



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/09904/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

19 January 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December about Petition P-05-1109 concerning free on-site parking for hospital staff

Health Boards are responsible for the operation and management of hospital car parks across their estates.

Car parking has been free of charge at all NHS hospital sites for patients, staff and visitors since 2018 when external contracts came to an end at a number of sites. It has been free of charge at Prince Charles Hospital since 2008. The attached Welsh Health Circular (WHC) was issued at the time. The WHC provided guidance to health boards whilst recognising that one solution would not fit all hospital sites.

The expectation is that operation and management would include providing designated staff parking areas. It is important to recognise that hospital sites are congested and limited parking is available. From the WHC, you will note that measures should also be in place to ensure car parking on sites is specifically for hospital business.

Welsh Ministers ambition is for the public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030. To contribute to this, along with other areas, measures are being considered to reduce travel emissions and encourage active travel including improved public transport and the potential for Park and Ride schemes that have already proved successful at a number of hospital sites.

The NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan will be issued early in the New Year. The Plan will have clear, ambitious and achievable targets to contribute to the ambition for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral by 2030. Among other emission sources it will highlight and target how travel emissions will need to be reduced.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Gething.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 5 April 2018

STATUS: ACTION

CATEGORY: FINANCE / ESTATES

Title: Car parking management – guidance for NHS Wales

Date of Expiry / Review – Under constant review

For Action by:
Health Board Chief Executives
NHS Trust Chief Executives

Action required by:
Health Boards and NHS Trusts

Sender: Richard Barr, Capital, Estates & Facilities at Richard.barr@gov.wales or 0300 0253987

HSSG Welsh Government Contact(s) :
Richard Barr, Capital, Estates & Facilities, Health & Social Services Group, Welsh Government
Richard.barr@gov.wales
Tel 0300 0253987

Enclosure(s):

Dear Colleague,

Summary

The purpose of this circular is to notify and to clarify to all health boards and NHS Trusts arrangements for car parking at NHS hospital sites. This WHC sets out the procedure within NHS Wales concerning car parking charges and the management of car parking across the NHS in Wales.

As a consequence of this new guidance the previous circular '*WHC (2008) 011 Reform of Car Parking in NHS Hospitals*' has been revoked.

Background

From 1st April 2008, free car parking has been provided at all NHS hospital sites for patient, staff and visitors. The only exceptions to this were where health boards had external contracts in place. The guidance explained that external contracts should not be reviewed or extended. There are three hospitals where there are external contracts in place all of which expire in 2018. When the contracts expire all parking across NHS Wales will be provided free of charge to patients, staff and visitors.

Health Boards and NHS Trusts will continue to be responsible for the management of car parking across their estate. The approach should be set out in your sustainable travel plans for your main hospital sites. This requirement is set out in '*WHC (2008) 058 Sustainable Travel Plans in NHS Wales (Site Specific,) to include Car Parking Plans*'. This WHC remains extant.

NHS Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) visited all health boards and NHS Trusts in 2017 to discuss and share information on how the NHS organisations currently deal with car parking management issues. The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust were not included in the programme of visits as their estate does not cover hospitals and similar facilities. The meetings with key NHS staff identified common issues across the NHS and best practice that could be shared.

It is recognised, that when free car parking is available across all hospital sites in Wales after September 2018, it may increase site traffic flow and access problems leading to further pressures on some sites that already have significant parking issues. This guidance sets out advice and best practice to be applied when managing car parking on hospital sites.

Policy

The key themes for car parking management should be to:-

- Protect disabled parking spaces, maintain a safe traffic flow around sites and ensure clear and safe access routes for emergency vehicles are maintained;

- Encourage people to use alternative means of travel, reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Encourage the development of sustainable travel hubs; and
- Encourage people to only park on hospital sites for hospital related business.

Advice

As all parking at NHS sites will be free of charge for patients, staff and visitors later this year the focus will need to be on the management of on site car parking.

There is an expectation that any enforcement measures would be proportionate and largely to address illegal parking and access issues. On some hospital sites it will also be necessary to control the possible use of parking spaces by commuters or others with no business at the hospital.

There are a number of ways that NHS organisations could look to alleviate car parking ranging from number plate recognition to park and ride schemes and this advice is not intended to be prescriptive. Major acute hospitals, for example, are likely to have significantly more car parking pressures than other hospital sites. Similar hospitals can have different parking issues. These can relate to their location, the footprint of their estate, the number of spaces etc. It would be impossible to have a one size fits all approach.

Whilst recognising the significant pressures there are in respect of car parking at a number of hospital sites there should be a clearly understood car parking management system. This should include clear signage and the system should be clearly understood by patients, staff and visitors and as far as possible the wider community.

For example, illegal car parking, that may cause access problems for emergency vehicles, should be treated differently to patients who are a few minutes over their allocated parking time following their appointment.

Good practice management arrangements

As a result of the visits NWSSP identified a number of good practice management arrangements which NHS organisations should consider. These are set out below:-

- Management schemes should be consulted upon with staff, public/visitor groups and unions to determine the parameters such as the time limits etc;
- Management schemes should be well signposted at site entry and other locations;

- Car parking enforcement charges should be no more than charges levied by local authorities within the Health Board/Trust area;
- Appeal procedures should be well advertised and easy to navigate;
- Appeal procedures should be compassionate to the appellant, where justified;
- Management schemes must be driven by safety and not in terms of profit for the NHS organisation or any management company that have been appointed by the NHS organisation;
- Parking policy should be based around the “*Wales Penalty Processing Partnership, Civil Parking Enforcement Procedures*”, and

<https://www.wppp.org.uk/pdf/WPPP%20CPE%20Procedures.pdf>

- There should be ‘hospital permit holders only’ areas at acute hospital sites. This would be for staff who meet certain criteria such as midwives and on-call medical staff.