

NON EMERGENCY PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICES

Patient Messaging

- NHS services should be used wisely. It's important that we all make the most appropriate use of the services we have.
- The service and criteria aren't changing, but the way we assess whether you are eligible or not has been improved to ensure the criteria is met before offering patient transport.
- You will only be able to access patient transport if there is a medical need.
- There may be other ways to support you to get home or to your outpatient appointment. For example; some people may be eligible to claim back expenses if you use public transport. Visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Pages/Travelcosts.aspx> to find if you are eligible.
- If you aren't eligible for patient transport, perhaps a neighbour or friend might be able to give you a lift?

Q&A - PATIENTS

1) Why are you asking me all these extra questions?

We want to ensure the service is offered to people who really need it on the basis of medical need. On occasion people who may not really have needed the service have been provided with it. This puts strain on the patient transport service and means that those who should be getting the service are being delayed.

2) I used to get transport why can't I have it now?

It may be that your eligibility has changed, so you may have had a condition which meant you needed transport but you are now better. For example you may have been temporarily unable to drive due to a medical condition but this is now not the case. Or you should not have received the transport previously as you did not meet the criteria laid out by the Department of Health

3) How do I book patient transport if I'm going to a hospital out of the area?

Your GP can advise you on how to book patient transport, which in most cases will be through a local arrangement with local providers. However in some cases, some Hospitals have their own specific arrangements for patient transport; therefore you may be asked to contact them directly. You will be asked questions in the same way by their own Patient Transport Service.

4) I can't afford to get to my appointment, doesn't that meet the criteria?

Patients who do not have a medical need for NHS transport to hospital and get Income Support or Family Credit or are on a low income, can receive help with their travelling expenses under the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS).

Full details of the scheme are available in leaflet (H11) NHS Travel Costs, which is available at hospitals and local offices of the DHSS

- 5) I have a condition which means I have to be transported on a stretcher; will I still be able to have the transport?

Yes nothing has changed. If you have a medical need, then you should and will be able to have patient transport to your appointment. For a full list of the criteria, visit:

<https://castlepointandrochfordccg.nhs.uk/your-services/patient-transport> or
<https://southendccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/patient-transport>

- 6) If I am not eligible for transport and do not have access to a car, what other options do I have?

Details of alternative transport methods can be provided by the PTS booking line. These options include information on public transport links and low cost transport options.

Q&A – NHS Staff

- 1) I work on a ward and have to book patient transport; do I have to ask my patients all these questions before I can book?

Yes, it's really important that everyone who accesses the patient transport service is asked the same questions. This makes it equitable and fair. Refer patients to the information provided about why we are asking these questions.

- 2) What about if I know the patient is eligible, because they have always met the criteria, do I still have to ask these questions?

It's always helpful to reassess a person's medical need on whether they need to use patient transport or not. Whilst the criteria hasn't changed, many people still receive the transport, even after their condition has improved and they no longer need it.

- 3) What about dialysis patients? Would they qualify?

Currently these patients are automatically eligible for transport (ref page 1 of assessment – exclusions).

- 4) Will Chemotherapy or Radiotherapy patients be eligible?

Currently these patients are automatically eligible for transport (ref page 1 of assessment – exclusions).