Payments for lay contributors to NICE’s work – Frequently Asked Questions

What are NICE’s principles for offering you a payment?
1. We offer payment (known as honoraria) to individual lay people whose input at a meeting we have specifically requested. Involvement in NICE’s standing committees or working groups are examples of the types of meetings where your input might be sought. Payment is offered for face-to-face meetings of any length, or for a teleconference where that input is scheduled to last more than two hours. This payment is offered irrespective of whether you are a paid employee of an organisation.

2. The payment is offered where your individual lay expertise is sought. For contributions where a lay organisation’s view is sought, payment is not offered.

3. The payment will be offered to you directly, although you may decide not to claim the payment if you wish.

Who do we mean by lay contributors?
4. Lay contributors who are eligible to be offered payment are:
   • individual patients, service users, carers, members of the public and of specific client groups targeted by public health guidance, and patient/public advocates;
   • individual people from patient, carer, voluntary and non–governmental organisations that are run by, or directly reflect the perspectives of patients, service users, carers, or client groups targeted by public health guidance.

What is the payment offered for?
5. All payments offered to you are in relation to attendance at meetings or teleconferences. Payment will be offered for any individual lay contribution that requires face to face contact, regardless of the length of the meeting. Payment will also be offered for teleconferences (or other meetings that are not face-to-face) scheduled to last more than two hours. The payments recognise the contribution that you make to NICE’s work and are not based on an hourly rate for the tasks concerned. The payments do not mean that you have a contract of employment with NICE or its partner organisations (such as the National Collaborating Centres). The payment amount on offer will be made clear to you at the point of appointment or invitation.

6. Payments are not offered where your attendance at a meeting is optional, or where an organisational (rather than individual) perspective is sought.
How much will you be offered?
7. Payments are offered at the following rates, subject to review:
   - £150 per full-day meeting (four hours or longer)
   - £75 per half-day meeting (shorter than four hours).

8. These rates are fixed and are based on the planned duration of the meeting. You will not receive less than the agreed amount if a meeting finishes early, or more if a meeting runs over time. You will not be offered a payment for teleconferences of two hours or under.

How will you be paid?
9. Payments are normally claimed through Expenses, our online system. The online system allows your claims to be processed quickly, and for payments to be made directly into your bank account. If you are unable to use the online expenses system, alternative arrangements can be made.

What are the implications for your Income Tax and National Insurance contributions?
10. If you accept any payments for contributing to our work, they become part of your overall income. You are personally responsible for any liability with regard to Income Tax or National Insurance contributions. You will be asked to acknowledge this responsibility each time you claim the payment. NICE does not deduct tax or National Insurance contributions from the payments at source (although some of our partner organisations may have different arrangements).

What are the implications if you receive state benefits?
11. There may be implications for your benefits if you accept any payments we offer you. You can decline the payment, ask for a smaller amount or ask for the payment to be made to a support organisation (such as a charity).

12. The travel expenses you receive should not affect any state benefits you receive, however because NICE offers a ‘rounded-up’ amount of subsistence of a maximum of £20.00 per day, a claim for these payments may be considered as earnings. ‘Subsistence’ is money offered by NICE to cover the cost of meals not provided as part of a meeting or hotel booking. If the amount you spend on subsistence is less than that standard amount on offer, you can claim the exact amount you spent on meals and this will not be considered as earnings.

13. There is more advice about payments in relation to benefits on the NICE website.

What if you don’t come to a meeting?
14. If you are unable to come to a meeting, or (depending on the circumstances) if you leave a meeting early, you cannot claim your payment. The payment offered to you is for attendance at a meeting to help shape our guidance, advice, recommendations and standards.
What about attending the NICE annual conference?
15. If we invite you to attend the NICE annual conference you cannot claim your payment. If you are a speaker at the conference you can claim your payment for the day on which you are speaking.

Are expenses such as travel and subsistence also paid?
16. In addition to the payment for your input, your travel, subsistence, accommodation, childcare and carer costs will be reimbursed by NICE in line with its travel and subsistence policy.

Public Involvement Programme
June 2013