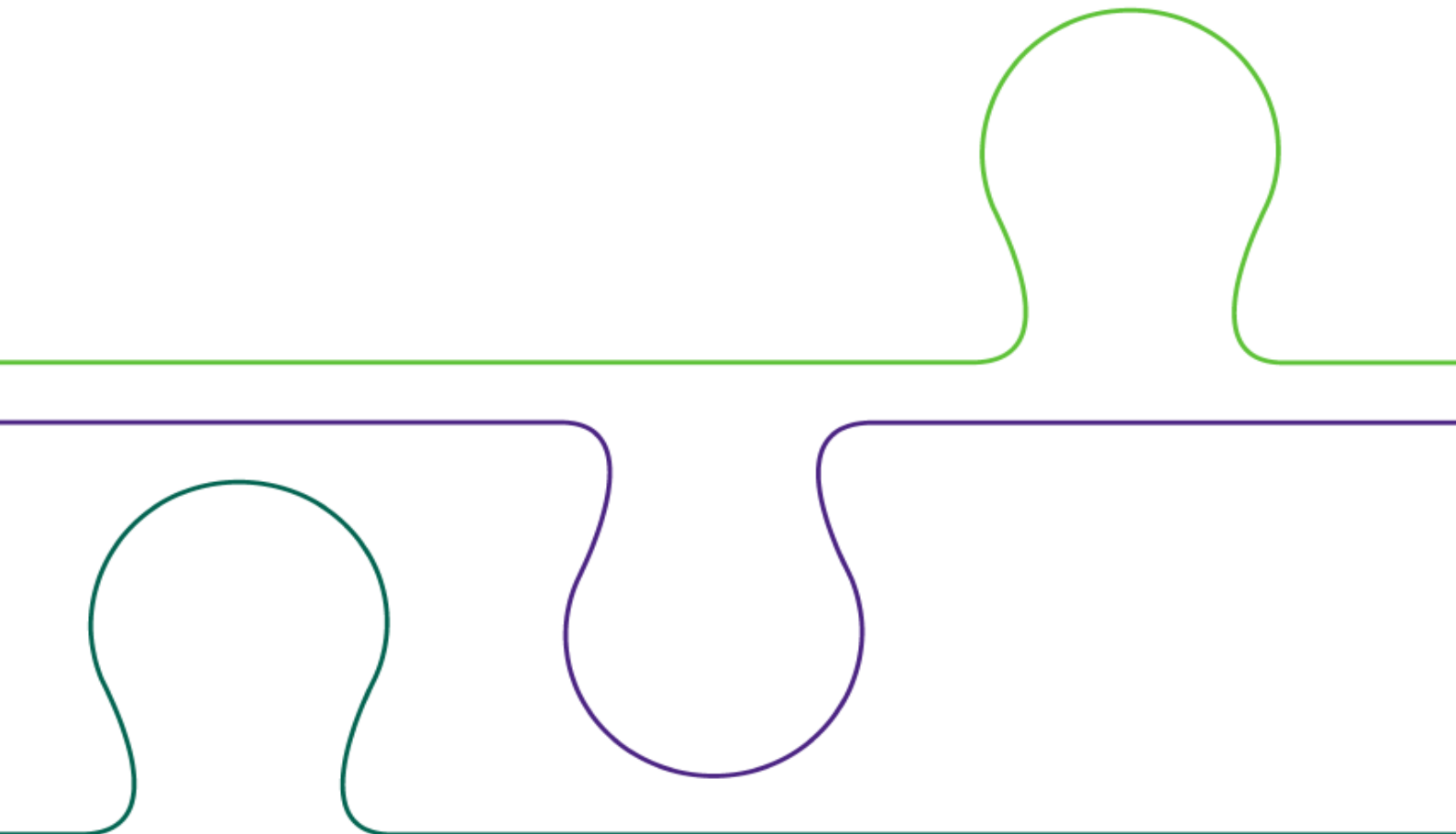


*[Insert hub and NIHR logo]*

# **Model Payment Policy for Service Users and Carers for MHRN hubs hosted by NHS Trusts**

Version 2.0 January 2012



**This Payment Policy is based on good practice established in the field of involvement in health and social care, and published as Valuing Involvement by CSIP with the support of Experts by Experience.**

**A companion guide 'Benefit Conditions and Systems around Paid and Voluntary Involvement' provides further detailed information.**

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## About the MHRN

The Mental Health Research Network (MHRN) is funded by the Department of Health. The MHRN consists of eight regional offices (or hubs) together with a Coordinating Centre. The MHRN Coordinating Centre is hosted by the University of Manchester and Institute of Psychiatry, which is part of Kings College London.

**This payment policy relates solely to payments to service users and carers through the [insert hub name].**

**The term 'service user' is used throughout the policy to mean both those that use services because of a mental health problem and those who have mental health problems but are not in contact with services.**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Mental Health Research Network

The Mental Health Research Network (MHRN) is part of and funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is one of the Topic Specific Networks of the NIHR CRN CC (NIHR CRN CC stands for: Clinical Research Network Coordinating Centre).

The Network provides the NHS infrastructure to support commercial and non-commercial large scale research in mental health, including clinical trials and is managed by a partnership between the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London and the University of Manchester.

The Mental Health Research Network aims to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of large-scale research projects that will inform policy and practice as it develops:

- To broaden the scope and capacity of research in mental health, by including the full involvement of service users and carers at every level of the MHRN including research studies that it supports
- To help identify the mental health research needs (particularly in health and social care)
- To develop research capacity through a range of initiatives at a local, regional and national level.
- To involve service users and carers in the work of the MHRN Coordinating Centre and its eight hubs at every level.

**This policy relates to activities carried out by [insert hub name]**

## 1.2 The legislation

The Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (2005) states that: 'research participants or their representatives should be involved wherever possible in the design, conduct, and analysis and reporting of research'.

Principle 3 of the NHS Constitution (2009) establishes research as an integral part of NHS activities.

### **1.3 Whom do we seek to involve?**

The Mental Health Research Network seeks people for involvement based on their individual personal experiences and expertise.

We seek to involve people who have personal experience of using mental health services or caring for a person who has used mental health services.

We also seek to involve people who have needed but not accessed mental health service and their carers.

## **2 PRINCIPLES**

### **2.1 For people who we seek for involvement**

People who we seek for involvement with the work of the Mental Health Research Network will:

- be paid for their individual personal contribution based on their personal experience if they wish (not as a representative of a charity)
- be offered adequate payments if they wish for involvement as set out in the Mental Health Research Network Adoptions Procedures
- have reasonable out of pocket expenses covered or reimbursed
- be not left out of pocket wherever practicable or put at risk of being financially worse off as a result of involvement
- be able to make an informed choice about involvement rates and terms before committing to involvement (see below for details of the Involvement Helpline and see MHRN Benefit Conditions and Systems)
- be offered payments and reimbursements in a manner that will not exclude people who must comply with state benefit conditions
- be offered payments according to open and consistent criteria that takes into account the level of involvement and the skills and expertise required.
- Wherever possible service users and carers should not be left out of pocket as a result of their involvement with the Mental Health Research Network

### **2.2 For people who are in receipt of state benefits**

The Mental Health Research Network acknowledges the benefit barriers to involvement that may be presented by a complex benefit rules and conditions.

The companion guide '**The Mental Health Research Network Benefit Conditions and Systems around Paid and Voluntary Involvement**' provides supplementary information to this Payment Policy by setting out the benefit rules about voluntary and paid involvement.

Difficulties that are caused to a person wishing to check what they are allowed to do include:

- Benefit rules and earning limits differ according to the benefit received.
- Earning limits may change annually. The year is started when the first episode of earning occurs.
- Some benefits have a separate rule on earnings: a certain amount of earnings in a week is 'disregarded'.
- Some benefits have both an earnings limit and an earning disregard.
- It is usual for a person to be in receipt of several benefits each of which has different conditions attached.
- Helpful changes to benefit rules for service user and carer involvement on the treatment of reimbursed expenses and the application of notional earnings apply to payments made by NHS Trusts (but not to Hubs where payments for involvement are made by universities).

Jobcentre Plus staff are not usually in a position to advise on benefit conditions for involvement as this is a specialised topic. Many of the free welfare rights advice services such as run by local authorities and the Citizen's Advice Bureau are not in a position to advise on involvement. If a person inadvertently breaches a benefit condition they may have their benefits reduced or stopped pending an enquiry.

For this reason, the MHRN Coordinating Centre subscribes to the **Involvement Helpline**. This is a specialised telephone welfare rights advice service provided by Milton Keynes Citizens Advice Bureau. Advisors are trained in involvement issues. They provide confidential, personalised and professional advice to anyone who is considering paid or voluntary involvement with the health or social care organisations that subscribe to the service

People who are in receipt of state benefits, will be offered information and assistance (in the form of access to the Involvement Helpline and the Mental Health Research Network Benefit Conditions and Systems around Paid and Voluntary Involvement document so that they can make an informed decision as to what levels of payment they can receive for any involvement work that they carry out with the MHRN.

The **[insert hub name]** will vary offers of involvement so that these are acceptable to people on benefits provided that service users establish via the Involvement Helpline or otherwise the amount of money that they can receive for the work that they perform

People may choose:

- the payment rate per hour or may choose to volunteer if they wish;
- to have their travel tickets pre-booked by the **[insert hub name]**
- to have a child carer or replacement carer paid directly if needed.

## 3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 The [insert hub name]:

- Have a responsibility for the health and safety of any individual who is involved in their work
- Have a responsibility under the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure that the individual's rights regarding the use of personal data are protected
- Have a responsibility to provide people with support and training wherever practicable to enable effective involvement
- Will offer people who are in receipt of state benefits access to Involvement Helpline where appropriate and the Mental Health Research Network Benefit Conditions and Systems around Paid and Voluntary Involvement document where appropriate so that they make an informed decision about involvement before committing to involvement
- Will offer involvement in a manner that does not present unnecessary benefit barriers as agreed with the individual; this may be voluntary, or paid at a rate lower than the standard rate offered. Where payments and reimbursed expenses are to be made by a NHS Trusts helpful changes to benefit rules for involvement are set out at the end of paragraph 7.3.2

### 3.2 Good practice procedures

The [insert hub name] will ensure that:

- A copy of this policy will be made available to people who are considering involvement with the MHRN on request
- Role descriptions for involvement will be provided where appropriate
- Individual payment records will be kept and will be available on request
- The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the MHRN Coordinating Centre, through feedback from service users and will amend the policy accordingly
- The policy is updated annually for any changes to employment legislation and benefit rules
- Ad-hoc arrangements that are outside of policy will not normally be allowed. An example of where ad hoc arrangements may be permitted is where service users and carers not in receipt of welfare benefits carry out substantial pieces of work. In such cases, it may be appropriate for the relevant hub manager to authorise a rate of payment that is proportionate to the nature of the work being carried out.

### **3.3 People who get involved:**

#### **Are, if in receipt of state benefits, responsible for taking up and following welfare rights advice and keeping to their benefit conditions**

- Are , if in receipt of state benefits, responsible for notifying Jobcentre Plus, as required, of plans for voluntary or paid involvement and the amount of payments
- Are responsible for notifying HM Revenue and Customs of payments received where this is required (See paragraph 6.3).
- Should choose the most cost-effective travel available to them

## **4 PAID INVOLVEMENT**

### **4.1 Involvement activities that will be paid include:**

- Membership of a hub executive
- Contributions to publications such as newsletters
- Membership of a hub service user reference group
- Membership of Steering Groups for individual Research Studies
- Presentations and talks as commissioned
- Social research and qualitative studies
- Taking part in a focus group
- Presenting or facilitating an event at a conference or seminar

**Please note: this is not an exhaustive list.**

### **4.2 Involvement activities that will not normally be paid**

- Attending a conference or seminar
- Participation in a research study

### **4.3 Payment rates**

Each of the MHRN hubs will make payments at levels which are set out in the hubs host NHS Trust payment policy for service users and carers. Different rates may be applicable to different forms of involvement with differing levels of responsibility

**Insert the activities and payment rates in the following table to those that may be applicable within the hub. We suggest that payments may be made for three broad areas of work (attendance at committee meetings, peer reviewing, and ‘other tasks’.**

**However, the following table need not be used and hubs are free to use whatever format they choose.**

<b>Committee Meetings</b>	
Preparation and attendance at a meeting such as the hub service user and carer steering group	Fee £X
<b>Peer Review</b>	
	Fee £X
<b>Other tasks</b>	
Writing patient materials for study	Fee £X
Attending relevant external training course / conference/event	No fee is normally payable although payment may be made at the discretion of the relevant hub manager  Pay for the cost of the training or event and reimburse travel and accommodation costs where agreed in advance

**Expenses should always be agreed with a member of MHRN staff in advance.**

The minimum rate of pay for involvement should not be less than £6.10 an hour (the minimum wage rate from 1 October 2011 is £6.08).

Payments must include payment for any additional time that is required of service users such as for preparation.

## 4.4 Paid involvement and the benefit system

### 4.4.1 Informed choice

A key principle of this Payments Policy is that people who are considering involvement must be able to make an informed choice about involvement rates and terms before committing to involvement.

People who are in receipt of state benefits may not be able to agree to involvement if the rate of pay that is offered is more than is allowed by their benefit conditions. But because of the complexity of the benefit system people must get welfare rights advice first to check their benefit conditions and find out how much they can be paid.

When the individual has been advised of the rate of pay and hours of involvement that will not impact on their benefit entitlement they will be able to let the **[insert hub name]** know what they agree to.

Some people may say that they prefer to be involved on a voluntary basis.

The lowest amount that can be offered per hour is £6.10. Involvement must be either paid or voluntary.

**NB Law does not allow for a combination of paid activity and voluntary activity. The person must be either paid for all the hours of involvement or unpaid for all the hours of involvement.**

### 4.4.2 Process of enabling informed choice

The process of enabling people who are in receipt of state benefits to make an informed choice for involvement pay rate and hours must be carried out in two stages.

#### Step 1

An initial informal offer of involvement is made. See letter Appendix II page 27. The letter makes an offer of involvement setting out the proposed rate of pay, the hours, the frequency of involvement events, and proposed means to cover or reimburse expenses.

The person is given information about the Involvement Helpline and offered access to the confidential advice service if appropriate. The person obtains the advice and makes a considered decision. They tell the **[insert hub name]** if they agree to getting involved and how much they will accept as payment. They will say if they want their expenses covered or reimbursed.

## Step 2

The NHS Trust Hub writes a formal letter offering involvement at the rates agreed. See letter Appendix III page 30. If the person does not want to be paid the letter offering voluntary involvement can be used. See letter Appendix IV page 32. The letter offering payment or voluntary involvement can be used to provide to Jobcentre Plus. The letter also sets out the expenses that will be covered or reimbursed.

If the person is in receipt of state benefits because of ill-health or disability they should also be provided with a letter addressed to Jobcentre Plus that explains why involvement is not the same as work and why it cannot be used as a measure of capacity for work. The person can enclose this letter with letter of offer when notifying Jobcentre Plus as they are required to do. After these procedures are completed the NHS Trust Hub can then deal with matters such as obtaining tax details if this appropriate, and claim forms etc. See the staff check list on page 40 that can be used as an aide memoire.

It is absolutely essential that the person who has agreed to involvement can advise Jobcentre Plus of the involvement, before contact with HMRC is made. **This is because if HMRC is informed that a person has been added to PAYE and is provided with their details, there is an assumption that they have started full-time employment. HMRC notify Jobcentre Plus who in turn stop benefit payments.**

### 4.4.3 Averaging payments

There is a helpful benefit rule that allows weekly payments to be treated as averaged over a longer period of several weeks. This enables a person to be paid more than the weekly limit in one week if they are not involved or involved for a lesser amount in another week. The **[insert hub name]** will consider if involvement can be arranged where possible in order to make use of the benefit-averaging rule.

**If there is any doubt as to how to use the averaging rules then please consult with the MHRN Coordinating Centre or consider making a referral to the Involvement Helpline.**

The benefit rules on averaging are set out in the Jobcentre Plus guide for their staff as follows:

*'The weekly amount of a person's income may be averaged if the income varies or the regular pattern of work means that the claimant does not work every week, over:*

- *A complete cycle if there is a recognisable cycle of work, **or***
- *Five weeks, **or***
- *Another period if this means a more accurate weekly amount can be calculated.  
Hours of work or paid involvement can be averaged as well.*

Hours of work or paid involvement can be averaged as well.

Even where averaging has been agreed by Jobcentre Plus where people are in receipt of benefits because of health problems it is inadvisable to exceed 16 hours a week in paid

involvement on a regular basis as an individual may be thought to have recovered and be sent for a review of their entitlement.

If involvement sessions are arranged at intervals of two weeks (for instance) the individual who is subject to a benefit limit of £20 a week earnings, may be able to offer involvement every two weeks up to a payment limit of £40.

If the higher limit of Permitted Work applies, some people may be able to earn £97.50 a week or £195 a fortnight if averaging is agreed by Jobcentre Plus. See Part A Benefit conditions and systems 1. Permitted Work for the details. Earnings of up to £97.50 may be limited to one year. In some circumstances earnings of up to £97.50 may be allowed without time limit.

The individual must send a copy of the letter offering involvement from the **NHS Trust Hub**, to Jobcentre Plus and ask for the payments to be averaged. This must be done well in advance of the time that involvement is due to start. If the Involvement Helpline has provided advice the advisor will offer to do this on behalf of the individual.

Jobcentre Plus has in certain cases agreed that people who are in receipt of Pension Credit can have earnings averaged over one year.

#### **4.4.4 Notional earnings cannot be applied if payment is to be made by a NHS Trust.**

Where payments are to be made by a NHS Trust, a helpful change to benefit rules has been introduced.

Service users who are in receipt of state benefits may decline an offer of payment and their benefits will not be affected if they refuse the offer and accept a lower amount or nothing. Notional earnings do not apply.

Service users may also ask for the payment to be made to a charity, and notional earnings will not apply. But see below 4.4.5 for payments that are diverted to other third parties. Two sets of guidance on the changes have been issued for Jobcentre Plus staff and can be downloaded <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/m-37-09.pdf>, <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/m-34-09.pdf>

#### **4.4.5 Payments to third parties**

Where a person requests that a payment that is due to them is made to a third party instead, that may be another person or an organisation or a company, the benefit rules will treat the payment as if it were made to the person. Jobcentre Plus may see this as an attempt to defraud. For this reason the Coordinating Centre or Hubs will not usually make payments to third parties.

## **5 DIFFERENT FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT: BENEFIT RULES ON PAYMENTS, TAX & EMPLOYMENT LAW**

### **5.1 Involvement that is voluntary**

‘Voluntary’ means that there is no payment for a person’s time.

#### **Benefits:**

People who are in receipt of state benefits are allowed to do voluntary work or involvement for as many hours as they wish. Some will have to get prior permission. All must notify Jobcentre Plus. It is advisable for people on incapacity based benefits to restrict their hours of voluntary involvement to less than 16 hours a week as Jobcentre Plus may doubt that they are still incapable of work if they do more.

#### **Tax:**

Where there is no payment for a person’s time there is no tax due.

#### **Employment law:**

Employment law does not apply to voluntary work or voluntary involvement. It may be described as volunteering or as voluntary work. A volunteer’s agreement can set out the arrangements that are made for continued voluntary involvement. If involvement is with a non-profit making charity or statutory organisation a contract can be offered, but this not required.

Training necessary for the voluntary work or involvement can be provided.

**NB** If any payment is made, other than for reimbursed expenses, then the involvement is not treated in law as voluntary. Benefits may be affected.

### **5.2 Once-off involvement**

‘Once-off’ means for one day only, for an organisation with which the person has done no paid work or involvement in the same financial year. A gift of money can be made in appreciation.

#### **Benefits:**

People on state benefits can get involved as a once-off and receive a gift of money and their benefits will not be affected. This is providing that the gift of money does not take their capital (savings) over the limit of £6,000. A thank you letter must be provided that can be used to show Jobcentre Plus if asked. See Appendix I page 26.

### **Tax:**

HMRC have confirmed that they do not want to be notified about a 'once-off' gift of money in these circumstances. Neither tax nor National Insurance need be deducted.

### **Employment law:**

Employment law does not apply.

## **5.3 Paid involvement (when the once-off rule does not apply)**

### **Benefits:**

People on state benefits must get welfare rights advice on the amount they can be paid without affecting their benefits prior to committing to involvement even for one occasion. They must advise Jobcentre Plus of the amount that they will be paid.

### **Tax:**

HMRC will decide if they wish to be notified of a person's details when participation in research is intermittent. Tax may be deductible depending on the level of payment and personal tax code.

### **Employment law:**

Employment law (as for employees) is unlikely to apply if involvement is intermittent and infrequent. Verbal arrangements are all that is required.

The National Minimum Wage Act applies. If involvement is to be arranged on a frequent basis advice should be taken from your HR department.

## **5.4 Paid involvement for fixed term project**

### **Benefits:**

People on state benefits must get welfare rights advice on the amount they can be paid without affecting their benefits prior to committing to involvement. If the amount offered as a weekly payment is more than their total benefit income they might want to consider the implications of coming off benefits for the duration of the project.

**Caution!** Previously a benefit linking rule guaranteed a return to certain incapacity benefits at the same rate as before following a period in temporary employment, but this has now been abolished for some benefits. Any break in a benefit claim can now result in a serious loss of income. See **Part A 'Benefit Conditions and Systems'** Step 4 page 32 for the full details.

If people stay on benefits they must advise Jobcentre Plus of the amount that they will be paid and the frequency of involvement events.

**Tax:**

HMRC will require the details of a person who is paid for regular involvement. Tax may be deductible depending on the level of payment and personal tax code.

**Employment law:**

If paid involvement activity requires a commitment for the duration of a finite project then ends, then some aspects of employment law may apply and advice should be taken from the relevant HR department if there is any doubt. The National Minimum Wage Act applies.

**5.5 Person is self-employed and is asked to be involved as set out above in 5.3 or 5.4 or 5.5**

Your HR Department will have procedures for checking if a person is registered as self-employed with HMRC.

**Benefits:**

Where a person is self-employed they may none-the-less be in receipt of certain benefits such as for housing costs and Tax Credits. They may need to get welfare rights advice on the amount they can be paid without affecting their benefits prior to committing to involvement. They may need to ask for a different amount than offered based on the advice they receive. If they receive housing benefits they must advise the local authority of the amount that they will be paid and the approximate frequency of involvement events. If they receive Tax Credits they may or may not need to obtain advice on paid involvement.

**Tax:**

A self-employed person is responsible for their own tax. No tax or National Insurance should be deducted.

**Employment law:**

Holiday pay, sick pay, maternity and paternity pay are not payable to people who are self-employed. HR should be consulted and asked if a contract is required.

## **6. EMPLOYMENT LAW ISSUES**

### **6.1 Casual workers' rights**

If your HR department advises that the frequency of paid involvement means that the person has become effectively a 'casual worker' they will acquire, in law, core rights to:

- Payment of at least the minimum wage rate (the minimum wage rate applies in all circumstances)
- Provision of written terms and conditions within two months of starting
- Independent employment advice
- Protection against unfair discrimination
- Health and Safety protection
- Working time rights (including breaks and holiday pay pro-rata) regardless as to whether people claim benefits or not.
- Join a Union

Where paid involvement is part-time and intermittent holiday pay is pro-rata calculated on the basis of full-time entitlement. Full-time work gives a statutory entitlement of 28 days (5.6 weeks) holiday per annum including bank holidays. Holiday pay must be paid at the time the holiday is taken (not as a percentage added to the payment). An annual payment of holiday pay can be made for involvement.

## **6.2 Terms and conditions**

It is advisable for hubs to take advice from their host organisations if there is doubt as to the status of people who are being paid for involvement, because of the frequency and regularity of the involvement.

A Fixed Term Contract or other standard contracts can be supplied by your HR Department.

## **6.3 PAYE, tax and NI**

### **(Where payments for involvement are made by an NHS Trust)**

An organisation such as an NHS Trust that makes payments to an individual for involvement has an obligation to provide HM Revenue and Customs with the name and address and national insurance number of the individual who is to be paid, in order to ascertain if tax and National Insurance should be deducted from payments.

HMRC may waive this requirement if participation is intermittent.

HM Revenue and Customs usually require the organisation that is making payments to a person to obtain the person's details. These may be supplied via a P45 form. If a P45 is not available then the person should be asked to complete a P46 form.

The P46 form is a short form suitable for people who may be in receipt of state benefits. It asks for personal details and about benefits claimed.

### **Caution!**

**If HMRC have decided to require details of a person who is considering involvement and who is in receipt of state benefits careful administrative procedures will be necessary.**

**The service user or carer must not be asked to provide a P45/ P46 form until:**

- **they have received welfare rights advice on their benefit conditions and have told the Hub what they agree to;**
- **Received a written offer of payment from the NHS Trust (who will be making the payments) and have used this offer to advise Jobcentre Plus of their planned paid involvement and if necessary obtained permission under the Permitted Work rules.**

**The reason for this process is that HM Revenue and Customs will notify Jobcentre Plus when they receive the P45/P46. Jobcentre Plus will assume the person has commenced employment (rather than part-time intermittent involvement) and may stop their benefits.**

The staff checklist of procedures should be used when involving people who are in receipt of state benefits. This checklist is at the end of the appendices.

## 6.4 Chart showing different terms of engagement

Type of involvement	Payment for time?	Expenses reimbursed?	Agreement or Terms and conditions	Benefit and Jobcentre Plus issues	Tax code required?	Holiday pay pro-rata due?	Entitlement to sick pay, maternity/paternity pay?
5.1 Voluntary	None	Yes if agreed in advance	Letter of agreement	Must be notified	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
5.2 One-off	Gift of money	Yes if agreed in advance	Letter of thanks	None	None	Not applicable	Not applicable
5.3 Intermittent/ infrequent	Yes	Yes if agreed in advance	Letter making offer  HR advice may be required	Must be notified Payment must be below limit and disregard	Tax code may be required – must liaise with HMRC	No	Employment rights unlikely. Consult HR if unclear.
5.4 Regular and weekly or for fixed term project	Yes	Yes if agreed in advance	HR advice required  Fixed term contract	Must be notified. Payment must be either below limit and disregard OR if above limit benefits will stop. See 5.4 Caution Risks to benefits.	Tax and NI deductions will probably be required – must liaise with HMRC	Yes	May enjoy employment rights, seek advice from the HR department of the host NHS Trust
5.6 Self-employed and involved as 5.3 or 5.4, or 5.5	Yes	Yes if agreed in advance	Consult HR if contract required	If benefits claimed must be notified	No tax or NI deducted	No	No

## 7. COVERING OR REIMBURSING EXPENSES

### 7.1 Who will have their expenses covered or reimbursed?

People who are recruited for voluntary, once-off and paid involvement will have their expenses paid for in advance (covered) or reimbursed.

Where people are invited to attend a conference or seminar expenses are normally covered or reimbursed. However, expenses should always be agreed in advance with a member of MHRN staff.

### 7.2 Which expenses will be covered or reimbursed?

The **[insert hub name]** will cover or reimburse the following expenses, providing these are incurred necessarily for participation and have been agreed beforehand.

**The [insert hub name] reserve the right to refuse to reimburse any expenses that have not been agreed in advance of the involvement.**

Expenses may be covered when this is requested. Travel tickets may be purchased, transport may be provided, accommodation and subsistence may be paid for directly where appropriate; child-care or replacement carers can be paid directly.

Receipts must be provided for reimbursements, and only the exact costs will be reimbursed.

#### 7.2.1 Travel costs:

- Using public transport where possible and trains at standard class rates (**not first class travel**)
- Taxis/cabs where necessary and by prior agreement of the Hub staff.
- Your own car at **[insert mileage rate]**. If you are using your own car then you are asked to inform the hub as to the likely mileage prior to travelling so that the hub can approve reimbursement of the expense.

#### 7.2.2 Accommodation:

The **[insert hub name]** can book over-night hotel accommodation for you in advance. A hotel room will normally be booked for a person if they have to travel before 7am or for health reasons.

If you think you will need accommodation, you should ask us to book this for you at least two weeks in advance.

If you wish to book and pay for your accommodation the **[insert hub name]** will reimburse you for a maximum of up to:

- £100 per person per night including breakfast & VAT in London
- £80 per person per night including breakfast and VAT elsewhere

You are asked to inform the hub as to the costs of any accommodation prior to booking so that the hub can approve reimbursement of the expense.

### 7.2.3 Subsistence:

Meals and snacks are generally provided by the **[insert hub name]** at an event.

Where you pay for meals, snacks, and non-alcoholic drinks during involvement, the exact costs will be covered (paid by the hub or reimbursed of up to a maximum of £X for a meal).

Receipts for the meal must be provided. Credit card receipts are not accepted.

### 7.2.4 Replacement carer or child-care costs:

If you are a carer, participating in the Coordinating Centre or Hub activities may mean that you will need to arrange a replacement carer whilst you are away. You may be a carer for a person with a disability or for a child. If you have no close relative to provide replacement care, the cost of providing necessary alternative care whilst you are away can usually be covered or reimbursed. You will need to discuss any arrangement in advance.

## 7.3 Reimbursed expenses

Where people who are involved are in receipt of state benefits it is important to be aware of benefit rules. Previously some reimbursements were treated as earnings. Helpful changes to the benefit rules mean that where an NHS Trust reimburses expenses for involvement, the reimbursed amount is ignored and does not affect benefit entitlement.

### 7.3.1 Expenses that are reimbursed to a volunteer

Expenses that are reimbursed to a volunteer do not affect benefits as long as these are incurred during the course of the volunteering 'wholly, exclusively and necessarily'. Reimbursed travel expenses from home to the place of involvement will be ignored.

The cost of childcare or a replacement carer may be questioned and so it is desirable for these costs to be paid directly to the person who provided the service.

### 7.3.2 Expenses that are reimbursed to a person who is paid

## Expenses that are reimbursed by an NHS Trust

Where paid involvement is with a public authority such as an NHS Trust that is required by law to involve service users reimbursements for expenses are ignored. Two sets of guidance on the changes have been issued for Jobcentre Plus staff and can be downloaded. (See: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/m-37-09.pdf> and <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/m-34-09.pdf>)

#### **7.4 Procedures to cover expenses**

**You may choose to have your expenses covered i.e. paid for directly.**

As requested the **[insert hub name]** will:

- Buy travel tickets or cards and send these to participants before the event
- Arrange transport through cab accounts where necessary and by prior agreement of the Hub staff.
- Pay for subsistence and accommodation directly
- Pay a child- carer or replacement carer directly

The **[insert hub name]** is happy to organise this for you whether or not you are in receipt of state benefits.

Where a person to be involved wishes to request arrangements to cover their expenses they should discuss this at least two weeks in advance.

Where a person to be involved requires a replacement carer or replacement child-care, the recruitment and management of the person will be their responsibility. The **[insert hub name]** will require their agreement to the amount and their authority to pay them. There is a form to sign. See Appendix VII page 36.

This form also asks for the contact details of the replacement carer or child-carer so that we can write to them to arrange for payment.

#### **7.5 Procedures for NHS Trusts to reimburse expenses**

People, who have decided to have their expenses reimbursed after the event, should discuss and agree these expenses with the **[insert hub name]** before the event. Unless the expenses are agreed in advance the **[insert hub name]** will not be responsible for reimbursements.

The expenses claim form will be provided. The form must be completed and receipts for ALL expenses must be provided. Only expenses with receipts will be reimbursed.

## 8. IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS

If at any time problems, arise please contact the **[insert hub name]**. Contact details are given below

***[Insert contact details of a member of hub staff]***

***[In the standard letters for Appendix, I to IX please format the address under the NHS Trust logo with the correct address for the hub]***

## APPENDIX I

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

**Standard letter:**  
**Thank you for once-off involvement**  
*(Delete the above when formatting)*

**Date:**

Dear

**Event name, date: Offer of one-off involvement**

Thank you for your interest in participating in this one-off event with the **[insert hub name]**.

Your knowledge and experience of mental health services will be making an important contribution to research.

In appreciation, we would like to provide you with a cash gift of £X as a thank you. As this is a one off gift and you have not been involved with the MHRN before, this will not affect your benefits.

Our policy is to cover expenses that are incurred necessarily, wholly and exclusively in the course of involvement. Please contact me to discuss any necessary expenses that you may incur and whether you will need to be provided with travel tickets and/or transport to attend the event/ meeting.

If you are in receipt of benefits you can show this letter to Jobcentre Plus to explain your involvement with the **[insert hub name]**.

Enclosed is a form for your bank details so that we can make the payment to you. Could you return this in the SAE provided. Thank you.

Please feel free to contact me with any other issues that may concern you.

Yours sincerely

Thank you,

Signed

## APPENDIX II

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

#### STEP 1

**Standard letter:**

**Initial invitation for paid involvement**

**Purpose: for person to show to Involvement Helpline Advisor before deciding whether to get involved**

Dear **(name of person to be involved)**

Thank you for your interest in being involved in the work of the **[insert hub name]** from your personal perspective as someone who has experience of using mental health services.

We are offering you paid involvement at a rate of £X per *(meeting or other function)* on *(please insert the dates in which involvement will take place if known)*. Please note that the payment is intended to cover involvement in preparation that is required before you attend, and any follow up after the meeting such as your notes.

The *(meetings or other function)* will be held *(once only/once a month/quarterly/annually)* and will last for a maximum of x hours.

We will make payments by automated bank transfer monthly in arrears.

#### **Expenses**

Our policy is to cover or reimburse expenses that that are incurred necessarily, wholly and exclusively in the course of involvement such as:

- Reasonable travel expenses (see paragraph 7.2 of the Payment Policy)
- Any costs that you will incur as a result of involvement for child care or for a replacement carer

You have 2 options for the costs:

- We can cover the expenses and pay for these directly by providing travel tickets or card if you wish and by arranging to pay the child carer or replacement carer directly if you authorise the amount and provide their details

Or

- You can pay these costs and make a claim for reimbursement with receipts

**If you are in receipt of any of the benefits that are listed on the following page you will be aware that these have associated conditions that set limits on the amount of money you can accept as a payment. Please see if you would like to use the Involvement Helpline. Information about the Helpline can be found in the MHRN Payments Policy on [www.mhrn.info](http://www.mhrn.info)**

I look forward to hearing from you when you have decided if you will go ahead with involvement, about the rate of payment and about any expenses.

Yours Sincerely,

Signed

If you are in receipt of any of the following state benefits you can ask to use the Involvement Helpline that is run by Milton Keynes Citizens Advice Bureau, before you decide to help MHRN with our work.

The Involvement Helpline has specially trained advisors who can offer you free phone advice. This is a specialist benefit and tax credit advice service. It provides confidential, personalised and professional advice to anyone who is considering paid or voluntary involvement with the health or social care organisations that subscribe to the service.

- Incapacity Benefit
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Income Support for incapacity
- Income Support as a lone parent, carer or for any other reasons
- Employment and Support Allowance (contributory or income based)
- Carer's Allowance
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit or Savings Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Local Housing Allowance
- Council Tax Benefit
- Care home costs
- Tax Credits

## APPENDIX III

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

**Date:**

**Standard letter:**

**Offer of paid involvement to people who are in receipt of benefits (to be made after person has obtained advice on benefits and made an informed decision about the rate of pay and frequency of involvement and manner in which expenses will be covered)**

**Purpose: for person to be involved to show a copy to Jobcentre Plus  
NB Delete the above when formatting letter**

## STEP 2

**Dear (name of person to be involved)**

Thank you for your interest in being involved in the work of the **[insert hub name]** from your personal perspective as someone who has experience of using mental health services.

We are offering you paid involvement at a maximum rate of £X per *(meeting or other function)* on *(please insert the dates in which involvement will take place if known)*. Please note that the payment is intended to cover involvement in preparation that is required before you attend, and any follow up after the meeting such as your notes.

The *(meetings or other function)* will be held *(once only/once a month/quarterly/annually)* and will last for a maximum of X hours.

We will make payments by automated bank transfer monthly in arrears.

### **Expenses**

Our policy is to cover or reimburse expenses that that are incurred necessarily, wholly and exclusively in the course of involvement such as: *(Delete as appropriate)*

- Reasonable travel expenses (see Payment Policy paragraph 7.)
- Any costs that you will incur as a result of involvement for child care or for a replacement carer

You have said that we can pay for these expenses directly by providing travel tickets or card and/or transport and by arranging to pay the child carer or replacement carer directly if you authorise the amount and provide their details. I will send you the form shortly.

OR

You have said that you will claim a reimbursement of these expenses. I will send you a form shortly.

(Delete paragraph above as appropriate)

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Signed

## APPENDIX IV

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

## STEP 2

Standard letter:

**Offer of voluntary involvement to people who are in receipt of benefits (to be made after person has obtained advice on benefits and made an informed decision that they will volunteer their involvement and have decided the manner in which expenses will be covered)**

**Purpose: for person to be involved to show copy to Jobcentre Plus  
NB Delete the above when formatting letter**

Dear **(name of person to be involved)**

Thank you for your interest in being involved in the work of the **[insert hub name]** from your personal perspective as someone who has experience of using mental health services. We are offering you involvement on a voluntary basis. This means that you will not be paid for your time. The (meetings or other function) will be held (once only/once a month/quarterly/annually) and will last for a maximum of x hours.

### Expenses

Our policy is to cover or reimburse expenses that that are incurred necessarily, wholly and exclusively in the course of involvement such as:

- Reasonable travel expenses (see paragraph 7.2 of Payment Policy.)
- Any costs that you will incur as a result of involvement for child care or for a replacement carer

You have said that we can pay for these expenses directly by providing travel tickets or card and/or transport and by arranging to pay the child carer or replacement carer directly if you authorise the amount and provide their details. Please see attached letter and forms.

OR

You have said that you will claim a reimbursement of these expenses. I will send you a form shortly. *(Delete paragraph above as appropriate)*

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Signed

## APPENDIX V

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

## STEP 2

**Standard letter:**

**Give this letter to the person involved to provide Jobcentre Plus if they receive incapacity based benefits or Employment and Support Allowance**

**Purpose: Prevent recruitment for involvement being mistaken for recruitment for employment and incapacity status being questioned and Jobcentre Plus sending the person for an additional Work Capability Assessment. This letter is to be given to the person who uses services to use if they wish (not sent to Jobcentre Plus)**

*(Delete above before sending out letter)*

**To: Jobcentre Plus**

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to you to advise you about the 'involvement' of (name of person) with the **[insert hub name]** so as to prevent any misunderstanding.

The Mental Health Research Network (MHRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is one of the Topic Specific Networks of the NIHR CRN CC (Clinical Research Network Coordinating Centre).

The Network provides the NHS infrastructure to support commercial and non-commercial large scale research in mental health, including clinical trials and is managed by a partnership between the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London and the University of Manchester.

The Mental Health Research Network aims to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of large-scale research projects that will inform policy and practice as it develops:

- To broaden the scope and capacity of research in mental health, by including the full involvement of service users and carers,
- To help identify the mental health research needs (particularly in health and social care),
- To develop research capacity through a range of initiatives at a local, regional and national level.

We recruit people for involvement because of their personal experience of using mental health services. Recruitment for involvement should not be confused with recruitment for employment.

Involvement is part-time, usually less than three hours in any one week, and may be voluntary or paid. Due to the nature of involvement we expect that the person who is involved will prepare for a meeting or event in advance, and will need to follow up after the meeting with notes and discussion. Any payments are intended for all three stages of the involvement meeting or event.

Participation is supported so that people who are unable to work can participate and talk about their experiences of using mental health services. We are particularly concerned that involvement is not mistaken to represent capacity for work.

Yours Sincerely,

Signed

## APPENDIX VI

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

## STEP 2

#### Standard letter:

Covering letter to person to be involved for administrative arrangements

As relevant this letter will contain:

- Fee and/or expenses claim form
- Bank details form
- Authorisation of payments to child carer or replacement carer form

*(delete the above when formatting letter)*

Dear (name of person)

Thank you for agreeing to be involved with the **[insert hub name]**. There are some administrative arrangements to be made. Enclosed is the claim form for payments and/or expenses and your bank details form. Please can you complete and return these.

#### As relevant

You have asked us to pay your child carer/replacement carer directly. Please could you complete and return the enclosed form.

OR

You have asked us to reimburse the costs of child carer/replacement carer. Please could you complete and return the enclosed form.

*(Delete paragraph above as appropriate)*

Should you have any questions about these arrangements please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Yours sincerely

Signed

## APPENDIX VII

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

#### STEP 2

#### Authorisation to pay a child carer or replacement carer

**Purpose: confirmation of responsibility for the management of child carer or replacement carer and authorisation of payment**

*(delete above when sending out)*

I confirm that I am responsible for the management of (name of child carer or replacement carer) who provided/who will provide services for me on (insert date) to enable me to undertake involvement with the **[insert hub name]**. I confirm:

Rate of pay per hour £.....

Number of hours to be worked .....

Total: £

Payment should be made to (insert name of child carer or replacement care) for their work after the involvement event

Address of child carer or replacement carer.....

Authorised by:

(name of the person involved).....

Signature.....

Authorised by MHRN

(name of member of staff) .....

Signature.....

Date .....

## APPENDIX VIII

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

Date:

#### STEP 2

#### Letter explaining the process of reimbursement to a child carer or replacement carer

**Purpose: make arrangements to pay them**

***(delete the above when sending out)***

Dear (name of person)

I understand that you have provided/will be providing support services for (insert name of person who has been involved) to enable them to be involved in the work of the **[insert hub name]**.

The **[insert hub name]** will be paying you directly for the services you provided. The purpose of this letter is to tell you about the process for payment.

Please note this is not a contract with the **[insert hub name]**. Therefore, you will need to arrange to pay your tax and National Insurance contributions.

With this letter is a form completed by (insert name of person), authorising us to pay you, a form requesting your bank details, and a stamped addressed envelope (SAE).

Please complete all of the enclosed paperwork and return everything to us in the SAE.

Payment will be made either by BACS directly into your bank account or by cheque

Many Thanks

Best wishes, (insert staff name)

**APPENDIX IX**

**Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments**

**Date:**

**STEP 2**

**Purpose: to get the bank details of any person that will receive a payment directly.  
(delete above before sending)**

**BANK DETAILS FOR PAYMENTS**

Name:.....

Address:.....

Description of activity undertaken / attended:  
.....

Date of activity undertaken:.....

Amount Claimed: £.....

**Payment method (please tick preferred payment method)**

BACS	CHEQUE
------	--------

**Please complete if you want your expenses paid directly into your bank account:**

Bank Account name (Account holders name as it appears on bank statement or cheque book):

.....

Bank/ Building Society

Sort code (6 digit no) .....

Account No (8 digit no) .....

Reference (building society only) .....

**Please complete if you want your expenses to be paid by cheque:**

Cheque to be payable to .....(name of account)

Signature ..... Date.....

## APPENDIX X

### STEP 2

#### EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

***[Insert claim form from the hubs host NHS trust]***

## APPENDIX XIII

### Use headed paper of the NHS Trust administering payments

#### MHRN Staff checklist with procedures for access to the Involvement Helpline for people in receipt of state benefits

##### 1. Introduction

The staff checklist is an aide memoire that can be copied and used for people when they are recruited for involvement if they are in receipt of state benefits. This will not be necessary where a person is not in receipt of benefits. The aide memoire can be helpful if the process of induction runs over several weeks and as a handover tool for holidays and sickness.

The staff checklist should be read in conjunction with the Payment Policy paragraph 4.4.2 'Process of enabling informed choice' for referring people to the Involvement Helpline.

Name of person enquiring about involvement

.....

Address and contact details

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Name of MHRN staff member

.....

Action	Tick when action taken, record agreement of person to rates of payment etc Put date	Responsibility
Initial contact is made with a person to clarify that they are, or thinking about getting, involved with research.		
<p>What involvement are you requesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once-off? - Send letter Appendix I page 26 Plus the bank details form Appendix IX</li> <li>• Paid (one event only arranged) - Send letter Appendix II page 27 + Payment Policy +Helpline leaflet</li> <li>• Paid intermittent - Send letter Appendix II page 27 + Payment Policy +Helpline leaflet if appropriate</li> <li>• Fixed term contract (consult with HR for contract) Send letter outlining duration of fixed term contract and proposed payment and ask for meeting to talk it through If person is in receipt of benefits and payments will lead to benefits stopping, draw their attention to the Benefit Conditions and Systems document page 32 and possible risks to benefits.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Step 1</b> If person is to be offered access to the Involvement Helpline decides to use it provide them with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The details of how to contact the service, and procedures</li> <li>2. Offer to fax/email the Helpline with the initial offer of involvement</li> <li>3. The benefits checklist that the person can complete and return directly to the Involvement Helpline</li> </ol> <p>These documents can be sent through the</p>		

<p>post or via email whichever is preferred. Please note the Involvement Helpline documents run to a number of pages so people may prefer a hard copy.</p> <p>The individual should be advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Helpline needs information about their benefits in order to provide the advice. If they are not sure about completing the benefits checklist they can talk to the Helpline advisor about this instead.</li> <li>• the person answering the phone initially will be an administrator, not an advisor. The administrator will ask the individual when it would be convenient for the advisor to call them back</li> </ul>		
<p>Contact the Milton Keynes Involvement Helpline on <a href="mailto:invovlement@mkcab.org.uk">invovlement@mkcab.org.uk</a> or 0800 652 0942 to advise them that the person concerned will be getting in touch.</p>		
<p><b>Step 2</b></p> <p>The person should be contacted after 2 weeks. You should ask them if they have received advice from the Helpline and have come to a decision about involvement. If they have received the advice and come to a decision you should ask them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What involvement they are willing to do – hours and frequency</li> <li>• The rate of pay they will agree to</li> <li>• If they have asked the Helpline advisor to obtain agreement of Jobcentre Plus to averaging payments and how long this might take</li> <li>• Expenses that they will require</li> <li>• The manner in which the expenses are to be covered</li> <li>• Any further details that may be required for administrative reasons, such as: travel tickets and/or transport arrangements that are required</li> </ul>		
<p>Write letter of offer of involvement to person as agreed (See Appendix III for paid offer or Appendix IV for offer of voluntary involvement)</p>		

<p>They need this letter in order to notify Jobcentre Plus. Enclose: Standard letter addressed to Jobcentre Plus Appendix V for person to use if they are in receipt of incapacity benefits</p>		
<p><b>ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS</b></p>		
<p><b>Prepare pack to send person that includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Covering letter plus SAE</li> </ul> <p>And as relevant</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Travel tickets or cards and/or transport</li> </ul>		
<p>If child care or replacement carer required and they will be paid directly send</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Form for responsibility for management and authorisation of payment form Appendix VII</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bank details form</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Determine:</b> Does HMRC require their details for a tax code? First check with person that they have notified Jobcentre Plus of planned involvement. <b>If so</b> send for P46 for completion. <b>Then:</b> send P46 form to HMRC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ send P46 form for completion</li> </ul>		
<p>If a fixed term contract is appropriate send two copies and SAE for signed copy to be returned</p>		
<p><b>FOLLOW UP</b></p>		
<p>When name and address of child carer or replacement carer are received send them with SAE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ covering letter Appendix VIII page 37</li> <li>➤ bank details form to complete Appendix IX page 38</li> </ul>		