

Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Policy for Hearing Aid Replacement Due to Loss or Damage

Introduction

The following is quoted directly from the department of health circular number C100 titled "National Health Service Hearing Aid: Charges for loss or damage due to carelessness.

"Section 82 of the National Health Service Act 1977 provides for the Secretary of State to recover the cost of the repair or replacement of appliances including hearing aids when this has become necessary because of an act of omission of the person supplied".

This document describes the procedures and mechanisms for implementing this Department of Health policy.

Responsibility for Assessment of Charges

The following is quoted directly from the above mentioned circular (number C100).

"The responsibility for assessing the sum, if any, to be recovered in the respect of the replacement or repair of appliances rests with the individual district Health Authority who should not authorise the free repair or replacement unless they are satisfied that it has not been made necessary by an act or omission of the patient".

In accordance with these guidelines the current charge to be recovered will be ninety pounds (£90.00) for any hearing aid and fifteen pounds (£15.00) for an ear mould.

Patients Inability to Pay Charges

The inability of the patient to pay charges for personal financial reasons will not be accepted as a reason for them to be waived. When this applies patients will be expected to liaise with their social security department to arrange for costs to be met.

Patients Refusal to Meet or Make Arrangements to Meet Replacement Costs

A patient refusing to either meet the replacement costs, or to make satisfactory arrangements for such will not be able to have their hearing aid and accessories replaced and the hospital case notes will be marked accordingly.

Mechanism for Replacement and Charging

The process of replacing a lost or damaged hearing aid will not proceed until the patient has signed an undertaking to pay or made arrangements to pay the associated charges. Once this has been done, any necessary preliminary treatment, i.e. earmould impressions etc. will be undertaken. The patient will then be given a copy of their undertaking to pay which will include details of such. The amount shown should be paid by the patient at the hospital General Office or to the Finance Department on extension 4041. Please be aware the transaction will show as "FI : Finance Department" on your statement. A written receipt will be given to the patient or emailed to the department. Replacement of hearing aid and accessories will not be made by the Audiology department until proof of payment has been seen.

If the lost item is then found, the patient will not be entitled to any reimbursement. If the payment is later decline/reversed then the patient will be required to return the replacement hearing aid to the department.

For patients where loss or damage occurred whilst the patient was under the care of Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, e.g. ward in-patient, the cost of the replacement hearing aid may be recovered as per the trust's losses and special payments policy.

Copies of the relevant forms are available from Patients Experience Team / the Community Involvement Department / General office.

The first charge for replacement will be waived for patients who have dementia, learning difficulties or are resident in a Care Home at the time of the loss. However if further aids are lost or damaged a charge will be made.