

Support for carers policy



1. Purpose

This policy explains the support which the BMA can make available to BMA members who have caring responsibilities.

The purpose of the policy is to enable these members to engage fully with BMA business, notwithstanding their caring responsibilities. The support available is for care that is additional to a member's normal care obligations and is needed because of a BMA meeting; for example, extra hours or any extra day of care required to enable the member to attend a BMA meeting.

This policy replaces the previous document 'Care Guidelines for BMA members'. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the BMA's Corporate Development team by email at corporate.edi@bma.org.uk.

2. Who the policy applies to

This policy applies to BMA members who have regular caring responsibilities as parents, guardians or carers.

3. What support is available

Eligible BMA meetings, events and conferences ('eligible events')

Support is only available in respect of:

- *eligible* BMA meetings and events, which are those for which honoraria can be claimed, and *eligible* BMA conferences, which are BMA Branch of Practice conferences and the Annual Representatives Meeting (other meetings and conferences are not covered); **and**,
- where your attendance at the meeting or conference requires you to be on BMA business when you would normally have caring responsibilities.

Eligible BMA meetings, events and conferences will be referred to collectively in this guidance as 'eligible event(s)'.

Official evening and afternoon events, such as dinners and lectures, which are a scheduled part of an eligible event agenda (e.g. the evening dinners at the ARM and Branch of Practice Conferences) are covered.

Two kinds of support

Subject to the terms of this policy, the BMA will:

1. reimburse the costs of care provided by your normal care provider or equivalent alternative (if your normal provider is unavailable); or
2. provide basic care facilities and carers at the location of the eligible meeting or conference (referred to in this policy as 'on-site').

Details of these two kinds of support are set out below.

4. Reimbursing additional care costs

If attendance at an eligible event requires you to work when you would normally have caring responsibilities, the BMA will, subject to the terms of this policy, reimburse you for the reasonable costs of any additional care required. For example, if you were delayed collecting your child from nursery, the additional 1 or 2 hours of care at the nursery, or additional care provided by a child minder after nursery, may be reimbursed.

If you are an office holder of the BMA and it falls within the pre-agreed responsibilities of your role to attend regular or routine BMA meetings and conferences (including normal, scheduled days on BMA business), you will be responsible for arranging and meeting the cost of any care that you require during such attendances. In accordance with the terms of this policy the BMA will only reimburse care costs which are *additional* to your regular care costs and which you incur because you are required to do BMA work when you would normally have caring responsibilities.

Reimbursing care costs is the BMA's preferred approach because in most circumstances we expect it will better allow for continuity of care.

The BMA will not reimburse payments made to relatives who provide care, nor to those who would otherwise have provided care without charge.

5. On-site care provided by the BMA

Subject to the terms of this policy the BMA will endeavour to make available basic care facilities and professional carers on site at eligible events. This support is only available where your attendance at an eligible event requires you to be engaged on BMA business at a time when you would normally have caring responsibilities.

The availability of on-site care may be constrained by the venue for the eligible event, and the availability of care staff to employ. Although every reasonable effort will be made to provide on-site care, it may not always be possible. If on-site care cannot be arranged by the BMA, you will have to make alternative care arrangements and the BMA will provide appropriate reimbursement, subject to the terms of this policy.

Where care is provided by the BMA on-site, the agreed support will be available up to an hour before the eligible event commences; during the event itself and up to an hour after it concludes.

You must ensure that the carer has your contact details and the contact details of an alternative responsible adult in case for any reason you cannot be reached when care is being provided.

You are responsible for administering any medication to your child or dependant at all times. Carers sourced by the BMA are not permitted under any circumstances to administer medication to your child or dependant.

Babies and children

You should be aware that any facilities provided by the BMA are likely to be in the form of a mobile crèche or babysitting service. Reasonable efforts will be made to make any facilities provided age appropriate but before leaving your child you will need to make sure you are satisfied that the facilities are appropriate.

Age appropriate healthy snacks and beverages will be provided mid-morning and afternoon. You or your child's carer are responsible for any other provisions which the child or baby may require, such as formula milk, baby food, medicines, nappies and wipes, spare clothing, pacifiers and toys.

Lunch

Where the BMA is providing care during lunchtime activities which you are attending, your child or dependant can be given an appropriate healthy snack or lunch at lunchtime provided this has been requested by you in advance following the procedure below.

Remaining on site

The BMA does not permit children or dependants to be taken off-site while they are under the care of care providers sourced by the BMA, even when you have given permission for this. If there are open spaces within the confines of the venue (where the event is taking place) that are accessible and safe, then the BMA can, subject to receiving your permission, authorise carers to accompany children and dependants to those spaces for fresh air.

If your child or dependant must be evacuated from the building during on-site care, the carer will follow the evacuation procedures. All carers are provided with the Evacuation Brief in Appendix 1.

Complex care needs

The BMA will be unable to provide onsite care for individuals with complex care needs. Members requiring complex care for a dependant or child should arrange care through their normal care provider and apply for reimbursement.

Expenses

If your childminder or carer accompanies your child or dependent at an eligible event the BMA will not reimburse their travel or accommodation expenses, nor any other costs they may incur. Nor will the BMA be responsible for the cost of any child or dependent's travel, accommodation, or any other expenses and costs associated with attending an eligible event. Those costs remain your responsibility.

Disclaimer

The BMA shall not be liable for any act or omission on the part of those engaged to provide care for the benefit of members attending BMA conferences, meetings and events. Furthermore, the BMA shall not be liable for the use of personal data provided by members to external care providers of facilities.

6. Procedure for accessing support

1. Make request to the BMA: In order to access support under this policy you must make a request in writing to the relevant secretariat or BMA staff member who is organising the eligible event. The request must be made **at least 4 weeks before** the start of the event. Support will only be provided where 4 weeks' notice has been given.

If you are required to attend an eligible event on less than 4 weeks' notice, please speak to the relevant secretariat as soon as possible. In these circumstances the BMA will attempt to arrange the care requested but may be unable to on short notice.

2. Contact care provider: Once the request has been received, the secretariat will give you the care provider's contact details. You are then required to liaise with the care provider directly to arrange the care.

3. Complete booking form: The provider will require you to complete and return to them their booking form so that the care can be arranged.

In compliance with GDPR policy, the BMA does not at any point receive the personal data of the dependent requiring care.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the BMA's Corporate Development team by email at corporate.edi@bma.org.uk.

Requests for care falling outside of the scope of this policy may be considered on an individual basis and where the circumstances are exceptional they may be referred to the Treasurer for approval.

Appendix 1. BMA House evacuation brief.



Evacuation Brief

Please familiarise yourself with the nearest safe exit. Exit routes will be dependent on the room in use and its location. Should you need any assistance with this, please contact Security.

Action to be taken if you discover a fire.

Activate the nearest Break Glass Call Point and leave the area as per below instruction. Break Glass Call Points are located on all staircase landings.

Action to be taken on hearing the Fire Alarm.

On hearing the Fire Alarm, you need to vacate the building immediately using your nearest safe exit. Lifts are not to be used.

Muster points are located at Tavistock Square for the front of the building and Burton Street for the back of the building. Fire marshals will assist to evacuate the building.

On evacuating the building, please notify a member of the security team or a fire marshal that you are booked in for childcare, what your numbers are (e.g. 1 nanny, 1 child) and location. Both are recognisable by their orange high visibility jacket.

Please ensure there is a robust procedure for notifying parents and ensuring their identity should they come and collect their children.

Security will advise when the building may be re-occupied.