

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 4 June 2025
10th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE2041: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

Introduction

Petitioner John Ronald

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to encourage local authorities to exempt staff working at community healthcare facilities and who don't have access to free on-site staff parking from on-street parking charges and allow them to care for vulnerable and sick people in our country without it costing them thousands of pounds per year.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2041>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 9 October 2024](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to NHS regional health boards.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received new written submissions from 11 NHS regional health boards which are set out in **Annexe C**.
4. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 7 November 2023](#).
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 339 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

8. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
May 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2041: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

Petitioner

John Ronald

Date Lodged

3 August 2023

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to encourage local authorities to exempt staff working at community healthcare facilities and who don't have access to free on-site staff parking from on-street parking charges and allow them to care for vulnerable and sick people in our country without it costing them thousands of pounds per year.

Previous action

I have contacted my local MSPs.

I have also contacted NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and local councillors.

Background information

I work alongside nurses, social workers, health visitors, doctors, admin staff, cleaners and other vital staff within a community health building, which is surrounded by parking meters. Parking charges have increased dramatically to £6 per hour. This means staff pay £48 when working an eight-hour shift. Working a 5 day week, this comes to around £11,520 per year – equivalent to nearly half of the salary of some staff.

We are living through a cost-of-living crisis.

We clapped for our emergency workers, we cheered them on through a pandemic, but now the council and government charge them to care for sick, elderly, and vulnerable people. Community staff need to use their cars but are being punished financially for carrying out their roles. A simple solution would be to provide permits exempting them from charges.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2041 on 9 October 2024

The Convener: PE2041, which was lodged by John Ronald, calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to encourage local authorities to exempt staff working at community healthcare facilities who do not have access to free on-site staff parking from on-street parking charges, to allow them to care for vulnerable and sick people in our country without it costing them thousands of pounds per year.

We previously considered the petition on 6 December 2023, when we agreed to write to the health secretary, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, the Royal College of Nursing, the trade unions Unison and Unite the union, and the Allied Health Professions Federation.

Responses in support of the petition's ask have been received from the Royal College of Nursing, Unite and the Allied Health Professions Federation. Although being mindful of the need for sustainable travel, the RCN highlighted that parking arrangements

“form part of working conditions for RCN members and impact recruitment and retention rates.”

In its response, the Allied Health Professions Federation noted that, if allied health professionals

“are required to pay for parking, they would effectively be penalised for accessing their workplace.”

The then Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care's response notes the expectation that all NHS boards in Scotland should have a policy in place that enables staff to be reimbursed for valid expenses, including car parking charges, but the response is clear that such policies should not be extended to

“cover staff who drive to their work and park their car all day at their base of work”.

We have also received a response from the petitioner, who remains concerned that community health staff who use their own cars for work are being discriminated against.

Do members have any comments or suggestions? There is a route for the reimbursement of such charges when community care workers are out in the community and have to use off-street parking, but it is clear that a different view is taken to permanent daily parking at a fixed place of work. Are there any suggestions for actions?

Maurice Golden: As a final follow-up, should we write to regional health boards to ask what options for support and reimbursement are available to community healthcare staff who are required to use their personal vehicle as part of their role?

The Convener: I am content to do that. Are we all content?

Members *indicated agreement.*

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The Convener: Marie McNair, are you content that we pursue the matter a bit further?

Marie McNair (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP): Yes.

The Convener: Thank you very much. We will keep the petition open. Having been directed to the view that local authorities have that ability, let us try to find out whether staff can, in fact, access that opportunity in practice.

Annexe C: Written submissions

NHS Ayrshire and Arran written submission, 12 November 2024

PE2041/H: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

As a health board organisation, we recognise the importance of supporting our healthcare professionals, especially those working in the community setting. We would like to highlight that we already provide free parking across all our Board premises ensuring they can deliver a service without the burden of parking fees.

While we understand the rationale behind the request for exemptions, we believe that our existing provision of free parking addresses what is detailed in the petition.

NHS Grampian written submission, 13 November 2024

PE2041/I: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

I can advise that where staff parking is available on our NHS Grampian sites this is free of charge but on a first come, first served basis.

From reading the Official report it states “As a final follow-up, should we write to regional health boards to ask what options for support and reimbursement are available to community healthcare staff who are required to use their personal vehicle as part of their role?”, clarification would be needed if the sought after exemption is for parking at the base of the employee i.e. where they travel to on every working day and either stay based there all day or travel to patients returning to that base or it is for all parking irrespective if it their base or not but they require to be there to undertake work, this could include a residential area if seeing a patient in their home.

Current reimbursement is – travel to base is not reimbursed however the cost of travel including parking required to undertake a role can be claimed back by the employee. [Agenda for Change T&Cs handbook](#) quote:

17.21 Employees who necessarily incur charges in the performance of their duties, in relation to parking, garage costs, tolls and ferries shall be refunded these expenses on production of receipts, whenever these are available. Charges for overnight garaging or parking, however, shall not be reimbursed unless the employee is entitled to night subsistence. This does not include reimbursement of parking charges incurred as a result of attendance at the employee’s normal place of work.

- If the employee is undertaking approximately 4,000 business mileage annually they may be eligible for a leased car
- The other consideration is whether there is a benefit in kind implication – this would need to be explored once there was clarity on what exactly the employee is getting free from the Council and whether there is any reimbursement by the NHS to the Council
- There are also practical aspects of how would the council know who community NHS staff are for them to be exempt – pay and reclaim from the Council or submission of vehicle registrations or issuing of permits.

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- If after clarification the scenario is payment of parking at base there may be other groups of staff subject to the same parking charges, would this not apply to them?

NHS Tayside written submission, 14 November 2024

PE2041/J: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

In relation to the provision for reimbursement for staff who use their vehicle for work purposes, NHS Scotland terms and conditions provide the opportunity for individuals to claim mileage (at agreed national rates), and any parking charges that they incur in the course of their duties can be claimed back from their employer. The mileage rates are set to reflect the additional running costs for a vehicle being used for business purposes.

NHS Tayside, in supporting staff who are required to travel as part of their role, have a car leasing scheme as well as a fleet of pool cars available that staff can access.

The Board recognises that individuals with travel as part of their job role will require to be supported and the measures outlined above are designed to ensure we can do that. In addition, the Board car parking policy will continue to be reviewed to ensure we maintain the correct balance across our sites to meet patient and staff requirements.

NHS Highland written submission, 18 November 2024

PE2041/K: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

Community Healthcare Staff Parking Charges

Query: what support and reimbursement is available to your community healthcare staff who require to use their personal vehicle as part of their role.

Response

- Staff parking within NHS premises are not charged.
- If staff are using their own vehicles for travel and have to pay public parking charges, they can reclaim these costs through expense claim processes.

I trust that the above answers your enquiry. Please let me know if you have any other queries.

NHS Fife written submission, 18 November 2024

PE2041/L: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

Thank you for your letter dated 16 October 2024 in relation to the above.

I can confirm that NHS Fife would reimburse staff who travel between sites for work purposes, in line with Agenda for Change / relevant National Terms and Conditions of Service.

Fife Council have provided NHS Fife GP and Community Nursing staff with parking notices for their use in certain areas of Fife where parking is restricted / metered payment is in place.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information in relation to this matter.

NHS Orkney written submission, 23 December 2024

PE2041/M: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

On-street parking charges is not an issue that affects our community nurses in Orkney. Our Community Nursing team's administrative base is in the hospital where parking is free, and our GP practices all have free parking facilities available.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde written submission, 13 January 2025

PE2041/N: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

Summary of support and reimbursement available to community healthcare staff who require to use their personal vehicle as part of their role:

1. NHSGGC Business Travel

- a. Staff who are required to undertake business travel as part of their daily duties are eligible to claim expenses reimbursement on a monthly basis in accordance with the extant NHSGGC process. Expenses claims can either be submitted electronically or via paper submission. All business travel mileage claims and expenses require proof (i.e. receipts) together with approval by an identified line manager.
- b. Business travel expense claims rely on the individual employee submitting expense claims on a consistent and regular basis (normally monthly).

2. Car Parking Charges

- a. All NHSGGC sites provide free car parking for staff, patients, and visitors. Car parking spaces are limited across sites and there are occasions when peak demand can exceed availability. There are six sites across NHSGGC which have a Monday to Friday (core hour) car parking management presence, which supports site activity.
- b. Community Sites – where car parking arrangements may be restricted due to limited spaces, community based staff normally park near to their designated base as is feasibility possible. This is quite often on-street parking. If car parking charges are incurred, as a consequence of this, these costs would not be supported as they do not meet business travel criteria. It is unknown how many community (or other) staff may be affected by this type of situation. NHSGGC remains aware of the implementation of changes to boundary and levy charges for on-street parking in the six local authority areas covered by our extensive Health Board territory. However, we would note that, beyond any consultation that those authorities are obliged to undertake, these decisions are out with our control.

NHS Dumfries and Galloway written submission, 28 January 2025

PE2041/O: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

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Dumfries and Galloway Council does not have any on street parking charges in place.

There will be some car parks who charge but if a staff member incurs a charge for parking in the course of their business then they can reclaim as business expense.

It should be noted that if a staff member commits a parking offence resulting in them being issued with a fixed notice penalty then they are personally responsible for it.

NHS Shetland written submission, 8 April 2025

PE2041/P: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

In Shetland, currently, the only public car park that charges a fee for use is the Victoria Pier Car Park.

Lerwick Port Authority own and operate this car park. This organisation creation in 1877 was by an Act of the UK Parliament as Lerwick Harbour Trust.

As such, Shetland Island Council do not charge for on street parking or the public car parks that they are responsible for owning.

NHS Shetland does not charge a fee for car parking at our sites in line with the Scottish Government policy directive.

NHS staff who use their own vehicle for work purposes receive remuneration under the respective terms and condition of service.

For staff employed under Agenda for Change terms and conditions, such as district nurses, [the reimbursement rates are set out in DL\(2022\)11](#).

For the first 3,500 miles, Agenda for Change staff using their own car receive 61 pence a mile and then 25 pence a mile for each mile above 3,500 miles.

In respect of a parking fee, they may incur in respect of business travel the employee would reclaim through submitting an e-expenses submission that will be authorised by their respective line manager. This cash reimbursement is normally via their monthly salary. There is a time lag though on this process as that will be a least a month in arrears.

In Shetland staff who routinely travel on the interisland ferry services, they receive a book of ferry tickets to avoid having to pay the ferry fare and then reclaim via an e-expenses submission. The return ferry fare for the car and driver is £16.50 per trip.

I hope the above response answers the original petition query satisfactory and provides information to the committee regarding the additional nuisances of living and working on a remote and rural Scottish island.

NHS Borders written submission, 9 April 2025

PE2041/Q: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

It is my understanding that this enquiry may have originated in an urban health board where there are parking regulations enforced on public roads, and staff may not have access to Staff-Only car parks on the NHS estate.

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Many of the towns and villages in the Scottish Borders are not subject to parking regulations, involving tickets/fees. In addition, a number of the NHS Borders Health Centres have Staff-Only car parks.

In the uncommon instance where there may be some Pay & Display style ticket machines (in Galashiels/Hawick, the larger settlements) and when NHS Borders staff are visiting patients/clients in their homes, community-based NHS Borders staff display a disc which exempts them from payment of Scottish Borders Council parking charges.

I trust this is helpful and apologies for the delay in responding.

NHS Western Isles written submission, 13 May 2025

PE2041/R: Exempt community healthcare staff from parking charges

NHS Western Isles believes that while undertaking their duties staff should be exempt from parking charges with the caveat that they comply with the law at all times.