

Committee for Health
Room 410
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

14 February 2022

By email: committee.health@niassembly.gov.uk

For the attention of Mr Keith McBride

Dear Sir

Hospital Parking Charges Bill – Travel Cost Scheme

I refer to your correspondence dated 25 January 2022 in respect of the above.

With regard to the Committee members' observations in respect of a decline in claims to the Travel Cost Scheme I would refer to the table below:

	Total Non-inpatient Hospital Attendances		Number of Hospital Travel Cost Scheme Claims		Value of Hospital Travel Cost Scheme Claims £	
	RVH	BCH	RVH	BCH	RVH	BCH
2017/18	521,004	263,921	7,392	10,711	118,586	166,217
2018/19	540,390	262,333	6,568	9,549	111,595	160,799
2019/20	513,239	244,729	6,081	8,609	109,950	151,428
Total	1,574,633	770,983	20,041	28,869	340,131	478,444

The table shows a reduction in the number of non-inpatient attendances at the Royal Victoria and Belfast City Hospitals over the period 2017/18–2019/20, which would in some part, explain the decline in Travel Cost Claims. We also had the period of industrial action and the start of the pandemic impact on our services in the last quarter of 19/20. Other contributing factors such as benefit eligibility of non-inpatient attendances may offer some additional explanation; however, we continue to promote the scheme to patients within our appointment correspondence.

In respect of alternative schemes to generate income, I wish to advise the purpose of car parking charging is to cover the maintenance and security costs associated with car parking systems and estate, rather than to raise revenue per se. Currently, the Trust does not

generate sufficient funds from staff and visitor car parking to cover the full costs of providing car parking.

I would confirm the Trust has not to date given consideration to other income generation schemes such as advertising space. We are subject to extremely stringent guidance around suitable advertising, and our use of such space would be limited to health promotion and promotion of the Trust values.

I hope the above affords Committee members the further information requested and if I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brenda Creaney".

Brenda Creaney
Executive Director of Nursing and User Experience
On behalf of Dr Cathy Jack, Chief Executive



Committee for Health

Dr Cathy Jack
Chief Executive
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

By email: sharona.kelly@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Our Ref.: C15/22

25 January 2022

Dear Dr Jack

Re: Hospital Parking Charges Bill

At its meeting on 20 January, the Committee for Health heard evidence from the Belfast Trust on the Hospital Parking Charges Bill.

The Committee noted that the figures relating to the number of claims to the Travel Cost Scheme (at Tables 6 and 7 of the written submission) show a decline from 2017/2018 – 2019/20. The Committee requests further information on the reasons for this decline in claims to the scheme.

The Committee also asks if the Belfast Trust has considered any other revenue raising streams to generate income, such as advertising space etc.

I should be grateful for a response by 8 February 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Keith McBride
Clerk
Committee for Health

Cc: Brenda.Creaney@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Wendy.patterson@health-ni.gov.uk
Suzanne.Howe@health-ni.gov.uk
Andrea.caldwell@health-ni.gov.uk