



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY

Department of Health

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NHS  
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NHS Management Executive  
St. Andrew's House  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

17th February 1998

Dear Colleague

**TREATMENT COSTS AND TRAVELLING EXPENSES  
FOR WAR PENSIONERS**

**Summary**

1. The Annexes to this letter clarify the position regarding the payment of treatment costs and travelling expenses for war pensioners when they receive treatment for an accepted war disablement.

**Action**

2. Recent enquiries about the payment of treatment (in particular dental and chiropody) costs and travelling expenses in respect of war pensioners have revealed some misunderstanding as to who has responsibility for such payments. This has in turn caused delays in payment of the accounts and in some instances distress and embarrassment to the patient involved.

3. Health Board General Managers and NHS Trust Chief Executives should draw this letter to the attention of Directors of Finance, General Practitioners, Dentists, Opticians, Chiropodists and staff responsible for payment of invoices for the treatment of war pensioners and those responsible for the reimbursement of patients' travel expenses.

Yours sincerely

KEVIN WOODS  
Director of Strategy and Performance  
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**Addressees**

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**TREATMENT COSTS FOR WAR PENSIONERS**

1. NHS MEL(1996)73 (which should be read alongside this notice) advised of the extended definition of the term "War Pensioner" and reminded recipients of the arrangements for priority treatment of war pensioners.

2. Please note that the Transfer of Functions (Ministry of Pensions) Order 1953 passed the financial and administrative responsibility for the provision of medical and surgical services for war pensioners to Health Departments. In Scotland funding was transferred to Health Boards to cover the cost of providing these services.

3. Priority in and out-patient services provided and funded by the Health Board of residence should include:

supply and repair of artificial limbs, nursing equipment, hospital treatment expenses, dental treatment, eye tests, hearing aids, chiropody, skilled nursing care, orthotic devices, elastic hosiery, wigs and other aids and appliances considered medically necessary for their condition.

4. The cost of dental and chiropody treatment, as with any of the other services listed, should therefore be met by the war pensioner's Health Board of residence. There will of course be agreements in place with NHS Trusts for most of these services whereby the funding has essentially been transferred to the Trust. However, uncertainty has arisen when services are provided from outwith a Trust and an invoice is raised on the patient for the treatment provided. It is therefore important that Health Boards clarify their procedures for dealing with such invoices to avoid any embarrassment to the patient.

5. Funding for nursing care is not included in the Health Board allocations and is therefore reimbursed by the Department through an end-of-year adjustment.

6. The provision of spectacles is paid for by DSS, Blackpool.

## TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR WAR PENSIONERS

1. The War Pensions Agency, Norcross, Blackpool FY5 3WP pay travelling expenses to all war pensioners, including those resident in Scotland, for convalescence breaks and remedial treatment for a war disablement. They also reimburse Scottish war pensioners for travel to attend hospitals for accepted out-patient treatment.

2. However, war pensioners attending the Rehabilitation, Limb Fitting, Wheelchair and Mobility Centres previously known as Artificial Limb and Appliance Centres (ALACs) are paid directly by the appropriate Centre at the agreed public transport rate as follows:-

23p per mile plus 2p for an escort.

Subsistence is also payable at:-

£2.13 for 2.5 to 5 hours

£4.25 for 5 to 10 hours

£9.30 for over 10 hours.

3. The Centre should in turn, if there is no prior agreement in place with the relevant Health Board, reclaim these expenses from the war pensioner's Health Board of residence.