

Going to a Hospital or Medical Appointment?



Due to the COVID pandemic the British Government is asking that if people are able to make their own way to medical appointments to please do so and continue to help our NHS heroes. Here is a helpful guide to see what transport services are available and where.

Claiming Back Travel Costs

County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) operate a Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS). People can claim back (or in some instances, receive help upfront) reasonable costs for attending outpatient appointments by showing evidence that they or their partner:

- get Income Support
- get income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- get income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- are named on, or entitled to, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate – if you do not have a certificate, you can show your award notice; you qualify if you get Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits with a disability element (or both) and have income for tax credit purposes of £15,276 or less
- get Universal Credit and meet the criteria

You will need to keep any tickets or receipts you have as proof of the cost. Travel expenses may be claimed in person at all CDDFT outpatient appointment locations. Please speak to the outpatient reception desk on arrival. If you're an inpatient and need help to do this please ask to speak with our Transport Coordinator who can give you advice.

Costs can also be claimed retrospectively by completing the HC5 form available online or from Jobcentres, NHS hospitals, GP practices, dentists or opticians. See website for more information:

www.cddft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-visit-to-the-hospital/travel-costs.aspx

Need a Little Extra Support to Travel?

Friends of Darlington Memorial Hospital

Friends of Darlington Memorial Hospital provide a volunteer driver scheme for patients in Bishop Auckland and Darlington who have difficulty getting to and from Darlington Memorial Hospital. The service is free, although people may make a donation. Call **01325 743 866**.

Help To Health

Help To Health is a service operated by volunteer drivers which will take people to and from their healthcare appointments at hospitals, GP surgeries, pharmacies and dentists. **The service is available 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.**

The cost is 50p per mile (minimum charge £1) to a maximum of £10 plus any parking charges, it is open to people in Durham of any age, free to register by calling **0300 330 9424** or visit www.helpstohealth.org.uk

Bookings must be received 48 hours before the time of intended travel. This is to allow time to make arrangements for a volunteer driver to collect you.

Link2 Bus

Link2 is an accessible dial-a-ride bus service (journeys up to 5 miles) operated by Durham County Council, for people who do not have a suitable bus service, or are unable to access regular bus services due to mobility issues. Link2 will pick you up from an address specified by you, for example your home. It can be booked by anyone as long as:

- Your journey starts or ends in County Durham
- You do not have a bus stop within 600 metres/10 minute walk
- You do not have a bus service available within one hour of when you want to travel
- The journey would require a change of bus

Fares are the same as regular bus services and are paid when you get on the bus. **Concessionary bus travel passes can also be used.** To book the service, contact **03000 269 999**. The booking line is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm. Bookings can be made up to two weeks in advance and up to one hour before the time of intended travel. Bookings are made on a first come, first served basis so it's best to book as early as possible.

www.durham.gov.uk/article/1991/Link2-bus-service

Travelling by Car

University Hospital North Durham (UHND)

The car park is incredibly busy at all times of the day. At peak visiting times people can wait up to 30 minutes to get into the car park then additional time to find a space. If you have to park on site we'd recommend allowing plenty of time to find a space. **The cost is: 0-2 hours £3.00, up to 3 hours £4.00, 24 hours £6.00**

Parking is paid when leaving the hospital and is calculated from the time the car park was entered to the time you leave.

Sniperly Park & Ride (UHND)

The park and ride has ample car parking and is a very short bus journey away from UHND. The bus runs every 10 minutes and stops just outside the grounds. **The cost is £2 for all day parking, unlimited use of the park and ride bus, the Cathedral bus, under 16s travel for free if accompanied by an adult and concessionary passes can be used after 9:30am (50p charge before 9:30am).**

Eligible people can claim back these costs through the HTCS (see overleaf).

Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH)

The hospital car park is usually busy at all times of the day, please allow plenty of time to find a space. **The cost is: 0-2 hours £3.00, 2-3 hours £4.00, 3-24 hours £6.00**

Parking is paid on arrival at the hospital.

For parking concessions and information for our community hospitals please visit our website:

www.cddft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-visit-to-the-hospital/car-parking.aspx

NHS Funded Patient Transport Services

Non-emergency Patient Transport Service (PTS) is for people attending outpatient appointments or being discharged from hospital whose health conditions may affect their ability to travel without specialist care. This includes:

- Adults and children who require additional medical support during their journey
- Anyone who is immobile or finds it difficult to walk

To find out if you are eligible for PTS for an outpatient appointment or planned admission call **03000 269 999** or speak to your GP practice.

Waiting Times

• Outpatient appointment or planned admission

If using PTS for an outpatient appointment or planned admission you will need to be ready to travel two hours before your appointment time (precise times are unable to be given). This is due to the volume of people using PTS - for example if your appointment time is 10am you will need to be ready for pick up at 8am.

- **Hospital inpatient discharge** - At University Hospital North Durham (UHND) or Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH) you could wait a number of hours for your paperwork and ambulance before being transported home, so please consider other options as listed in this leaflet

Help with making arrangements or costs – Discharge from hospital

If you feel it would be more convenient to make your own way home, but need some help, please ask to speak with our Transport Coordinator. They can give you advice on available transport services, eligibility criteria for claiming back costs or simply help you contact a family member or friend to collect you.

Supported by

NHS County Durham

Clinical Commissioning Group

County Durham and Darlington

NHS Foundation Trust

North East Ambulance Service

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