

APPENDIX B

Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel- Final Report: Blue Badge Parking Scheme

Formal Response from Middlesbrough PCT in relation to Recommendation 4.

In line with the Government's Comprehensive Blue Badge Reform Strategy the PCT would wish that the assessment was fair and consistent across all of its contracts. Potentially the benefits of this would be a robust system that provided value for money and was the most efficient use of the financial resources allocated. As GP's are entitled to receive collaborative fees they are not commissioned as such they are paid as and when invoices are received. As you will be aware previously up until 2007/08 collaborative fees were set by the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body (DDRB) and issued via an NHS circular. Competition legislation and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) prohibit the BMA or Local Medical Committees (LMCs) from advising on fees. It was recommended by the BMA that GP's agree fees independently within their own areas for collaborative arrangements. Presently collaborative fees are broadly in line across the PCT's with one or two exceptions. To have standardisation would be advantageous when working with local GP contractors.

We are happy to work with Council representatives to examine the way in which medical assessments for blue badges are currently provided with a view to exploring the benefits of an independent assessment process. We think it would also be beneficial to seek involvement from primary care, and would welcome your view on this approach.

Potentially an extension of this would then be for the PCT to consider if similar arrangements should be explored in other Council areas so that a Tees wide approach could be adopted. Historical differences remain in a number of our contract areas and we are working hard to establish wherever possible equitable and standardised arrangements across Tees.

In order for us to consider supporting the development of the standardised medical assessment process we would require to understand the scope of the work required. Should you wish to discuss this response please contact me using my details below.

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