

FISH TRANSPORT SCHEME

Guidelines for drivers

1. The scheme is free to passengers, although many will wish to offer a contribution towards costs. Whilst you should not ask for a contribution, it should be accepted if offered, and deducted from your claim when submitted.
2. On occasions, passengers may offer a contribution which is significantly (eg more than £5) above the reimbursement rate of 45p/mile. On such occasions it may be appropriate (at your discretion) to advise the passenger that their contribution is more than our guideline for the journey involved, and that the excess will be regarded as a donation to the FISH scheme as a whole. We are hoping that once passengers know what contribution is considered reasonable, they will be more comfortable to offer it for any subsequent journey.
3. Guidelines on what we consider to be reasonable contributions for common journeys are:-

Within Harrietsham	£2
Lenham	£3
Maidstone Hospital	£10
William Harvey Hospital	£10
Medway Maritime Hospital	£15
Pembury Hospital	£20

4. Parking at hospitals

In the past year, most local hospitals have closed down their attended parking kiosks and installed automatic barriers and ticket machines.

At all hospitals except William Harvey, you should now take your ticket and FISH parking permit to main reception when you are ready to leave, and ask them to validate the ticket. You may be asked to show some form of identification (e.g. credit or bank card, bus pass) to prove that you are the person named on the permit.

At William Harvey, at the time of writing we and other voluntary transport schemes are still waiting to hear from Management how their system will operate in future, and their reception staff are often unsure what to do. You should in the first instance take your ticket to main reception, but if they are unable to validate it, then drive to the exit barrier, press the intercom, and explain that you are a volunteer driver for a recognised hospital transport scheme (Harrietsham FISH scheme, which is affiliated to Voluntary Action Maidstone), and have a parking permit which has been registered with their Parking Department (Janet Franks). The operator should then raise the barrier. In the event that there is still a problem, pay the parking fee and reclaim the cost from FISH via your expenses claim.

Drivers should only use disabled spaces in hospital car parks if their passenger has a disabled badge which can be displayed.

5. Drivers will be reimbursed for their motoring costs at the rate of 45p/mile. This is the rate currently recommended by HMRC for charitable schemes and used by other local transport schemes (eg VAM). Reimbursement does not need to be declared for tax purposes. Rates are reviewed periodically by FISH. You can claim your total mileage, including that between your home and the passenger's home. Claims should be submitted to the Treasurer (Michael Gear).

Guidelines for contact persons

1. If you are asked to arrange transport, and the passenger asks for guidance on payment, you should explain that the scheme is free, but indicate that if the passenger wants to contribute to the cost, you can advise them of the guidelines given in paragraph 3 (above).
2. Arranging transport at short notice can be difficult or impossible. If no driver can be found, we recommend that you suggest the passenger considers using the voluntary transport scheme run by Voluntary Action Maidstone (VAM). The telephone number for bookings is 01622 756662, and the line is open Monday-Friday, 9.00am-4.00pm. They make a charge of 45p/mile PLUS a booking fee of £3-£6 depending on distance. Both have to pay to the volunteer driver in cash.
3. For journeys to hospitals, please ascertain whether the passenger needs to be accompanied after being dropped off (i.e. whilst the driver is parking), and make appropriate arrangements for this.
4. At present, we only have a few drivers prepared to go to Pembury. Special arrangements may therefore need to be made, and there could be a delay in collecting the passenger after their appointment. For the time being, please make Pembury bookings via Marjorie.

Roger Kelly (Chairman)
March 2014