

National Assembly For Wales

Report by the Health and Social Services Committee on the The National Health Service (Travelling Expenses and Remission of Charges) Regulations 2007

1. The Committee had identified these regulations for scrutiny and they were submitted to the Committee for the meeting on 1 March 2007. They were handled in accordance with the protocol for dealing with secondary legislation agreed by the Committee on 11 June 2003, whereby Members notify in advance any queries or amendments they wish to make to the Regulations.

No amendments were proposed.

Points of Clarification

3. Four points of clarification were raised.

Helen Mary Jones AM:

i. Will the Minister clarify whether all cancer patients can claim travel expenses for cancer treatment, or are eligible only for ambulance travel?

The Minister explained that cancer patients and people receiving dialysis could ask to be transported by the Ambulance Service. Alternatively, if they travelled by other means they could, if entitled by virtue of having a low income, re-claim their costs under scheme.

Members suggested that it was anomalous that people with a higher income were able to be taken free of charge by the Ambulance Service, thus tying up resources, but could not reclaim the costs if they arranged their own travel. The Minister replied that the Ambulance Service would not take them by ambulance if that were not necessary, but would use a car when suitable.

Jenny Randerson AM:

ii. In Part 3 of the regulations: What obligation do NHS bodies have to advertise the existence and terms and conditions of the scheme?

The Minister said that posters and leaflets had been distributed widely in October 2006 and these were displayed in hospitals, surgeries and similar venues.

iii. Does the Minister intend to use the regulations as the basis for the payment of travelling expenses to brachytherapy patients from North Wales attending Velindre Hospital?

This was covered by the Minister's response to question i.

iv. The Minister has stated that he is reviewing the travelling expenses scheme, when the review is complete, is he intending a new scheme on similar principles?

This was not pursued.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM
Chair
March 2007