

## **HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**21 AUGUST 2012**

### **BLUE BADGE CHARGING – MEDWAY MARITIME HOSPITAL**

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

Author: Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer

#### **Summary**

This report updates the committee on the Medway NHS Foundation Trust's response to the Council's concerns relating to its changes to parking fee concessions for Blue Badge holders.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 Under Chapter 4 – Rules, paragraph 22.2 (c) terms of reference for Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee has powers to review and scrutinise matters relating to the health service in the area including NHS Scrutiny.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 The Medway NHS Foundation Trust has recently reviewed car parking concessions and in July a decision was taken to charge blue badge holders normal parking fees. The Trust stated that the purpose of the decision was to create fairness around concessions, which they consider are now based on affordability, rather than purely on entitlement to blue badges.

2.2 The changes were implemented on 2 July 2012.

#### **3. Council Motion**

3.1 At the Council meeting on 26 July the following motion was passed Council resolves to urge Medway Maritime Hospital to adopt the policy of Medway Council, which permits blue badge holders to park for free in all its car parks. The response to the motion has now been received as is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

#### **4. Response from Medway NHS Foundation Trust**

- 4.1 The Chairman of this committee wrote to the Trust's Chief Executive to invite him to this meeting to respond to the committee's questions and concerns. He also suggested that the Trust suspend this change in its parking charges policy until after the committee's meeting.
- 4.2 The Trust's Deputy Chief Executive responded to the Chairman of this committee to confirm that the Trust's Chief Executive and Director of Governance and Risk would attend this meeting to answer the committee's questions. The letter in response also confirmed that the Trust would go ahead with the revised concession arrangements as planned.
- 4.3 The Trust's response is attached at Appendix 2 of this report.

#### **5. Risk management**

- 5.1 There are no risk implications at this stage.

#### **6. Financial and legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial or legal implications for the Council at this stage.

#### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1. The committee is recommended to note the report and the response from the Medway NHS Foundation Trust.

#### **Lead officer contact**

Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer

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#### **Background papers**

None

We are a smoke free organisation and to improve public health, smoking is not permitted anywhere on the hospital site. Thank you for your co-operation.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**

Direct Line 01634 833944  
Fax No: 01634 825290

Our ref: MD/MJ

1 August 2012

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Tel: 01634 830000

Julie Keith  
Head of Democratic Services  
Democratic Services  
Gun Wharf  
Dock Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME4 4TR

Dear Ms Keith

**RE: Meeting of the Full Council – Thursday 26 July 2012**

Thank you for your letter of 27 July 2012, setting out the motion passed by the full Council on 27 July.

The Council's position on this matter is noted, and, I can assure you, is considered with respect by the Trust and its Board. However, the Trust reached its decision on the subject of parking fee concessions only after considerable deliberation, and is satisfied that the position is equitable and reasonable.

The current range of concessions addresses affordability for all hospital users and visitors, regardless of their entitlement to a Blue Badge – a full list of the concessions now offered (which exceed the concessions the Trust is required to offer under the NHS Constitution) is attached to this letter for Members' information and can be viewed on the Trust's website at [www.medway.nhs.uk](http://www.medway.nhs.uk)

In line with good practice guidance, the Trust has 65 disabled car parking spaces and is committed to ensuring there are sufficient spaces near the entrance to the hospital. Access to these spaces continues to be limited to blue badge holders.

Unlimited free parking for blue badge holders is not available at any of Kent's hospitals. At Darent Valley Hospital, a flat rate of £1 is currently charged, Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust charges Blue Badge holders full car parking fees and the East Kent University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust allows free parking only for the first three hours at its hospitals.

Continued.....

Surplus income from car parking fees, after running costs of the car park have been met, is put directly back into patient care to improve services for local people.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John', written over a large, light-colored circular mark.

**Patrick Johnson**  
**Director of Operations / Deputy Chief Executive**  
**(On behalf of the Chief Executive in his absence)**

Enc.....

### Car parking concession information for patients and visitors

Please find below a list of current car parking concessions, with instructions for those wishing to claim them. Concessions are available in the main car park (car park one), and those requiring concessions should ensure that they park in the main car park.

- Liverpool Care Pathway patients receive free parking. Please report to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, with the appropriate authorisation letter for ticket validation.
- Official volunteers who work for Medway NHS Foundation Trust receive free parking. Please report to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, with the appropriate Trust identification badge for ticket validation.

- **Travel cost assistance**

Patients who are in receipt of the support below will receive assistance with parking fees. Please report to General Office located at the main entrance Monday - Friday 9am to 4pm to claim assistance. Please ensure that receipt of parking is retained and that you have all documentation demonstrating entitlement under one of the categories listed above when making a claim:

- Pension credits
- Income support
- NHS exemption certificate
- Job seekers allowance
- Holders of HC2 and HC3 forms

Reimbursement of travel is paid to those in receipt of:

- 1) Income Support
- 2) ESA (Income related and/or Income based)
- 3) JSA (Income related and/or Income based)
- 4) Working Tax Credits
- 5) Child Tax Credits
- 6) Pension credit (guaranteed credit only)

We always need to see all relevant documents i.e.: benefit details, appointment letter and travel ticket/ car park ticket.

We do not pay travel cost to those on Disability Allowance or Incapacity Benefit.

When a patient with the correct benefit comes to General Office we pay rail/bus fares and mileage. We do not pay taxi fares unless the patient is in receipt of a letter from their consultant stating that they are physically unable to use public transport.

If an escort is needed the patient should have a letter from the consultant to say they are unable to travel unaided/alone.

We will exchange a parking ticket for a one shot to get out of the car park or if the patient has a pay and display ticket, we will reimburse the price of ticket.

- Oncology patients who are attending the hospital for treatment receive free parking. A claim form will be supplied and completed by the relevant ward or department and should then be taken to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, for ticket validation.
- Relatives or carers of a patient accessing oncology services can claim a concessionary rate of £10.50 per seven days. A claim form is to be supplied and completed by the relevant ward or department and should then be taken to the General Office located at the main entrance Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm, or, outside of these hours, to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital's main entrance. Please note that only one concessionary ticket will be issued per patient.
- Visitors or carers of ICU, HDU, SCBU, Dolphin Ward and Penguin Ward can claim a concessionary rate of £10.50 per seven days. A claim form is to be supplied and completed by the relevant ward or department and should then be taken to the General Office located at the main entrance Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm, or, outside of these hours, to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance. Please note only one concessionary ticket will be issued per patient.
- Outpatient clinics  
The parking fee will be reduced to £1.50 when the Trust is responsible for clinics over-running. Authorisation slips will be issued by senior outpatient staff and should then be taken to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, for ticket validation.
- Dermatology patients who are required to attend the hospital to undertake a course of treatment – requiring repeated visits over a defined number of weeks – will have their car parking charges reduced to £1.50 per visit. A claim form will be supplied and completed by the dermatology department and should then be taken to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, for ticket validation.
- Paediatric red badge holders are entitled to the reduced charge of £1.50 per visit, when accessing red badge paediatric services. A claim form will be supplied and completed by the relevant ward or department and should then be taken to the security and car parking reception desk, in the hospital main entrance, for ticket validation.
- Visitors of patients who have been in hospital over seven days and are assisting ward staff with the care or treatment of their relative, may apply for a concessionary rate of £10.50 per seven days. All requests must be made

through senior ward staff in writing to the car parking manager. Please note only one concessionary ticket will be issued per patient.

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## Car parking at Medway Maritime Hospital

July 2012

The Trust has recently reviewed car parking concessions and earlier this month a decision was taken to charge blue badge holders normal parking fees. The decision to implement this change was not taken lightly, but its purpose was to create fairness around concessions, which are now based on affordability, rather than purely on entitlement to blue badges.

The Trust offers a range of concessions to make car parking accessible for all patients and visitors and two new concessions have been introduced to support this commitment; dermatology patients who are required to attend the hospital to undertake a course of treatment requiring repeated visits over a defined number of weeks will have their car parking charges reduced to £1.50 per visit, and paediatric red badge holders (ie, people who need regular and frequent access to the paediatric assessment units) will have their car parking charges reduced to £1.50 per visit, when accessing red badge paediatric services. A full list of concessions is attached to this statement as an appendix and can be viewed on the Trust's website at [www.medway.nhs.uk](http://www.medway.nhs.uk)

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Unlimited free parking for blue badge holders is not available at any of Kent's hospitals. At Darent Valley Hospital, a flat rate of £1 is currently charged, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells charge blue badge holders and the East Kent trust allows free parking for the first three hours only.

Surplus income from car parking fees, after running costs of the car park have been met, is put directly back into patient care to improve services for local people.

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