



## **POLICY FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH RESPONDING FOR SAVES**

V 1.2

### **Background**

SAVES responders are volunteers who give their time freely to respond in support of South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SWASFT). SAVES as a charity raises funds to support responders and, also in a voluntary capacity, works to support their professional development and provide peer support.

From April 2019 a new contract has been agreed between SAVES and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, whereby funding is paid directly to SAVES to providing support for all responders. The annual funding has been agreed on an annually reviewable basis.

The SAVES Management Committee have agreed the principle that this funding should be predominantly used for the reimbursement of expenses for active SAVES responders following the principle that, whilst they give their time freely, they should not be “out of pocket” as a result of their work. This funding allows us to follow similar procedures to other BASICS schemes around the country that have systems for reimbursing responders’ expenses. In addition it has been agreed that some funding should be made to available to employers/partnerships of SAVES responders in recognition of call outs during working hours. This should support and encourage those employers or practices that release their doctors to respond for SAVES calls.

This document covers a raft of expense reimbursement policies introduced for April to March 2019-20 after which it will be reviewed.

The document covers the following key areas:

- Motoring expenses associated with SAVES responding
- Subscriptions (BASICS and SAVES)
- Sundry personal expenses, personal equipment etc.
- Continuing Professional development
- Employer/Practice Support

### **Motoring Expenses:**

SAVES responders respond to incidents in their own vehicles. This involves “mileage expenses’ including fuel and wear and tear on the vehicle. SAVES will offer reimbursement of mileage costs at an enhanced rate to recognise the nature of response driving. In addition SAVES responders’ cars should be fitted with an appropriate level of blue lights and audible warning devices, the cost of which should be covered by SAVES. Special motoring insurance is also required at an additional cost to cover blue light driving and use of exemptions.

The following motoring expenses will be reimbursed:

**Mileage expenses at the enhanced rate of 67p per mile:** This should be claimed on a quarterly basis using the quarterly activity log.

**Contribution to motor insurance of one third of the premium for the vehicle used for responding up to a ceiling of £300 per annum.** A similar contribution may be made for a second vehicle, if it is considered justified by the management committee (for example a four-wheel-drive vehicle for use in adverse weather conditions)

**Fitting of blue lights and audible warning devices to vehicles used for responding.** This will be limited to, at most, once every three years for each doctor (with exceptions made if a vehicle is written off, or the equipment is damaged). The equipment fitted should be no more than the standard fitted to Ambulance Service officers' personal vehicles. Where practical, equipment should be re-used and transferred to replacement vehicles.

**Reimbursement of insurance "excess" costs if a responder's vehicle is damaged, or causes damage, whilst responding to, or returning from, a SAVES call:** This would include costs of damage incurred where the cost of the damage is low enough to make an insurance claim not worthwhile.

### **Subscriptions:**

SAVES responders are required to be members in good standing of the British Association for Immediate Care (BASICS). In addition SAVES members pay an annual subscription to SAVES of £20 per year to demonstrate engagement and support of the charity.

**Reimbursement of annual BASICS subscription for active SAVES responders:** Reimbursement will be restricted to the annual membership subscription without journal.

**Waiving of SAVES subscriptions for active SAVES responders:** SAVES responders demonstrate their commitment and support through actively responding. They will be exempt from the annual subscription.

### **Personal Sundry Expenses Relevant to Responding**

Equipment required for responding is generally provided by SAVES or SWASFT. However there may be occasions where a SAVES responder incurs occasional expenses in replacement of personal equipment used for responding. Examples might include a head torch, a storage bag for the car or similar. A claim may be made for reimbursement by the treasurer up to a maximum total value of £50 per year. Any additional requests for reimbursement of sundry expenses, in special circumstances, should be made to the Management Committee.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

SAVES responders are required to maintain a level of continuing professional development to support their role. SAVES provides regular quarterly meetings and additional training may be available via the ambulance service. However courses and exams for continuing development can

be expensive and SAVES will support active responders in maintaining and developing their knowledge and skills.

**A continuing professional development allowance of up to £1000 per doctor per annum:** Active SAVES responders may submit claims to support course fees, travel, backfill/locum costs and/or accommodation associated with continuing professional development, so long as it is approved by the SAVES Medical Committee. This must be associated with formal courses, exercises or exams specifically associated with pre-hospital emergency care. The Medical Committee may, from time to time, designate certain recognised courses as “pre-approved”. In all other cases responders would be well-advised to seek approval from the Medical Committee prior to incurring expense. Mileage expenses will be at the standard current HMRC rate. If “backfill” costs are claimed, these should be reimbursed directly to the practice or employer, at the rate currently recommended by Somerset Local Medical Committee. The maximum that any responder can claim, in total, in support of CPD, in any one financial year would be £1,000.

### **Employer/Practice “Backfill” Honorarium:**

**An honorarium for employers or partnerships of £100 per call during the responders working hours:** Providing some recompense to employers or partnerships may help to support them to release doctors from duties to attend calls during working hours. Employers and partnerships, who are willing to release the doctor from his duties during the working day can choose whether to claim the honorarium or waive it as a “donation” to the charity.

SAVES will also help with reimbursement of any responders employer/practice for the time required by the responder after a Major Incident, or similar (for example to attend a debrief/court hearing/inquiry) if this takes them out of their employment. Such events would be deemed to be exceptional and would need to be agreed by the management committee on a case-by-case basis. Reimbursement would only be considered if there were no other organisations that would cover these costs.

### **Notes:**

Where an annual allowance or maximum is stated, this is to be read as the maximum that can be claimed in anyone year. Unused “allowance” may not be carried forward to subsequent years.

This policy covers expenses associated directly with being a responder for SAVES. Expenses incurred by Officers, Trustees or volunteers in association with administration and management of the charity should be considered separately

SAVES Management Committee  
July 2022