediclean) as part of a PFI. Its policy states that if an individual spends more than £150 on car parking charges within a six month period, any charges above this cap will be reimbursed. Essentially this policy implies that visitors will pay more no than £150 on car park fees within a six month period.

Have tariffs been reduced or removed elsewhere?

Based on the responses summarised in the table **none** of the Trusts serving Local Authority areas in Dudley's 'family group' have reduced or removed charges in the last 10 years. However, the fee for parking between 4-24 hours at Russell's Hall is lower under the current tariff introduced almost two years ago. In addition, no Trust from the sample reported providing universal free parking facilities within the last 10 years.

There is, however pressure on Politicians to intervene following decisions to abolish charges in Wales and Scotland.

Proposed Recommendations

The Committee should acknowledge the challenge in influencing policy review and development of contracted private bodies, particularly those of a PFI nature. However, the autonomous nature of the operation of Foundation Trusts places clear responsibility on leaders to be accountable and to run services efficiently and fairly. Given the Committee's expressed wish for residents to be given the best opportunities for fair access to Hospital services and both good patient and staff experience, it may, therefore wish for DGOH to arrange for the following to be considered:

- That the Trust develops its services so that relatives of long term patients are referred by the Ward/Service Manager to make arrangements for the appropriate concession.
- To actively promote the availability concessions supported by the Trust, in line with NHS Confederation guidance. This information should be made immediately accessible particularly via the Trust's public facing website and in appropriate wards/service areas across the Hospital(s),
- To actively promote the mandatory Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme and develop services to ensure that individuals are promptly reimbursed.
- That the Trust develops the good practice developed in Doncaster and Bassetlaw Trust in relation to its working with Macmillan Cancer to ensure that those visiting patients during end of life care are exempt from fees.
- That the Trust explores with its PFI partners the possibility of developing good practice in Sheffield by ensuring the availability of free parking provision for all visitors/relatives of patients receiving Specialist Cancer Treatment.
- The Trust, with its facilities management partner Interserve consider adopting a car park charge capping system - currently in place at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire whose facility is also outsourced and managed by ISS Mediclean.

Table 1 Summary of responses

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
Stockport NHS Trust	Stockport MBC	There is a parking charge of £2.00 for less than 2 hours, £3.00 for 2 - 4 hours, or £4.00 for all day.	No	A permit is available for a long term visitor to inpatient of three weeks or more - this is restricted normally to one permit per family. The discount levy is unknown. Discount monthly, quarterly and six monthly passes are available.	No. Managed by in-house by Facilities Directorate.
Wirral University Teaching Hospital (WUTH)	Wirral MBC	Visitors using pay to park spaces are charged £2 per visit, up to a maximum of five hours.	No	A nominated family member or carer receiving the following areas of treatment and care is exempt from parking charges for the duration of the inpatient's treatment at the Trust : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITU/HDU (Intensive Therapy and High Dependency units) • Neonatal Unit • children's wards • terminally ill patients. For relatives of patients who are long stay (in excess of 4 weeks) the Ward or Department Manager will contact the Car Park Permit Office who will then arrange for them to purchase a multi-day pass at a reduced cost from the cash office (i.e. a seven-day pass at a cost of £5 or thirty day pass at a cost of £16).	No

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
				Patients on Benefits Patients attending for outpatient appointments or treatment, who meet the criteria under the Hospital Travel Costs Reimbursement Scheme, will be entitled to claim a refund of their car parking charges from the respective hospital cash office.	
Rotherham Foundation Trust	Rotherham MBC	Up to 2 hours: £1.60 2 - 4 hours: £2.10 All day: £6.50	No	Similar to WUTH	No
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals	Sheffield City Council	Royal Hallamshire Hospital and Jessop Wing Up to 2 hours - £2.30 Up to 4 hours - £3.20 Over 4 hours - £7.40 Northern General Hospital Up to 4 hours - £2.30 Over 4 hours - £3.20		The following groups are exempt from car parking charges in the Trust's car parks: a. Any patient in Specialist Cancer Treatment Unit b. Any patient attending the Northern General Hospital site for Kidney Dialysis c. All blue badge holders, except when parking in the Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Multi Storey Car Park. A concessionary parking permit is available to those regularly visiting the hospital for a prolonged period. To be eligible for a permit the relative must have been an inpatient for 3 weeks and alternative means of travel must not be a viable.	Yes. The car parking facilities at Royal Hallamshire Hospital and Jessop Maternity Wing are managed by Excel Parking. The car parking facilities at Northern General Hospital & Weston Park Hospital are managed by ISS Mediclean

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
				<p>The Trust also participates in and actively promotes the Hospital Transport Costs Scheme (HTCS).</p>	<p>However neither of these agreements are part of PFI.</p>
<p>Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals</p>	<p>Doncaster Council</p>	<p>Doncaster Royal Infirmary</p> <p>Outpatients/Accident & Emergency /Women's Hospital</p> <p>Up to 2 hours £0.70p 2 to 4 hours £1.20p 4 to 8 hours £2.20p</p> <p>Bassetlaw Hospital</p> <p>Outpatients Department Maternity Department Up to 3 hours 60p All Day £1.20p</p>	<p>No. Charges unchanged for last 5 years</p>	<p>The Macmillan Cancer team issue parking permits to relatives visiting patients during end of life stages of care which allows them to park free of charge. The permit usually lasts for a week when requirement is reassessed and then reissued if appropriate.</p> <p>Long stay visitors or resident mums are referred to staff in the General office by Ward nursing staff. Arrangements are made for them to pay the minimum charge of 70 pence per day or visit, which is a reduction of £1.50 per day on the current tariff.</p>	<p>No. Managed in-house by the Trust's Facilities Directorate.</p>
<p>Wolverhampton (non FT status)</p>	<p>Wolverhampton City Council</p>	<p>-----</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Any 'frequent user' can purchase a ticket which covers 7 consecutive days for £10.</p>	<p>Managed by APCOA (formerly First Management Group) but not part PFI agreement.</p>

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
Walsall (non FT status)	Walsall MBC	A 'pay on foot' system operates and the charge is £1 per hour with a maximum daily fee of £5.	No	Weekly concessionary passes are available for regular visitors to the hospital at a charge of £10 per week. No charge for chemotherapy patients	No. Run in-house.
Dudley Group of Hospitals	Dudley MBC	The current tariff, which has been in-place for almost two years at the main Russell's Hall site: First 10 min free Up to 1hr - £1.10 1-2 hrs - £2.20 2-24 hrs - £3.50 The former tariff was: 1hr - £1.00 2hrs - £2.00 3rs - £3.00	The tariff has not been removed but it costs less to park between 4-24 hours under the latest tariff	Car parking concessions are available to the following patient and visitor Groups : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oncology Day Case Patients who attend ward C4 (the Georgina Unit) for treatment at a frequency of at least three times per week over an extended period • Renal Dialysis Patients who attend the Renal Unit for treatment at a frequency of at least three times per week over an extended period • Parents of Babies and Children up to the age of 16 who are inpatients within the Trust over an extended period (Only one concession pass per baby or child) Concessions are based upon a 50% reduction of fees each time the car park is used	Car park management at the Trust operated by Interserve Plc's facilities services division under a concession agreement under its PFI agreement with the developer.

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
		4hrs - £3.00 Over 4 hours - £5.00		Car parking value passes are also available to other regular attendees to Russells Hall Hospital Car parking value cards will be based upon unlimited car parking on the main V2/S2 visitor car park for a fixed fee per 7 day continuous period	
Royal Bolton Hospital FT	Bolton Council	Up to 4 hours £1.90 4-24 hours £4.50	No	Monthly tickets are available at a cost of £20. These can be purchased from the Cashiers office during normal office hours and from Main Reception at other times. If relatives have purchased 6 consecutive monthly tickets they are entitled to receive on going monthly tickets free of charge whilst the patient is in hospital.	No
Tameside Hospital NHS	Tameside	0-1 Hour £1.60 1-2 hours £2.10 2-4 hours £2.60 4 Hours + £5.20	No	Concessionary car parking tariffs are offered to patients or patient's visitors in the following circumstances: a) Where the patient is an in-patient and is expected to have a stay of longer than 4 weeks, or	No. Provided by in-house service.

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				b) Where the patient has regular out-patient appointments that extend over a period of more than 4 weeks.	
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire (Non FT)	Coventry City Council		No	<p>Individuals can park for free at our hospitals if receiving any of the following (This applies to disabled and able bodied patients and where considered medically necessary, their escort):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income support • Income based Job Seekers allowance • Working Tax Credit or Child Tax credit • Guaranteed Pension Credit (no savings) <p>Individuals can also park for free if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An oncology (cancer) patient attending for intravenous chemotherapy treatment • Renal Dialysis patients • Parents of Sick Children (who stay in hospital overnight to accompany their sick children) <p><u>Car park capping charges</u></p> <p>If an individual spends more than £150 on car parking</p>	Yes. The Car park management is provided by ISS Mediclean as part of a PFI agreement.

Comparator FT Trust (unless stated otherwise)	Family Authority	Regular car park tariff details	Tariff reduced or removed within last 10 years Y/N	Concessionary rates for nominated carers or relatives visiting inpatients	Car park(s) managed by a private agency as part of concession agreement under PFI contract?
				charges within a six month period, any charges above this cap will be reimbursed. In summary this concession means that no-one will pay more than £150 on car parking charges within a six month period.	