Dear Member of Conference

LMC Conference 2016 - reimbursement of expenses

The 2016 LMC Conference will be held on Thursday 19 and Friday 20 May at Logan Hall, Institute of Education, London (http://www.ioe.ac.uk), with the Conference dinner to be held on the evening of the 19 May. This letter applies to all members of Conference, including LMC representatives and GPC members.

I am very conscious that the funds entrusted to the GPDF to enable proper representation of the profession are given to us from the hard earned income of our colleagues. This has perhaps even more significance in the current economic situation for GPs as we who face falling profits or static salaries. Nevertheless, representatives should be able to travel to London in comfort and stay in a reasonable hotel whilst at the Conference.

Representatives and LMCs do, however, have a responsibility to make best use of resources and it is reasonable to book accommodation in advance and use cheaper rail fares whenever possible. Booking fees or credit card fees that are easily avoidable by using the train operators' own sites will not be reimbursed.

I am open to innovative proposals for transport from LMCs, but these do require approval in advance by me. Proposals need to show how they will benefit both the representative(s) and the GPDF. Please email me at treasurer.gpdf@gmail.com by 19 March with your proposals before committing to any expenditure.

The rate card giving details of the hotel rates offered by PHR is fully accessible via this website http://www.phrweb.co.uk/events.aspx?event=lmc (you need to put in LMC as the event code). Representatives are not limited to using these hotels, and better rates may be available by booking online. I urge you to make bookings soon and take advantage of online savings and I will not be prepared to offer additional reimbursement for those who book late. The accommodation reimbursement rate (including breakfast and VAT) is capped at £195. Where the rates for two nights differ the average of the nights may be used.

Those who must leave home before 06.30 on the first day of conference in order to arrive by the start of the Conference at 09.30 will also be eligible for reimbursement for accommodation and subsistence for dinner on Wednesday 18 May. Anyone who cannot get home by 23.30 on the final day of conference and who wishes to claim the cost of accommodation must have this approved by 29 April 2016; please email me at treasurer.gpdf@gmail.com.

I anticipate most representatives will travel to London by train. I will authorise the reimbursement of First Class train fares for those travelling over 50 miles each way. Off Peak Return or Advance Single tickets should be used wherever possible and group rates may also be available. Where air travel is required only an economy air fare will be reimbursed.

I hope these arrangements and the reasons behind them are clear. A summary is appended to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

J Canning
Treasurer
General Practitioners Defence Fund Limited

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Summary of reimbursement policy for representatives attending the LMC Conference 2016

General

- No reimbursement will be made for expenses incurred by observers
- Reimbursements will be made on the basis of completed claim forms accompanied by original receipts (as opposed to scanned copies or photocopies)
- Please staple receipts to a top corner of the form
- Expenses claim forms may be submitted by members during conference
- Forms submitted after conference must be received within 6 weeks of the end of conference, ie by Saturday 2 July 2016; claims received after this date will not be paid
- Where a representative fails to return their electronic voting pad on time a deduction of £100 will be made from expenses reimbursed to cover the cost of the pad and associated administration.

Travelling expenses

Members of conference as defined in the Standing Orders will be eligible to be reimbursed as follows:

- If travelling by air: at economy rate
- If travelling by train*: First Class travel can be claimed for single journeys over 50 miles. The cost of a first class overnight sleeper may be claimed for journeys over 250 miles
- Off Peak, Advance Single tickets or group bookings should be used wherever possible
- Booking fees or credit card fees that are easily avoidable by using the train operators' own sites will not be reimbursed
- The cost of a standard class ticket only will be reimbursed for travel on the Heathrow, Gatwick or Stansted Express for those travelling via London
- If travelling by car**: mileage will be paid at 45p per mile for the round trip journey to the home town, irrespective of engine size; carrying a passenger does not increase the amount per mile reimbursed
- Bus/tube fares will be reimbursed at actual cost. Oyster cards should be used wherever possible/applicable if travelling via London.

*With some rail ticket purchases, it is often cheaper to buy two single tickets than a return. When purchasing rail tickets, representatives are encouraged to get the best possible fare. This can often be achieved by booking as far in advance as possible; it may also be cheaper to buy two tickets (ie A to B and B to C so long as the train stops at B) whilst staying on the same train [see http://www.splityourticket.co.uk/]. As many train ticket websites now offer tickets without any form of service charge I will not allow more than the face value of the ticket concerned; collection receipts should not be used unless these indicate the fare, Class of travel and start and conclusion of the journey.

**Motor vehicle insurance

Whilst a vehicle used by you, of which you, your spouse, a relative or partner (whether civil or business), are the registered keeper, may be insured for Social, Domestic and Pleasure purposes, it is your responsibility alone to ensure that the vehicle is properly and adequately insured when used for a business purpose.

You should consult your insurer to confirm that the motor insurance policy covers you when on business for the GPC, its sub-committees and the GPDF. You may also wish to confirm that cover extends to journeys undertaken by you to your LMC and any LMC or BMA Conference.

Consequently, if you are the driver of a motor vehicle, including a motor bicycle, used to attend any of the meetings described, and this Conference in particular, you are solely responsible for ensuring that the vehicle and its passengers are properly covered by a motor insurance policy and that you have done nothing to invalidate that insurance policy. You are also responsible for ensuring that any person who is driving your motor vehicle with your permission is protected.

The GPDF and the GPC accepts no responsibility whatsoever for any damage caused to a third party, or to you or to the driver of the vehicle in the event of any loss sustained as a result of or during the use of the motor vehicle in question.
Overnight expenses (the rates shown below include breakfast and VAT)

- 18 May: Up to £195 against receipted costs may be claimed by representatives who would have to leave home before 06.30 on 19 May so as to get to the conference on time
- 19 May: Up to £195 against receipted costs may be claimed by anyone unable to get home by 23.30 after attending the dinner
- 20 May: Up to £195 against receipted costs may be claimed by anyone unable to get home by 23.30 on that day but only if approval by the Treasurer has been obtained by 29 April 2016.

Subsistence

- 18 May: A dinner allowance of up to £35 including VAT and service/tips may be claimed by those qualifying for overnight accommodation on that night
- 19 May: The organised dinner is an integral part of the conference and no claim for dinner taken elsewhere will be allowed
- 20 May: A dinner allowance of up to £35 including VAT and service/tips may be claimed by those who cannot arrive home by 20.00 (but only where no meal is included in the ticket price for transport) or who qualify for overnight accommodation on that night
- No claims for reimbursement of the cost of lunch will be approved, in line with GPDF and BMA policy
- No claims for reimbursement of room service, internet access, newspapers or drinks will be approved

Excluded expenses

Please note that the following expenses will not be reimbursed unless agreed in advance by the Treasurer of the GP Defence Fund where there are exceptional reasons for payment or where expenditure leads to higher costs being avoided.

- Taxi fares for travel within London
- Additional non-conference related car mileage within London
- Accommodation costs for the evening of Friday 20 May (see above).

Other items

- Taxis may be claimed for travel to a railhead/airport where the cost is less than mileage + parking
- Parking fees in London will only be reimbursed where the cost of driving + London parking is less than rail + station parking
- Internet access charges will not be reimbursed
- No other expenses will be reimbursed unless agreed in advance by the Treasurer of the GP Defence Fund who will require evidence that there are exceptional reasons for payment or where expenditure leads to higher costs being avoided
- Virement between types of expenses is not permitted
- Locum costs will not be reimbursed.