A Guide to Non-Emergency Patient Transport

A Guide for patients receiving cancer care

Most people who have a hospital appointment make their own way there but, for some, this is not possible due to their medical condition. As someone receiving treatment for cancer, it is likely that you will be eligible for NHS Non-Emergency Patient Transport.

This service is not provided for financial or social reasons but for people whose health would be harmed if they travelled by other means.For that reason, the service works hard to ensure that only those patients who are eligible can use this vital service.

**Who is eligible for Patient Transport?** This is based on what medical assistance the patient requires, such as:

* + A medical condition where the patient must travel lying down
  + A medical condition that requires medical support during the journey e.g. Oxygen or IV drip
  + A medical condition that makes it detrimental to the patient’s condition or recovery to travel on any other transport than an ambulance, such as a patient receiving a same day medical treatment that has severe physical side effects e.g. dialysis or cancer treatment
  + A medical condition which makes the patient vulnerable or compromises dignity on public transport\*
  + A medical condition that impacts on mobility and always needs the support of one or more to mobilise\*

**\**If the patient receivesa Disability Living Allowance or a Personal Independence Payment which includes a Mobility Benefit or a vehicle under the mobility scheme, thisis supplied to assist with mobility in daily life, including attending hospital appointments, and transport will not be supplied for this reason alone.***

If you are using the service to travel for cancer treatment, your eligibility will be reviewed after the first three months. This is to check that you still need the service and, if so, that it continues to meet your needs.

**Family and Friends** are unable to travel on Patient Transport unless:

* + To accompany patients under 16
  + To support a patient with a mental health condition or learning disability
  + To support a patient who requires interpretation to manage the journey

Friends and family may still be able to access free parking, pick up points and if you are on benefits you may be able to claim travel expenses from the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme. And there are advantages to travelling with friends and family such as less waiting time and shorter journey times.

**Understanding the Service:**

* + Patients should be ready for collection from home 2 hours before their appointment
  + The ambulance may be transporting several patients whose treatment may be at different times and this will require some patients to wait longer for transport
  + The ambulance aims to get people to planned appointments no earlier than one hour before the appointment and to collect people no later than one hour after the appointment
  + The ambulance aims to collect patients for journeys arranged with the last 24 hours, within 90 minutes
  + For the homeward journey patients need to stay in the waiting room to be ready for collection
  + Patients can only take 1 bag on the transport for the comfort and safety of all passengers
  + Please always wear suitable outdoor clothing and it may be useful to bring something to read and eat for whilst you are waiting
  + Your eligibility for transport will be regularly checked

**Alternatives to using patient transport.** Using the Patient Transport Service is optionaland even eligible patients may find that making their own transport arrangements is more convenient. To help patientswe can also offer:

* + Short stay ‘Pick up Points’ for friends and family
  + Free parking concessions for Dialysis, Oncology, Palliative Care and Neonatal Care
  + Free parking spaces for those with a Blue Badge
  + Information regarding public and voluntary transport links
  + A refund of travel expenses through the Hospital Travel Cost Scheme for those on benefits

**How do I book an appointment?**The Patient Transport Service is provided by West Midlands Ambulance Service and their booking telephone line is

**0345 425 0050**

You will be asked to provide the following information to assess for eligibility:

* Name, Date of Birth, address and contact telephone numbers
* GP name & Practice
* Date, time and place of appointment
* Details regarding your medical needs and mobility
* Confirmation regarding any relevant government benefits received

**Please always remember to cancel transport** that is not required at least 24 hours in advance of the appointment, by phone **(0345 425 0050 )**, if not the NHS will still be charged the full journey cost.