

NHS Tayside to considering parking improvement at Ninewells Hospital

#dundeewestend



As reported in the Courier and Evening Telegraph over last weekend, we have welcomed a positive response from NHS Tayside to a suggestion to improve the parking situation for Ninewells Hospital out-patients.

We regularly receive complaints from constituents about the difficulty getting parked at Ninewells Hospital in our West End Ward and this is a particular concern for people with an out-patient appointment with a specific time. Residents report circling round and round the hospital's car parks in their vehicle trying to find an available space.

Although the challenging parking situation has always been an issue at the hospital, people report it has worsened since parking charges have been abolished. We strongly supported the abolition of parking charges as these were effectively a tax on ill-health, but it is important that spaces are used by patients, staff and visitors to the hospital and not used as a free 'park and ride' facility by commuters with no connection to the hospital.

We raised the possibility of parking arrangements being reviewed to adopt the system at Perth Royal Infirmary where the parking is also free but you must display a tear-off slip from your appointment letter to use some of the car parking spaces.

The system at PRI is a good idea. It means that there are parking spaces specifically allocated to out patients who display a tear off strip on their car dashboard as proof of their appointment. This makes getting a space a little easier and also gets round the problem of time-limited spaces too. We therefore asked NHS Tayside if it would consider doing this also at Ninewells Hospital and we are pleased at a positive response to this suggestion.

NHS Tayside Director of Facilities, John Paterson, advised us :

“NHS Tayside offers free parking and operates one of the largest car parks within Scotland, with 2383 spaces available within the Ninewells Hospital site. Ninewells Hospital can experience significant car parking demands at certain peak times of the day, which is a similar situation as experienced at most large acute hospitals. Over the years we have introduced measures to maximise the number of parking spaces and make best use of the physical footprint space available and to manage car parking effectively.

Within the grounds of Ninewells Hospital there are strict parking arrangements in place that support an effective and safe environment for patients, visitors and staff. Signage is present in all areas outlining the parking arrangements on the Ninewells site, with clear notification of penalties should a member of staff or visitor fail to comply with these arrangements.

There are dedicated short-stay parking specifically for patients and visitors adjacent to the entrances of the hospital, found within Car Parks 5, 6, 7, East Block car park and the Renal Unit car park. To support this initiative we have ‘Collect and Display’ ticket machines within these car parks. Long-stay parking is also available for staff, patients and visitors within Car Parks 1, 2, 9 and the multi-storey (Car Park 8).

I can confirm that we are exploring the opportunity for our outpatient services to adopt the tear off slip on the letters from our clinical colleagues to be consistently implemented across Tayside.

It is really worth noting that this system does not guarantee patients a parking space. However, whilst parking in a time restricted area, no patient will receive a parking charge notice.”

We appreciate that parking will always be a challenge at such a large hospital and know from constituents that many use public transport to get to Ninewells Hospital as it is well-served by bus services, but that's not an option for every out-patient and having the tear-off slip system would, in our view, improve matters for out-patients so we really do hope NHS Tayside

rolls out this system already in place at PRI to Ninewells Hospital as soon as possible.