

Review of Car Parking Arrangements, NHS Highland

Report by Douglas Seago, Head of Facilities

Current Position and Proposal

The system of car parking management across NHS Highland, including the charging arrangements on the Raigmore site broadly meets the interim guidance in the circular.

Due to the increase in demand for car parking spaces and changes in the way we deliver services there will be a need to review the current arrangements for car parking in the light of the final guidance document and the need improve access to services for patients. It is recognized that there is a need to examine in greater detail the current arrangements, particularly on the Raigmore site.

Parking Charges were introduced at Raigmore Hospital in 1997 as part of a traffic management plan which ensured the cost of providing the car park did not reduce the funds available to the then Trust Board to deliver patient care. This principle has continued to be adopted. Raigmore has the lowest level of charging of any of the hospitals which do charge for parking.

The charges have only been increased once since their introduction.

For patients and visitors the cost is £1 per visit. With arrangements for patients undergoing long term treatment e.g. renal, chemo therapy etc being free and visitors who have a long term commitment to visit being able to use a fob which gives a total cost of £7 per week, a maximum of £1 per day.

Volunteers, blood donors etc are given free parking.

Disabled parking is free

Staff are charged according to salary. Those earning less than £30k per year pay £70 per annum (31 pence per day for a member of staff with 5 years service working 5 days per week). Those earning more than £30k pay £90 per annum (40 pence per day for a member of staff with 5 years service working 5 days per week).

The key principles in CEL 1 (2008)

At most sites parking should be provided free of charge. This is the case in NHS Highland.

There should be a maximum charge of £3 per day on hospital sites. The charges at Raigmore fall well within this limit.

Boards may make reasonable charges to facilitate access to their sites and cover the cost of car parking. NHS Highland, (and its predecessors), uses charging as one tool to help manage traffic on the Raigmore site. Close working with bus companies and cycle schemes are also used to try and encourage alternative method of accessing services and work. Parking has only ever been used to cover the cost of the car park and not as a profit making income generating scheme.

Boards must ensure a reasonable allocation of spaces to allow patients and carers access to services. The car park at Raigmore does not segregate the various car park users therefore difficulties can arise at times of peak activity and will be reviewed.

Boards must ensure a reasonable allocation of spaces for staff, reflecting the overall availability of car parking on the site and the allocation of spaces must reflect good employment practice, essential car use required for the delivery of services and be agreed through local staff partnership arrangements. Currently all staff who apply can have the use of a fob at the rates detailed above.

Given the increase in demand for spaces the arrangements at Raigmore do require to be reviewed in the context of the principles stated in the CEL and further guidance which will become available.

The review will be carried out in partnership with patient, staff and community groups to ensure the impact any changes are beneficial to patients and cause minimal inconvenience to others.

The review should,

- Consider the relevance of the existing system rather than a time based arrangement which would discourage unauthorized parking.
- The separation of patient and staff parking, particularly during peak times.
- Future developments.
- The financial arrangements and how developments will be funded.
- Wider traffic management issues.

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