

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

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Ms Rosy Wassell  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer  
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Watford Borough Council  
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26<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Dear Ms Wassell,

Thank you for your e-mails dated 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011 and 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011. In response to your request from Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) relating to car parking provisions and charges at Watford General Hospital, I am pleased to provide the following information:

For the second quarter of the current financial year (1<sup>st</sup> July 2011 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011), PALS received 413 enquiries, seven of which related to car parking at the Trust. More specifically, five of these related to Watford General Hospital, with the remaining two related to St Albans City Hospital.

Of these seven enquiries, five primarily related to concessionary car parking and the factors in order to reach the criteria for entitlement. In these instances, each person met the criteria and was satisfied with the advice given.

It is also worth noting here that PALS did not receive any enquirers complaining that they felt the criteria were unjust.

One instance involved an error in the car parking machine which resulted in the enquirer being reimbursed car parking money, and the final one related to a patient requesting information about the car park and advocating the use of stronger signage. In response, it was explained that a number of signage improvements have been made across the three hospital sites, and that car parking attendants are now taking a more prevalent role in order to direct drivers. A security hut is also now located at the entry of the hospital, where patients and visitors can ask questions about car parking.

Four of the five enquiries also commented on the cost of car parking. In these instances the rationale for the cost of car parking was explained to the enquirer. Other options of concessionary parking were also explained to the individuals concerned.

Further examining the seven PALS enquiries, individuals have not complained about the £4 charge but more about long term parking. Information about concessionary parking has been provided and is available at main reception, on the wards, posters displayed throughout the sites, notice boards, on the Trust website and circulated through press releases, and on car parking machines. E-mails explaining the criteria and copy of concessionary parking form are sent to the Matrons, Departmental Managers and Divisional Managers for the respective areas. I can also confirm that PALS have not received any complaints relating to the availability of 30 minutes free spaces.

From a formal complaints perspective, the complaints received relating to car parking are a similarly low percentage, and the majority of these relate to cost. Please do not hesitate to contact Mark Jarvis (Associate Director for Patient Experience and Feedback) through the address above or email [mark.jarvis@whht.nhs.uk](mailto:mark.jarvis@whht.nhs.uk) should you require a statistical breakdown from the formal Complaints department.

I hope this has given you a sufficiently comprehensive analysis of hospital car parking from PALS' perspective. However, if you should have any more questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Hamed Zarin**  
Patient Advice and Liaison Service Coordinator  
**Patient Advice and Liaison Service**