



Tower Hamlets
Clinical Commissioning Group

Service User and Carer Involvement: Incentive and Reimbursement Policy

Author: Jessica Neece

Website: www.towerhamletsccg.nhs.uk

Email: thccg.info@nhs.net

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1. Policy statement

Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group (THCCG) aspires to have a comprehensive approach to patient and public involvement out-of-pocket expenses. This is a key method for ensuring our involvement structure is inclusive and that we are targeting hard-to-reach groups.

THCCG values the time and effort given by users to get involved, and view rewards as recognition of this. THCCG will offer patients and members of the public a range of reward options and supporting information to enable users to make an informed choice on this issue.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will be used:

2.1 Patients and members of the public

THCCG commissions health and care services for the people of Tower Hamlets. The general rule is that THCCG commissions services for people who are registered with a GP practice in the borough and for those who are not registered but who are deemed to be 'usually resident'(note) in the borough. Although there are instances where people do not fit into these categories (such as people with no fixed abode, or more than one address), this general rule applies to most people (note – link to doc that explains more: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/who-pays-aug13.pdf>).

Therefore THCCG defines patients and members of the public as those for which it commissions services, who can generally be defined as all people who are registered with a GP practice in Tower Hamlets or else are deemed 'usually resident' in the borough. THCCG uses the term 'patients and members of the public' because all members of the public are potential patients, although they may have not been a patient recently or ever. Members of the public may also be people who are 'carers', defined as an individual who spends a significant amount of their time giving unpaid support to a family member, partner, or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse issues. Throughout this policy, the term 'patient or member of the public' is used interchangeably with 'people' or 'person'.

THCCG will wish to involve different patients and members of public, depending on the purpose of involvement. For example, to develop our annual plan we may want to consult widely across the general public, but to evaluate a specific service, we may only want to speak to the patients and carers of patients who use that service.

2.2 Involvement

Involvement covers a broad spectrum of activities and can mean different things to different people. Terms such as "engagement", "consultation" "co- production" and "participation" are often used interchangeably with "involvement" as the meaning of all these terms overlap. THCCG uses the term "involvement" to cover all these terms, and is defined as "the involvement of patients and members of the public in the design, management, review and delivery of services".

2.3 Organiser

The “organiser” refers to the member of staff who is responsible for inviting patients or members of the public to the meeting, training event, interview panel or defined task or work programme.

2.4 Budget holder

The “budget holder” refers to the member of staff who is responsible for authorising payments made in accordance with this policy.

2.5 Expenses

“Expenses” refer to the following out-of-pocket expenses incurred by patients or members of the public to take part in a meeting, training event, interview panel, defined task or work programme that they have been invited to.

2.2.1 “Travel expenses” refer to the cost that a patient or member of the public must pay in order to travel to and from a meeting, event or activity to which they have been invited.

2.2.2 “Meal allowance” refers to the cost of a meal or refreshments for a patient or member of the public who is attending a meeting, event or activity with an early start or a late finish.

2.3.4 “Childcare expenses” refer to the cost that a patient or member of the public must pay in order to commission a third party to care for and supervise a child or children¹, for whom they have a principal caring responsibility². Direct family members (i.e. parents and siblings) are included in the category of third party care provider.

2.3.5 “Carer costs” refer to the costs that a patient or member of the public must pay in order to commission a third party to care for and/or supervise a person with special needs, for whom they have a primary caring responsibility. Direct family members (i.e. parents and siblings) are included in the category of third party care provider.

2.6 Rewards

Rewards are defined as a specific benefit to acknowledge involvement by patients and members of the public. Rewards include but are not limited to cash payments, prize draws, social events, gifts and prizes, shop/other vouchers, IT equipment, discounted services, leisure activities, clothing/entertainment allowances and training. Providing lunch or refreshments at a meeting is not included as a reward in this policy.

2.7 Volunteering

¹ According to OfSted, children can receive childcare services up to the age of 16 years old.

² Only one person can be the principal carer of a particular child. The principal carer must be an adult living with the child and be responsible for providing the majority of care for that child.

Volunteering is defined as “An unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help an organisation or an individual who they are not related to”³. Volunteering can be a form of involvement depending on the role, but is not involvement by definition.

3. Scope

This policy applies to patients and members of the public as defined at 2.1 who the THCCG has invited to be involved in the design, management, review and delivery of services.

- 3.1 This policy applies to adult carers and service users in services provided and commissioned by the THCCG and Tower Hamlets residents who are individually invited in this capacity by the THCCG to take part in a meeting, training event, interview panel or defined task or work programme.
- 3.2 This policy does not apply to open or public events to which users can attend but are not individually invited. Nor does it apply to questionnaires and surveys issued by THCCG⁴.
- 3.3 This policy does not apply to users who are invited to take part in meetings or other events in a different capacity. This includes in the capacity of third party providers (e.g. user led organisations or self-employed users) and temporary or permanent employees (e.g. user on work placement).

4. Background

4.1 Department of Work and Pensions “Volunteering While Getting Benefits” Guide (2010)

This Guide aims to support local voluntary and health and social care organisations with the principles and best practice of reimbursing and paying service users (public/patients) for their involvement. It aims to provide some consistency of approach and ensure that service users are treated fairly and appropriately according to their circumstances, so that they are able to make an informed choice about the arrangements concerning their involvement. It provides advice on the implications of paying and reimbursing service users who are in receipt of benefits. This policy has been developed to reflect the principles and best practice included in this Guide.

4.2 Employment status and implications

- 4.2.1 This policy has been developed on the understanding that users who get involved and receive monetary rewards or a specific non-financial benefit do not have “employee” or “self-employed” status.
- 4.2.2 This policy includes the standards users can expect from the THCCG if they receive monetary rewards or a specific non-financial benefit from the THCCG on a regular basis. These standards are included in the “Involvement Agreement” (Appendix II) and include protection against unfair discrimination, health and safety protection and working time rights.

³ Volunteering England (2009)

⁴ When considering approaches to expenses, rewards and recognition for open or public events and questionnaires, organisers may want to use this policy as an indicator of good practice.

- 4.2.3 This policy has also been developed on the understanding that users who get involved and do not receive monetary rewards or a specific non-financial benefit have “volunteer” status. “Volunteer” status ensures a volunteer’s health and safety rights are protected, but does not infer employment rights.

4.3 Welfare benefits and implications

- 4.3.1 This policy clarifies the roles and responsibilities of THCCG and patients and members of the public in relation to involvement and benefits. THCCG will signpost users to key information that will enable users to make an informed choice and aims to be as inclusive as possible in terms of THCCGs approach to involvement.
- 4.3.2 It is the responsibility of the user to inform the Jobcentre about any incentives or gifts in the form of vouchers received for involvement work with THCCG.
- 4.3.3 Users have the option not to accept incentives or gifts in the form of vouchers if they feel it will have a negative impact on their financial situation or for any other reasons.

4.4 Childcare regulations and implications

- 4.4.1 OfSted guidelines on childcare providers need to be considered in relation to user childcare expenses. These guidelines include:
- Childcare providers must register with the OfSted Early Years Register for children aged 5 or under.
 - Childcare providers must register with the OfSted General Childcare Register for children aged 5-7 years with some exceptions.
 - It is voluntary to register with OfSted if home-based care is being provided in the home of the child (nannies), if short-term care such as crèches is being provided, or if the child is aged 8 to 18 years old.
- 4.4.2 This policy reflects OfSted guidelines in terms of our approach to user childcare expenses in relation to involvement.
- 4.4.3 THTHCCG also allows users to choose child care providers who are not registered through OfSted, as long as users trust the child minder and have worked with them in the past. In this instance, users will be paid directly for child care once a signed receipt is submitted to the organiser.

4.5 Tower Hamlets context

- 4.5.1 This policy has been developed to ensure it is consistent with the 2015- 2018 Patient and Public Involvement Strategy, other relevant volunteering and work experience programmes, and overarching THCCG strategies, policies and plans. The policy aims to ensure involvement is flexible and inclusive whilst offering a consistent approach in terms of how decisions are made.
- 4.5.2 This policy is to be implemented in accordance with THCCG’s financial policies and procedures.

5. Approach to involvement and expenses

5.1 The organiser

- 5.1.1 Will gain authorisation from the budget holder before processing payments.
- 5.1.2 Will clarify with the patient or member of the public in advance (where possible) what expenses are likely to be incurred, and decide how these expenses are to be met. The following should be considered in relation to this:
- i) Is this an expense that is likely to regularly incurred, or is it a one-off?
If the expense is going to be regularly incurred, the organiser should consider the most effective method of meeting these costs. This should include meeting the expenses in advance where possible (for example, sending out an Oyster prepaid travelcard) or establishing regular methods of payment via Oracle (for example, a registered childcare provider).
 - ii) When will the patient or member of the public need their expenses to be reimbursed?
People can expect their out-of-pocket expenses to be met on the day they are incurred via petty cash if the organiser is given at least two weeks' notice that expenses are likely to be incurred; and if the expense cannot be met through the mechanisms listed above. Unexpected expenses that cannot be met through these mechanisms will be processed via petty cash by the organiser within 10 working days.
- 5.1.3 Will only reimburse actual costs incurred by the patient or member of the public. Evidence of the incurred cost will be required.
- 5.1.4 Will keep a copy of the evidence of expenses and any costs incurred (for example, a receipt). In unusual or exceptional circumstance (for example, if a bus ticket is needed for a return journey and no photocopier is available or if pay-as-you-go credit has been added to an Oyster Card) for amounts under £20.00, the organiser will document that they have viewed evidence of the cost incurred.
- 5.1.5 Will record all out-of-pocket expenses payments by completing the Involvement Claim Form (Appendix I) and returning this to the budget holder.
- 5.1.6 Will carry out the following procedure to access petty cash to reimburse expenses:
- i) The organiser will complete a petty cash request form with details of the provisional or actual amount of petty cash needed (Appendix III) and send this to the budget holder at least two weeks before the amount is needed.
 - ii) Will collect the provisional amount from the budget holder at Tower Hamlets THCCG on the agreed date.
 - iii) Will return all completed Involvement Claim Forms detailing the actual amount of petty cash used and any remaining petty cash to the budget holder at Tower Hamlets THCCG within 2 weeks of the reimbursements taking place.
- 5.1.7 Will accept user expenses claims up to one calendar month following the meeting or event
- 5.1.8 Will offer the user general information and advice on the potential impact of receiving involvement expenses on benefits (please see Appendix III).

5.2 The patient or member of the public:

- 5.2.1 Is responsible for declaring any earnings to the tax and benefits offices as appropriate.
- 5.2.2 Will complete the Involvement Claim Form with the organiser and provide relevant supporting evidence where possible.

5.3 Travel expenses

- 5.3.1 For regular forms of involvement, the organiser will consider providing the patient or member of the public with a prepaid Oyster Card for an agreed amount of time.
- 5.3.2 The organiser will post out a relevant public transport ticket to the patient or member of the public (e.g. a one day travel card) if a request is received from the user within 10 working days of the planned meeting or event.
- 5.3.3 If a patient or member of the public does not incur an extra expense by attending the meeting or event (e.g. if they have a one week or one month travel card) they cannot claim travel expenses.
- 5.3.4 The maximum amount reimbursed for travel using an Oyster Card is £5.00 per session unless an alternative amount is agreed with the organiser before the involvement activity.
- 5.3.5 People will be encouraged to use the most economical form of transport available subject to any special requirements.
- 5.3.6 Taxi costs will be paid if there is a valid reason why travelling by taxi is necessary (e.g. if public transport is inaccessible). The cost must be agreed in advance between the organiser and user if the user does not have a Freedom Pass.

5.4 Subsistence allowance

- 5.4.1 The organiser and patient or member of the public must agree in advance if subsistence allowance is applicable to the meeting or event (e.g. lunch allowance for a meeting from 11:00am to 2:00pm, or dinner allowance for a meeting from 6:00pm to 8:00pm).
- 5.4.2 Subsistence allowance can only be claimed if meals have not been provided free of charge at a meeting or event.
- 5.4.3 The organiser will reimburse costs incurred up to a maximum of £10.00 per meal.

5.5 Childcare costs

- 5.5.1 A contribution to the cost of childcare will be paid in instances where the responsibility to care for the child or children will prevent the person from attending the meeting or event to which they have been invited.
- 5.5.2 For regular forms of involvement, the organiser will consider establishing registered childcare providers as suppliers on Oracle.

- 5.5.3 The person can be reimbursed for the cost of childcare if the provider is registered with OfSted, unless the child is over the age of 8 or if home-based care is being provided in the home of the child by a nanny. The person and organiser must document this information accordingly.
- 5.5.4 Childcare can be reimbursed at a maximum rate of £10.00 per hour, for no more than 8 hours per day.
- 5.5.5 The organiser will inform the person what costs can be reimbursed and to what amount in advance of the meeting.
- 5.5.6 The organiser will support the person to identify local registered childcare providers when required, however it is up to the parent or guardian of the child to make the final decision as to who the child minder is.
- 5.5.7 THCCG takes no responsibility for the actions of childminders who are not registered with OfSted, the liability lies with the parent/guardian.
- 5.5.8 Child care costs will be reimbursed once a signed child care receipt and an invoice for the child care costs incurred has been received by the organiser.
- 5.5.9 The organiser will submit the invoices and receipts to SBS and the user will be paid via a BACS payment.

5.6 Carer costs

- 5.6.1 A contribution to the cost of a replacement carer will be paid in instances where the responsibility to care for an individual will prevent the user from attending the meeting or event to which they have been invited
- 5.6.2 For regular forms of involvement, the organiser will consider establishing registered carers as suppliers on Oracle.
- 5.6.3 Carer costs can be reimbursed at a maximum rate of £10.00 per hour, for no more than 8 hours per day.
- 5.6.4 The organiser will inform the user what costs can be reimbursed and to what amount in advance of the meeting
- 5.6.5 The organiser will support the user to identify local home care providers who are registered with the United Kingdom Home Care Association Ltd (UKHCA) and Care Quality Commission (CQC) when required.
- 5.6.6 THCCG takes no responsibility for the actions of carers who are not registered with the CQC or UKHCA, the liability lies with the user.
- 5.6.7 Carer costs will be reimbursed once a signed receipt and an invoice for the Carer costs incurred has been received by the organiser.
- 5.6.8 The organiser will submit the invoices and receipts to SBS and the user will be paid via a BACS payment.

5.7 Other expenses

- 5.7.1 The organiser and user must agree in advance whether the user has any additional expenses in relation to involvement, to what extent these costs can be met and what evidence is required to do this. Possible examples include but are not limited to:
- i) The cost of telephone calls if the user is expected to use the phone on a regular basis as part of their role
 - ii) The cost of internet access if the user is expected to communicate via email
 - iii) The cost of printing cartridges and paper if meeting papers are emailed rather than posted out
 - iv) The cost associated with attending a conference, such as drinks and snacks over and above those supplied as part of the delegate package
- 5.7.2 For each instance, the organiser and user will consider if what the most efficient or cost-effective option is (e.g. whether meeting papers should be posted out by the organiser to the user, or emailed by the organiser and printed by the user).

6. Approach to involvement and rewards

6.1 Type and amount of reward

- 6.1.1 Rewards in the form of vouchers is the THCCG default position in relation to the type of reward offered.
- 6.1.2 The organiser and user (where possible) will agree together in what form the reward should be offered. Options to be considered include:
- Voucher
 - Training
- 6.1.3 The organiser will agree the value of the reward to be offered to users in each case. The value should reflect the time spent on the task and will equate to £15.00 per hour. All involvement is paid at the same rate as all user contributions are seen as equally valuable.
- 6.1.4 For users who are unable to attend meetings or events (for example, housebound service users) but complete the same role in a different way as users who do attend such meetings, the same level of reward will apply.

6.2 The organiser:

- 6.1.2 Will purchase vouchers
- 6.1.3 Will clarify with the user in advance where possible if and in what form the reward will be offered. If the user is a member of a group, this may affect the type of reward it is possible to offer: for example, some types of reward – such as training, will require more than one user receiving a reward in this way.

- 6.1.4 Will document any rewards and the criteria for the chosen rate by completing the Involvement Claim Form (Appendix I).
- 6.1.5 Will identify the relevant budget holder and gain authorisation before processing payments
- 6.1.6 Will use the agreed THCCG financial procedures to access petty cash and/or process rewards to users Will follow the procedure for accessing petty cash for rewards as outlined in point 5.1.6
- 6.1.7 Will process the user reward within 20 working days of the meeting or event taking place, unless agreed in advance with the user
- 6.1.8 Will offer the user general information and advice on the potential impact of receiving involvement rewards on benefits (please see Appendix III).
- 6.1.9 Will draw up an Involvement Agreement (please see Appendix II template) and sign this with the user before a reward is processed for users who are involved on an ongoing or regular basis. This agreement sets out what is expected of both parties without bringing the user's independence into question.
- 6.2 **The user**
 - i) Has the choice to refuse the reward offered, or donate the reward offered to a third party
 - ii) Is responsible for declaring any earnings to the tax and benefits offices as appropriate
 - iii) Will complete the Involvement Claim Form with the organiser and provide relevant supporting evidence where possible.

7. Budget

The budget holder in the Corporate Affairs Team is the Engagement Manager.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance

- i) The organiser will keep a record of Involvement Claim Forms. Information on quarterly amounts spent on expenses and rewards will be tracked by the Engagement Manager.
- ii) The Engagement Manager will use this information to inform the annual review of this policy.
- iii) All staff including the Engagement Manager will remain responsive to any feedback from users, carers, staff and stakeholders in relation to this policy.

9. Author and review date

8.1 Author

Jessica Neece (Engagement Manager, Corporate Affairs Team) June 2016.

8.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the review of the 2015-2018 Public and Patient Involvement Strategy unless there is a significant change in legislation or regulation that requires the policy to be reviewed earlier. This review will include users, staff and key stakeholders

Appendix I: Involvement Claim Form
Appendix II: Involvement Agreement
Appendix III: Involvement Payment Information Sheet

10. Appendices

Involvement Claim Form

For more information, please see the “Involvement & Payment Information Sheet”.

Please attach the evidence of costs – such as receipts - to this form.

About you

Name:	
Home address:	

About the meeting or event

Name of organiser: (staff member)	
Name of meeting or event:	
Date of meeting or event:	
Place of meeting or event:	

Rewards

	Notes	Amount
Reward (Please note the fee or type of reward, the value or cost of it for the individual, how it was paid if money and – if relevant - a brief explanation of why it was offered)		
Extra associated costs This includes travel or meals if relevant		
Total value of the reward:		

Total claim (Total amount of expenses + total value of fee or reward)	
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“This is to confirm that I was involved in the meeting, event or activity described here and that the above is a true record of my out-of-pocket expenses and the reward I received in relation to this. I understand that accepting a reward may affect my Benefits. I am fully aware that it is my sole responsibility to inform my local benefit office, Jobcentre Plus and Inland Revenue of any fee, reward or specific benefit from involvement that I receive from the Tower Hamlets THCCG. I understand that using child care providers and carers is done at my own risk”.

Signed by user: _____

Signed by organiser: _____

Date: _____

Involvement Agreement

In line with the Tower Hamlets CCG “Service User and Carer Involvement Payment Policy”, you may be entitled to a specific benefit or reward for the activity or task you are involved with. This agreement outlines the terms on which this reward is offered for people who are involved on a regular basis.

You will need to read, sign and date this agreement in order to receive the reward or specific benefit. The reward will also be conditional upon your carrying out any involvement activity that has been offered to you, which you have agreed to carry out.

If you would like help or support to understand the information in this agreement, please contact the staff member who is organising the involvement activity or task.

The Tower Hamlets CCG:

- i) Will work in line with the “Service User and Carer Involvement Payment Policy.”
- ii) Is not obliged to offer you any involvement activity or offer you any further tasks once each activity or task is over.
- iii) Will comply with the policies, general protocol, standards and conduct applicable to THCCG. This includes confidentiality, health and safety, respect for others and anti-discriminatory practice.
- iv) The staff member organising the task or activity will explain to you the policies, general protocols, standards and conduct applicable to the area in which you are working. We have the right to end your involvement in the activity or task if you do not comply with these.
- v) Will decide if a DBS check is needed if you are involved in an activity or task that brings you into contact with children or vulnerable adults. We are responsible for organising this and meeting any associated costs.
- vi) Will provide a safe and healthy place and environment for involvement activities and tasks. In some cases, if we are concerned about you taking on any responsibilities that could have an affect on your health, we will talk to you about this. We may require you to be referred to our occupational health team. They can give advice on what to do next.
- vii) Will provide information on request as to where you can access independent advice on employment and benefits before you start the involvement activity or task.

The individual involved in an activity or task for which they receive a specific benefit:

- i) Is not obliged to take part in any involvement activities that are offered or to undertake any further tasks or activities once each one is over.
- ii) Can chose not to accept the specific benefit offered or to donate this to a third party
- iii) Will be able to demonstrate they are able to legally work in the United Kingdom in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act (1996).
- iv) Will report any accidents or incidents to the staff member organising the involvement activity or task.
- v) Will comply with the policies general protocols, standards and conduct applicable to the area in which you are working. This includes confidentiality, health and safety, respect for others and anti-discriminatory practice.

During the time when you are involved in an activity or task, your relationship with Tower Hamlets CCG will be that of an independent adviser. This is not employment.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is agreed and understood that participating in an involvement activity or task does not constitute a contract of employment between you and the Tower Hamlets CCG. It does not imply any obligation to provide you with any specific benefits or rewards. It does not imply any obligation on your part to accept the activity or task that is offered.

I have read and understood the above and agree to the terms of this agreement.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Name of staff organiser: _____

Involvement Payment Information Sheet

This sheet gives you information on payments if you are invited to get involved in a meeting, event or activity by the THCCG as a service user, carer or Tower Hamlets resident. Please speak to the person organising the meeting or event if you have any questions, or if you need any more information or advice.

If you would like to see a full copy of our “Service User and Carer Involvement Payment Policy”, please contact Jessica Neece on 020 3688 2587, or visit our website on <http://www.towerhamletscg.nhs.uk/>

Expenses

We want to make sure there is no cost to you to get involved. We can give you back money you may need to spend to come to a meeting or event.

- We can help with transport costs if you do not have a weekly or monthly travel card (Maximum of £5 on an Oyster Card, unless other amount is agreed with the organiser).
- We can pay a maximum of £10.00 for a meal if the meeting or event starts and ends at certain times.
- We can pay a maximum of £10.00 per hour for childcare or for a carer if you need to organise this to come to a meeting.
- We can also help with other costs - such as the cost of phone calls - if they are to do with your role.

Expenses: What you can expect from us:

- We will meet your out-of-pocket expenses as long as we have evidence of the cost.
- We will do this no later than 2 weeks after the event or meeting, but we can do this on the same day if you let us know in advance that you need this.
- We can support you to find registered local childcare providers or carers.
- We can organise transport that meets your needs if you give us at least 2 weeks notice.

Expenses: What we expect from you

- We expect you to keep proof of the money you spent, such as a receipt.
- We expect you to use the cheapest form of transport available that meets your needs.
- We expect you to contact us if you are unsure whether we are able to meet a certain cost or expense. There are a few restrictions in terms of what costs we are able to meet, so it is important to be clear on this before you come to the meeting or event.

Where to go for more information:

- Transport: Transport for London has information on public transport and taxi's on www.tfl.gov.uk or 0843 222 1234
- Childcare: We can support you to find local services. Information on local childcare services is also available on www.childcarelink.gov.uk or 0800 234 6346
- Carers: We can support you to find local services. The Care Quality Commission also has information on local care services and how they have been assessed on www.cqc.org.uk or 03000 616161.

Rewards

We value the time and effort given by service users and carers to get involved. We offer rewards for some forms of involvement as a way of recognising this.

- Rewards can be offered in the form of money, a voucher, training or other things.
- When deciding on the amount or value of the reward, we will look at the type of activity that is going on and the time and effort put into the activity.
- The reward will be worth £15.00 per hour of involvement. The same amounts apply to people who cannot come to a meeting in person but take on the same role in a different way (for example, people who are housebound).

Rewards: What you can expect from us

- We will offer some activities as voluntary activities, and some activities with rewards.
- We will agree with you what type of reward will be offered where we can.
- We will give you the agreed reward within 4 weeks of the activity unless we have agreed with you to do something different.
- We will give you general information on how rewards can affect people's benefits.
- We will support you to find out more information about how receiving a reward may affect you. This will vary depending on your circumstances.

Rewards: What we expect from you

- You have the choice not to accept a reward that is offered.
- It is your responsibility to tell your local benefits office, Inland Revenue or Jobcentre Plus about any rewards you are offered.
- We expect you to sign an "Involvement Agreement" if you are getting involved on a regular basis.

Information on benefits

If you are offered a reward, it is possible that your benefits may be affected if the value of the reward is seen as earnings. It is your responsibility to tell your local benefits office to see if and how your benefits will be affected. The information below gives some general guidelines on earning allowances for different benefits:

- Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit generally allow someone to earn up to £20.00 per week without their benefits being affected
- Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Income support generally allow someone to work up to an average of 16 hours per week over a year
- Carers Allowance generally allows someone to earn up to £95.00 per week
- Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance are not normally affected by earnings.

[Where to go for more information:](#)

We can support you to find out more on how your benefits may be affected if you are offered a reward. Detailed information is available at www.direct.gov.uk , 0200 882 200 (Benefit Enquiry Line for people with disabilities – voice), 0800 243 355 (Benefit Enquiry Line for people with disabilities – text) or the Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688.