Policy

Policy Directive: compliance is mandatory

Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals Policy Directive

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Summary

SA Health is committed to making better decisions by bringing the voices of communities and stakeholders into the issues that are relevant to them. Sitting fees recognise the significant contributions made by external individuals who bring knowledge, skills and experience that is not generally obtainable from SA Health employees. Reimbursement ensures that external individuals are not out of pocket as a result of their participation.

Keywords

Partnering, Engagement, Advocate, Consumer, Sitting Fees, Reimbursement, Travel, Standard 2, GP, Loss of income

Policy history

Is this a new policy? *N*

Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? *Y*

Does this policy replace an existing policy? *Y*

If so, which policies?

D0136 Sitting Fees Reimbursement Policy v1.0

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Registered with Divisional Policy Contact Officer	*Yes*
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Version control and change history

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1.0	11/09/2015	19/10/2015	Original version
1.1	20/10/2015	current	Removal of Clause 9.10

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Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals Policy Directive

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Date	Author	Version	Change reference
17/08/2015	Clinical Engagement and Service Development	V1.0	N/A
20/10/2015	Safety and Quality	V1.1	Removal of Clause 9.10.

Approvals

Date	Endorsed by
11/09/2015	Portfolio Executive

Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals Policy Directive

1. Purpose

1.1 SA Health is committed to engaging with communities and stakeholders, so that better decisions can be made by bringing the voices of the communities and stakeholders into the issues that are relevant to them. This may include listening to and collaborating with people using health services (sometimes called consumers) or people who provide health services outside of SA Health (such as General Practitioners).

1.2 Sitting fees recognise the significant contributions made by external individuals who bring knowledge, skills and experience that is not generally obtainable from SA Health employees. Reimbursement ensures that external individuals are not out of pocket as a result of their participation.

1.3 Like any organisation, SA Health has resource constraints and is not in a position to provide payment for participation in every activity. The *Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals Policy Directive* provides a clear framework, process and schedule for the provision of sitting fees and reimbursement for external individuals.

2. Strategic Context

2.1 The *Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals Policy Directive* provides an enabling mechanism to achieve the strategic objectives of the following policies:

2.1.1 The *Better Together: Principles of Engagement* vision outlines the South Australian Government's commitment to make better decisions by engaging with communities and stakeholders in decision making that is relevant to them.

2.1.2 The *National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards* aim to protect the public from harm and to improve the quality of health service provision. Standard 2 describes the systems and strategies to create a consumer-centred health system by including consumers in the development and design of quality health care.

2.1.3 The *SA Health A Framework for Active Partnership with Consumers and the Community Policy Directive* ensures there are mechanisms in place to actively engage with consumers and the community in order to meet their needs, and develop appropriate services. The principles and standards recognise the importance of partnering with consumers and the community and maintaining high quality and efficient health services.

3. Principles

3.1 External individuals can provide skills, knowledge, expertise, experience and access to both information and stakeholder networks that is not generally obtainable from SA Health employees.

3.2 The time and effort of external individuals who participate in SA Health activities is valued and respected.

3.3 There is a planned approach to seeking external individuals who have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to provide the required contribution to meet the business needs of SA Health.

3.4 Sitting fees provide a measure of recognition to external individuals.

3.5 Reimbursement ensures external individuals are not out of pocket as a result of their participation.

3.6 A standardised approach to the provision of sitting fees and reimbursement provides consistent reimbursement regardless of when or where an external individual contributes. The process for claiming and payments of sitting fees and reimbursement is open and transparent.

3.7 External individuals are provided with the appropriate information on sitting fees and reimbursements available, and the process for claiming is explained clearly. It should be clearly stated when reimbursement is not available at the time of inviting an external individual to participate in SA Health activities, to allow an external individual the choice to participate or not.

4. Scope

4.1 Sitting fees and reimbursement are provided in the context of a constrained resource environment and as such may not be available all the time and for every activity. Whether sitting fees are provided is at the discretion of the SA Health employee with responsibility for the SA Health activity being conducted and the associated budget for that activity (hereafter called the SA Health delegate). As per 3.7 it should be clearly stated when reimbursement is not available at the time of inviting an external individual to participate in a SA Health activity.

4.2 Where sitting fees and reimbursement are provided, this policy represents the best practice standards that must be followed by all SA Health employees.

4.3 It is recognised that different activities can place different requirements and expectations on external individuals. This policy provides flexibility to allow payments above and beyond those detailed in this policy, however additional payments must be negotiated and agreed at the sole discretion of the appropriate SA Health delegate.

5. Eligibility

External Individuals

5.1 This policy applies to external individuals who are not South Australian public sector employees.

5.2 The exception to Clause 5.1 is where public sector employees participate in a SA Health activity that is completely and identifiably separate to their employed role, and their participation is within their own time and not during paid working hours.

5.3 This policy only applies to external individuals who are operating outside of their employment role or sponsored activities on behalf of an external organisation. Where an external individual is funded or employed to participate in a SA Health activity then that external individual would not be eligible under this policy.

5.4 This policy excludes external individuals who are volunteering for SA Health.

5.5 External individuals may choose to waive sitting fees and reimbursement.

5.6 This policy does not apply to external individuals who are members of ministerially appointed boards and committees and are subject to the *SA Government Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Remuneration for Government Appointed Part-Time Boards and Committees*.

5.7 This policy applies to external individuals aged 18 years and over. For external individuals under 18 years of age, sitting fees and reimbursement must be negotiated and agreed with the appropriate SA Health delegate with consideration given to the external individual's developmental standing, in partnership with a parent, legal guardian or caregiver.

5.8 Examples of external individuals who may be eligible under this policy include:

- 5.8.1 Individual health consumers
- 5.8.2 Carers, as per the definition of carers in the *SA Health Partnering with Carers Policy Directive*
- 5.8.3 Unfunded or non-salaried representatives of a peak agency or non-government organisation
- 5.8.4 Representatives of recognised community groups
- 5.8.5 Medical, nursing and midwifery and allied health practitioners in private practice
- 5.8.6 Individual experts in non-health related fields, such as accountants or auditors
- 5.8.7 Public servants consistent with Clause 5.2, such as a public servant who attends a Local Health Network consumer council during a rostered day off.

SA Health activities

5.9 This policy applies to all activities under an approved governance structure within SA Health that have been approved by the appropriate SA Health delegate. For these activities, a planned approach should be identified to seeking external individuals who have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to provide the required contribution to meet the business needs of SA Health.

5.10 Short term, one-off and ad-hoc activities involving an external individual are eligible under this policy contingent on approval from the SA Health delegate.

5.11 Attendance of external individuals at seminars, lectures, conferences or other passive activities are not eligible under this policy as attendance at these activities would not meet the requirement for providing a significant contribution.

5.12 Consistent with Clause 5.4, this policy does not apply to volunteering activities such as the activities of the *Friends of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital* or *The Volunteer Service for the Flinders Medical Centre Inc.*

5.13 Consistent with Clause 5.6, this policy does not apply to activities of ministerially appointed boards and committees that are subject to the *SA Government Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Remuneration for Government Appointed Part-Time Boards and Committees*.

5.14 Examples of SA Health activities that may be eligible under this policy include:

- 5.14.1 Membership on Local Health Network Consumer Advisory Councils
- 5.14.2 Membership on governance arrangements for Safety & Quality such as the Partnering with Consumers and the Community Advisory Group
- 5.14.3 Membership on working groups of the Ministerial Clinical Advisory Group
- 5.14.4 Participation in a one-day workshop to develop a new policy
- 5.14.5 Participation in a time-limited, informal working group that meets to review communications materials

6. Detail

Sitting fees

6.1 Sitting fees are expressed as an amount per hour paid to external individuals for attending, participating and providing significant contribution to SA Health activities.

6.2 Sitting fees shall only be paid for involvement where an external individual provides knowledge, expertise, experience and access to both information and stakeholder networks not generally available to SA Health employees.

6.3 Sitting fees are only to be paid to external individuals for activities in which they participate. Teleconference and videoconference are acceptable modes of participation for the purpose of this policy.

6.4 The hourly rate is to be paid for each scheduled hour. For example, a two hour meeting will attract sitting fees for two hours, independent of whether the meeting finishes on time, early or late.

Preparation time fees

6.5 It is expected that, in order to participate effectively, external individuals will spend time preparing for SA Health activities. This includes time reading agenda papers, reading emails, gathering information from stakeholders and networks, and liaising with SA Health employees.

6.6 In recognition of this requirement, the SA Health delegate may agree to provide fees for preparation time to external individuals. The payment will be equivalent to the hourly sitting fee rate for each meeting or activity the external individual participates in.

Chair fees

6.7 External individuals who are engaged in a SA Health committee or working group as Chair may receive an additional hourly rate that recognises the increased responsibility and workload of the position of Chair. The additional amount is negotiated with the appropriate SA Health delegate on a case by case basis.

Loss of income fees

6.8 External individuals may be paid for a loss of income incurred as a result of participating in SA Health activities. Loss of income will be expressed as an hourly rate. Loss of income will be paid in addition to any sitting fees paid so that the combined total amount paid is equal to the evidenced hourly rate of income for the external individual.

6.9 For General Practitioners, the GPSA Reimbursement Policy indicates an accepted hourly rate of income.

6.10 For other external individuals, reliable evidence (such as pay slips, copies of awards) need to be provided to indicate the hourly rate of income.

Reimbursement

6.11 Reimbursement provides payment for expenses incurred by external individuals in relation to their participation in SA Health activities. Receipts or other evidence is required as proof of costs incurred for all reimbursement claims.

6.12 External individuals may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in relation to their participation in SA Health activities for:

6.12.1 Public transport
6.12.2 Private vehicle transport
6.12.3 Taxi transport
6.12.4 Air fares (economy class)
6.12.5 Accommodation
6.12.6 Car parking
6.12.7 Child care costs in respect of Registered Care or Approved Care
6.12.8 Respite care costs

6.13 Options for public transport must be considered in the first instance. Following this, the cheaper of private vehicle, taxi and air fare will be considered.

6.14 No reimbursement will be provided for:

6.14.1 Printing costs - SA Health employees are encouraged to provide agenda papers via email, and to print and post agenda papers to external individuals if there is a specific need for hard copy papers.
6.14.2 Telephone costs - SA Health employees will initiate calls or use a Freecall teleconference number as appropriate.
6.14.3 Parking fines or other traffic infringements

Other benefits

6.15 SA Health recognises that other benefits for external individuals may arise from participation in SA Health activities, such as:

6.15.1 Induction and orientation
6.15.2 Skills development
6.15.3 Opportunities for training with relevant organisations

7. Schedule of Sitting Fees and Reimbursement

7.1 The current schedule of sitting fees and reimbursement is available online on the SA Health Consumer Engagement and participation page.

8. Annual Schedule Review

8.1 The schedule of sitting fees and reimbursement will be reviewed annually and is applicable from 1 July each year.

8.2 Indexation will be determined during the annual schedule review.

9. Business Rules

Process for approval to offer sitting fees and reimbursement

9.1 A clear purpose and need for external individuals will be identified by SA Health employees. Where possible, this should be documented in formal Terms of Reference.

9.2 The required budget for sitting fees and reimbursement for a SA Health activity will be calculated and an appropriate funding source identified.

9.3 The offer of sitting fees and/or reimbursement to external individuals must be approved by the appropriate SA Health delegate before being made to the external individual.

Process for agreement on sitting fees and reimbursement with external individual

9.4 An offer of sitting fees and/or reimbursement will be discussed and agreed between an external individual and an SA Health employee prior to the external individual's participation in a SA Health activity.

9.5 A written agreement in the form of a letter signed by an SA Health delegate may be prepared to provide evidence of an agreed approach to sitting fees and reimbursement for a SA Health activity. A *Sitting Fees and Reimbursement Agreement Letter Template* is available online on the SA Health Consumer Engagement and participation page.

Documentation for claims

9.6 Claims for sitting fees and reimbursement must be made using the *SA Health Non-Employee Reimbursement Coversheet/Form*. A copy of this form is available on the SA Health Safety and Quality intranet site.

9.7 One form should be used for one activity. One form may be used for multiple activities, as long as a detailed breakdown of costs by activity is provided.

9.8 It is the responsibility of the appropriate SA Health employee to provide confirmation of attendance and participation prior to sitting fees being paid.

9.9 It is the responsibility of the appropriate SA Health employee to seek evidence of the incursion of costs prior to claims for reimbursement being paid. Receipts and other evidence must be produced for payment to occur.

Submission of claims

9.10 Claims for sitting fees and reimbursement must be lodged with the appropriate SA Health employee within three months of the SA Health activity taking place. Claims submitted after three months will not be accepted.

Processing of claims

9.11 All claims must be processed by the appropriate SA Health employee within one month of receiving the claim.

9.12 Sitting fees must be coded using the correct natural account code (71842 Board Fees).

Taxation and Centrelink requirements

9.13 Taxation and Centrelink arrangements need to be considered for external individuals on a case by case basis and in consultation with the relevant Australian Government agency. Further information is available online on the SA Health Consumer Engagement and participation page.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

10.1 The Chief Executive, SA Health is responsible for ensuring this policy is mandated and distributed across SA Health.

10.2 Department for Health and Ageing Deputy Chief Executives, Executive Directors, Directors and Local Health Network and SA Ambulance Service Chief Executive Officers, Executive Directors and Directors will:

10.2.1 Ensure SA Health employees give consideration to the benefits of inviting external individuals to participate in SA Health activities and ensure criteria are identified and met for such persons.
10.2.2 Liaise with peak agencies (such as Health Consumers Alliance of SA) to select the most appropriate external individuals.
10.2.3 Approve SA Health activities as being eligible for, and having budget available to cover, sitting fees and reimbursement for external individuals.
10.2.4 Exclude the activities of ministerially appointed boards and committees that are subject to the *SA Government Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Remuneration for Government Appointed Part-Time Boards and Committees*.
10.2.5 Be able to delegate these responsibilities to a SA Health employee.

10.3 All SA Health employees will:

10.3.1 Seek the appropriate approval before offering sitting fees and/or reimbursement to external individuals.
10.3.2 Validate claim form details for payment to external individuals, make sure details are accurate and receipts and other evidence is provided where required.
10.3.3 Monitor external individual's involvement and contribution and raise awareness if their participation is not consistent with this policy.
10.3.4 Provide copies of this policy and relevant resources to external individuals and make sure the policy is part of induction into new SA Health activities.
10.3.5 Where possible, seek to use resources in the most efficient manner, for example through teleconference facilities to reduce travel expenses.
10.3.6 Process claims in a timely fashion.
10.3.7 Use the correct natural account code (71841 Board Fees) when processing claims.

11. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

National Standard 1 Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Care	National Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers	National Standard 3 Preventing & Controlling Healthcare associated infections	National Standard 4 Medication Safety	National Standard 5 Patient Identification & Procedure Matching	National Standard 6 Clinical Handover	National Standard 7 Blood and Blood Products	National Standard 8 Preventing & Managing Pressure Injuries	National Standard 9 Recognising & Responding to Clinical Deterioration	National Standard 10 Preventing Falls & Harm from Falls
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12. Related Documents

Better Together Principles of Engagement

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Remuneration for Government Appointed Part-Time Boards and Committees

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

SA Health A Framework for Active Partnership with Consumers and the Community

SA Health Guide for Engaging with Consumers and the Community

SA Health Guide to Engaging with Aboriginal People

SA Health Consumer and Community Advisory Committee / Group Guideline and Toolkit

SA Health Charter of Health and Community Rights Policy

13. Definitions

13.1 **Carer** means a person who provides care and support for their parent, partner, child or friend who has a disability, is frail, or who has a chronic mental or physical illness.

13.2 **Consumer** means patients and potential patients, families and other support people and organisations representing consumers' and carers' interests.

13.3 **Consumer advocate** means a person who advocates the consumer perspective and has the requisite experience to speak as an informed consumer.

13.4 **Delegate** means the SA Health employee with delegated responsibility for the SA Health activity being conducted and the associated budget for that activity.

13.5 **Executive Officer** means a SA Health employee who provides management, secretariat or administrative support to facilitate the operation of a SA Health committee or working group.

13.6 **External individual** means an individual who is described in Clauses 5.1 – 5.7.

13.7 **Passive activity** means events such as seminars and conferences where an external individual does not make a significant contribution.

13.8 **Preparation time** means time reading agenda papers, reading emails, gathering information from stakeholders and networks, and liaising with SA Health employees to facilitate making a significant contribution to a SA Health activity.

13.9 **Reimbursement** means to pay back or compensate for money spent or losses incurred. Reimbursement claims are accompanied by a receipt or other evidence of the cost incurred.

13.10 **SA Health activity** means activities, such as meetings and workshops, which are required to be performed by SA Health employees to meet the business needs of SA Health.

13.11 **SA Health committee** means a committee, working group, advisory group or other body of individuals brought together under an approved governance structure to meet the business needs of SA Health.

13.12 **Significant contribution** means involvement where an individual provides knowledge, expertise, experience and access to both information and stakeholder networks not generally available to SA Health employees.

13.13 **Sitting fees** means payments for attending, participating and providing significant contribution to SA Health activities.

13.14 **Volunteering** means if a person receives no remuneration for work undertaken on behalf of SA Health.

14. Relevant Resources

Schedule of Sitting Fees and Reimbursement

SA Health Non-Employee Reimbursement Coversheet/Form

SA Health Vendor Creation Form

Sitting Fees and Reimbursement Agreement Letter Template