



*Coventry and Rugby
Clinical Commissioning Group*

Non-Emergency Patient Transport: Clinical Eligibility Policy

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1. Document Purpose

- 1.1. This document sets out the eligibility criteria for the Coventry and Warwickshire Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS), and will take effect on all NEPTS journeys to be provided. This policy will ensure that there is transparency and a standard approach to eligibility assessments is taken, ensuring that patients receive a consistent response to transport requests regardless of where they receive their healthcare.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Ambulance and other Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services: Operation, Use and Performance Standards' [HSG 1991(29)] was published in 1991. This set out guidance for the NHS on the operation, use and performance standards for emergency and urgent Ambulances, superseded by the Eligibility Criteria for Patient Transport Services (PTS) document issued in August 2007. The contents of this document comply with this guidance
- 2.2. Non-emergency patient transport services, known as PTS, are typified by the non-urgent, planned, transportation of patients with a medical need for transport to and from a premises providing NHS healthcare and between NHS healthcare providers. PTS services are only available for acute, mental health, and learning disability services (ie. Treatment or procedures that are traditionally provided in a hospital setting. An example would be, an outpatient appointment, or diagnostic test such as an x-ray). Community and Primary care services (eg. GP appointments or district nurse clinic appointments) are usually excluded from PTS services.
- 2.3. To standardise patient access to services, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) across Coventry and Warwickshire have collectively reviewed the clinical eligibility criteria for patient transport, agreeing a standard criteria to ensure consistency across the local health economy. The eligibility criteria applied are detailed below.

3. Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1. The NHS has limited resources and providing Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPT) must be reserved only for those whose medical condition warrants it. The expectation is that patients are expected to make their own transport arrangements. NEPTS must only be targeted at those patients who have a clinically stated **medical need** that prevents them using private or public transport.
- 3.2. Patients attending NHS treatment do not have an automatic right to NEPTS; if they do not fully meet the agreed eligibility criteria, then transport will not be awarded. In general, patients are expected to make their own arrangements for travelling to and from healthcare premises, this ensures that;
 - i) Limited resources are available for those who really need them.
 - ii) If a patient has a medical or mobility condition where they need NEPTS staff to support them to and from a hospital or clinic for treatment, they may be eligible for patient transport.
 - iii) NEPTS caters for those patients where the medical condition will require the skills of NEPTS staff and/or it would be detrimental to their diagnosed condition or recovery if they were to travel by any other means.

- 3.3. Patients must be assessed every time they request NEPTS as their condition may have changed. The only exception being where a patient is undergoing ongoing treatment on a regular basis eg. Renal dialysis. In this instance, the patient's eligibility will be reassessed every 3 months.
- 3.4. Judgement will be made, in line with the eligibility criteria, to assess whether transport is required for both parts of the journey.

4. Qualifying Criteria

- 4.1. Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services will be provided for patients who have a medical need that stops them from using private or public transport. An individual is eligible for transport if they;
 - i) Need to travel lying down due to medical need
 - ii) Require oxygen or other medical gases while travelling
 - iii) Require intravenous support (medical drugs in vein)
 - i) Are being transported between hospitals
- 4.2. An individual may also be considered for hospital transport if they have no alternative means of transport available and;
 - i) The patient has restricted mobility and is unable to stand, sit or walk more than a few steps.
 - ii) Patients with recognised disabilities who are genuinely unable to travel by private or public transport*
 - iii) Patients whose medical condition, and or treatment, would make travelling by other means detrimental to the patient's condition, recovery or well-being.
 - iv) Patients have a mental health condition, learning disability, or currently suffering from confusion and are genuinely unable to travel by private or public transport*
 - v) Have a medical condition which compromises their dignity and have no other means of transport

Notes:

***Genuinely Unable to travel by private or public transport:** Patients who would not normally be able to travel by private or public transport – either independently, or with assistance – for the purpose of carrying out their daily living.

5. Patient Escort

- 5.1 Patients may be entitled to be escorted by only one representative if the below criteria is met. A representative may include; a family member, a parent or guardian accompanying a child, or a carer/support worker.
 - i) All children should be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
 - ii) Patients who have a mental health condition or learning disability whereby travelling independently would have a detrimental effect on their well-being.
 - iii) Patients who have a medical condition that requires constant supervision for their own safety.

6. Financial and Social Requests

- 6.1 It should also be made clear that NEPTS services will not be provided for social or financial reasons.

For those patients who do not have a medical need for ambulance transport, but may require help in meeting the cost of travel to and from their care may be entitled to financial assistance under the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS).

To be eligible for assistance under the HTCS, a patient must be in receipt of at least one of the following:

- i) Income Support
- ii) Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- iii) Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- iv) Guarantee Pension Credit
- v) Child Tax Credit
- vi) Working Tax Credit

Patients will only be able to claim back the full travel costs by using the cheapest form of public transport available.

If travelling by private car, patients may be able to claim for the fuel used and unavoidable car parking costs, up to the cost of the same journey by public transport.

Further information can be found at:-

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Pages/Travelcosts.aspx>

7. Appeals

It would be expected that there will be no exceptions to the eligibility criteria; if the patient fails to meet the criteria the request for NEPTS must be declined and the patient sign posted to known services, including;

- i) Local authority provided transportation
- ii) Public transport, including bus routes
- iii) Voluntary sector transport provision
- iv) Private hire/taxi services

Any appeal against the refusal to award NEPTS should initially be dealt with informally by the PTS provider and if a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached it should be escalated to the CCG PTS Lead via the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU). Full details above at request.