

THE NEW MASONIC SAMARITAN FUND



**'HELPING FREEMASONS
EVERYWHERE'**

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

January 1992

Q 1. What is the New Masonic Samaritan Fund?

A The New Fund has been established as an independent Masonic Charity ranking equal in priority to the other major Charities and is registered with the Charity Commission. Its Trustees are R.W. Bro. the Hon E.L. Baillieu – Past Deputy G.M., the Provincial Grand Masters for Oxfordshire, Sussex and Wiltshire, and the Pro. Provincial Grand Master for Middlesex. The Chairman of the new Fund's Board, V.W. Bro. Michael Jepson, has been appointed by M.W. the Grand Master, who is its President. The Board of Management consists of Officers, the Treasurer, (who is elected annually), four members nominated by the President, two by the Board of Management of the Royal Masonic Hospital, four elected from London Lodges and eight from the Provincial Grand Lodges. The day to day affairs are administered by the Secretary as Chief Executive from the Fund's Offices at 26 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5BB.

Q 2. What about the Royal Masonic Hospital?

A The Royal Masonic Hospital is itself a Charity providing medical care. Through its Samaritan Fund, it financed the treatment of needy Masons and their dependants but, the increasing cost of private medical treatment, coupled with the falling level of donations to the Fund, meant that the Hospital had to draw on its own reserves to the extent that it could not continue to finance this work from its own resources.

Q 3. Why is a New Samaritan Fund needed?

A The aims of the Old Samaritan Fund were limited to relief at the Royal Masonic Hospital. A new Charity was therefore needed with wider and more flexible objectives in order to meet the needs of Masonic Petitioners and the changing circumstances of medical care and treatment generally and country wide.

Q 4. What will happen to the Old Samaritan Fund?

A The New Fund has taken over the work of the Old Samaritan Fund and a Scheme is to be proposed to the Charity Commission to enable the Old Fund to be transferred to the New Fund. In the meantime, the funds received by the Old Fund are made available to the New Fund, which now therefore deals with all petitions for Samaritan Fund relief.

Q 5. What are the New Fund's Aims and Objectives?

A The constitution of the New Fund is designed to help sick and needy Freemasons, and the families and dependants of Freemasons, and of deceased Freemasons everywhere. It will be the interests and needs of Petitioners which will determine how and where relief will be given. Whilst the New Fund will therefore continue to support petitioners at the

Royal Masonic Hospital, it is able to provide support at such other hospitals as it considers to be the most appropriate to the interests and needs of each particular petitioner.

Q 6. Will the New Fund help the Royal Masonic Hospital?

A Yes, insofar as Petitioners may be treated at the Hospital. However, the New Fund's resources will not and were never intended to be paid to or applied in financing the Royal Masonic Hospital itself.

Q 7. How is the New Fund Financed?

A Solely from charitable donations. With no Festival arrangements, the New Fund will be entirely dependent upon regular support and donations from Brethren, Lodges and Provinces, including continued support from those who, in the past, have supported the Old Samaritan Fund.

Q 8. Who is Eligible for Relief?

A Applications for relief can be considered only from Freemasons or the wives, children or dependants of Freemasons or deceased Freemasons. For this purpose, a Freemason is anyone who has been initiated into a Lodge.

Q 9. Will relief be available on the same basis as the Old Fund?

A The Craft can now only realistically be expected to ensure that relief is available to relieve cases of hardship or distress. Whilst the New Fund will always try to apply its resources as fairly and generously as possible, priority will be given to those in real need who are unable to obtain treatment on the National Health Service without undue delay or hardship.

Q 10. Is Relief restricted to those who are Members of the New Fund?

A No. The New Fund is a Charity for the relief of poverty and sickness in Freemasonry and will therefore give relief to Petitioners in need irrespective of whether they are members of, or have made contributions, to the New Fund.

Q 11. How does a Petitioner Apply?

A Applications should be made by petition through the Almoner of a Lodge appropriate to the Petitioner. It is acknowledged, however, that in some cases, for personal or geographical reasons, it may be more appropriate for a Visiting Brother to be appointed through the New Fund. Any request to appoint a Visiting Brother will be sympathetically considered and should be made to the Secretary of the New Fund. All Petitioners should realise that retrospective relief cannot be given other than in exceptional circumstances.

Q 12. Why does a Petition have to be made through the Lodge?

A All Masonic Charities rely on the Lodges to keep in touch with and to provide personal and caring help to their Petitioners. The Lodge is more likely to be aware of the needs of its Brethren and their dependants, and, through its Almoner and a Charity Steward, will keep in touch with Brethren and their dependants and work with the Charities. It is therefore essential to involve the Lodge right from the start.

Q 13. What Information is Required?

A A confidential petition form must be completed, including a separate report, from the Petitioner's Doctor or Consultant, to the Medical Sub-Committee of the New Fund's Board. Details of the Petitioner's financial circumstances are required and these must be verified, in complete confidence, by the Lodge Almoner or Visiting Brother. The Master of the Lodge must notify the Lodge and, where appropriate, the Province, that a petition is being presented. However, the petition procedure does **not** require the Petitioner's name or any of the confidential information to be disclosed to the Lodge or the Province.

Q 14. Why are Financial and Medical details Required?

A With limited funds available, financial and medical information is necessary to ensure that the Petitioner qualifies for assistance and that the relief is directed to those in greatest need.

Q 15. Will a Petitioner be Required to Contribute towards the Cost?

A Yes, if his or her financial circumstances warrant a contribution. The amount will be determined on the basis of the information which the Petitioner gives on the petition form, and of the Almoner's or Visiting Brother's Report. The Petitioner will be informed of any contribution required at the time the petition is approved, and this must be paid to the Fund before treatment is authorised.

Q 16. What if a Petitioner only needs a Consultation?

A The Petitioner will probably be expected to pay the cost of any initial consultation and associated tests. These will normally range between £50 and £300. If, however, the Petitioner cannot afford this cost, initial application for financial assistance can be made through the Almoner or to the Secretary of the New Fund. If assistance is required for any resultant treatment, a full petition will then be needed before this can be authorised.

Q 17. How long will the Decision on a Petition Take?

A The Petitioner should hear within four weeks of presenting a fully completed petition. Once the petition and admission arrangements are approved and any contribution required has been paid, the New Fund will

then authorise treatment and accept responsibility for the cost including all hospital charges.

Q 18. What about Urgent Cases?

A Emergencies and medically urgent cases should first be referred to a suitable NHS hospital. If this proves impossible and the case merits relief, the New Fund will be prepared to step in. The Petitions Committee operates an emergency procedure and any such application should be made to the Secretary of the New Fund. Even so, aid given through the Fund will always take some time to process.

Q 19. What if a Petitioner is already on the NHS Waiting List?

A Those who are already high on the NHS waiting list, or who have been offered a date for treatment should stay within the NHS. If there is a long waiting list or the delay is causing real hardship or distress then a petition to the New Fund should be considered.

Q 20. What if Separate or new Treatment proves Necessary?

A A further petition would be needed and would be sympathetically considered. The Petitioner must recognise, however, that relief is unlikely to be granted where appropriate treatment can be obtained without undue delay or hardship through the NHS.

Q 21 Can Provision be made for Future Medical Treatment?

A Freemasons have always been expected to 'stand on their own feet'. Provision for possible future treatment can be made through available health insurance provident schemes. A new scheme established by PPP Medical Care Limited for the Royal Masonic Hospital is available at a very competitive cost. Anyone who takes out a policy under this scheme will also be helping the New Fund, as PPP Medical Care will make a donation of £20 to the New Fund for each policy taken out.

Q 22. How can you Help the New Fund?

A By taking the first steps to become a **member** of the New Fund. If you were a Governor of the Royal Masonic Hospital before 28th November 1990, the first £25 to the New Fund will secure immediate membership. Otherwise you will need to make donations totalling £100. This can be achieved by committing £25 a year for the next 4 years, preferably covenanted so that the Fund can also reclaim the tax element. Expressed in terms of 50p per week, this is not much to ask. We hope many Freemasons will wish to covenant substantially more.

The Fund Jewel, which has been designated as a **Permanent Jewel**, can be purchased (cost £5) once £100 has been donated to the Fund or, if £100

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is committed under a four year covenant, once the first £25 has been paid. In addition, once £100 has been received a **Founders Bar** for the Jewel can be obtained (extra £1) provided that the payment is made or the appropriate covenant has been entered into before 31st March 1992.

Lodges, Chapters etc. can become a **Lodge Patron** of the Fund by a total payment of £500. Wives or non-Masons can become a Patron on payment of £100.

If you are a Master or Charity Steward, please consider a **Master's List** for the New Fund, a special fund-raising event or, perhaps, giving the New Fund, annually, the proceeds of the **Installation Charity Box**.

Donations should be made payable to the "New Masonic Samaritan Fund" and sent to the Secretary at 26 Great Queen Street, London W2B 5BB. He will send such covenant, deposited covenant, or gift aid forms as are required. The tax advantages to the New Fund and the individual are explained in the covering literature.



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26 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5BB
Telephone: 071 404 1550 Fax: 071 404 1544