

## **EXECUTIVE NOTE**

### **The National Health Service (Travelling Expenses and Remission of Charges) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2006 S.S.I. 2006/183**

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred on Scottish Ministers by sections 75A, 105(7) and 108(1) of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978. The instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure.

#### **Policy Objectives**

The policy of the Scottish Executive is that no-one need be deterred from attending hospital appointments or obtaining prescribed medicines on financial grounds. The purpose of this instrument is to amend the National Health Service (Travelling Expenses and Remission of Charges) (Scotland) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 460) (“the TERC regulations”) in respect of the provisions set out below:-

#### **Payment of Travelling and Accommodation Expenses by the National Waiting Times Centre Board (NWTCB)**

The TERC regulations provide for two travelling expenses schemes – a generally available, means tested scheme, eligibility for which is assessed under the terms of the NHS Low Income Scheme and a separate, non-means tested scheme for people who live in the Highlands and Islands.

These amendment regulations provide for the NWTCB to pay travelling and, where applicable, overnight accommodation expenses to patients who are eligible for help with health charges under the NHS Low Income Scheme and to persons who travel with them if they are unable to travel alone. The expenses to be paid are those incurred in travelling to receive treatment at the Golden Jubilee National Hospital, Beardmore Way, Dalmeir, Clydebank. In addition, provision is made for the NWTCB to be reimbursed the amount of expenses paid to a patient by the Health Board responsible for the healthcare of that patient.

Transitional provisions are made in respect of the NWTCB arrangements to ensure that payment of relevant travelling expenses shall be made by the NWTCB only in respect of claims received on or after 1 April 2006.

#### **Payment of Travelling and Accommodation Expenses to Persons Resident in the Highlands and Islands**

The non-means tested scheme for people who live in the Highlands and Islands has been in operation since 1964 and the patient’s contribution to expenses incurred in attending a hospital appointment has been set at £8 since 1997. These amendment regulations raise the patient’s contribution to £10 per appointment.

#### **The NHS Low Income Scheme: Amounts of Patients’ Assets to be Taken into Account**

People on low incomes who are not otherwise eligible for help with health charges can apply to the means tested NHS Low Income Scheme. The Scheme operates throughout Great

Britain and the assessment arrangements are revised annually to keep pace with amendments to the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987. These TERC amendment regulations contain up-rated amounts of capital assets to be taken into account in the assessment of patients' claims. Certain up-rated amounts will come into force from 1 April 2006 and others from 1 May 2006.

### **Consultation**

There has been no formal, public consultation during the preparation of this instrument.

### **Financial Effects**

This instrument will have no financial implications for the Scottish Executive or NHSScotland. The overall cost of payments to patients and NHS Low Income Scheme help with health charges is not expected to increase. The increase in patients' contributions under the terms of the Highlands and Islands travelling expenses scheme, although small, will bring in additional income for NHSScotland.

Scottish Executive Health Department  
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