



AMBULANCE CAR SERVICE (ACS) INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

Thank you for requesting details on the Ambulance Car Service (ACS), this is a voluntary transport service and does not constitute any contractual arrangements or contract of employment with the North East Ambulance Service. Our ACS volunteers are required to provide transport for non-emergency walking patients to and from hospitals and treatment centres, thereby leaving ambulances available for low mobility patients i.e. wheelchair and stretcher patients and allows ambulance when needed to support with emergency and urgent care transport.

The Basic Requirements

The basic requirements which must be met before being considered as a Volunteer Driver are that the volunteer must be:-

- 1) **Availability**
You will be asked to nominate certain days and times of the week when you will be available for ACS journeys. A volunteer can be available any time of day 7 days a week. Journeys are normally planned on the previous day; however availability on the day will be acceptable.
- 2) **Physically and mentally fit**
You will be required to assist patients from their home to your car and again to the hospital ward or department and vice versa. There may also be belongings to be carried.

A medical questionnaire will need to be completed. This is a confidential document and will be screened by the Occupational Health Department.
- 3) **Have a four door car in good and clean condition**
Cars must be seven years old or less on commencement of voluntary duties, be four/five door design to allow free and easy access to and from the rear seats and must be maintained and kept in a clean condition. If your vehicle is over 7 years old this may be acceptable, Manager's discretion pending inspection is required.
- 4) **Covered by full Comprehensive Insurance**
The North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust does not accept any responsibility or liability for damage or injuries arising from accidents whilst patients are in your car. Therefore, it is most important that Volunteer Drivers ensure that their car is covered by a fully comprehensive policy and that they are authorised to use the car for the conveyance of patients and reimbursement of these expenses, we require evidence that your insurance company are aware that you are volunteering.

It is important that the volunteer checks the above points with their insurance company, as an insurance indemnity certificate will be required to be signed by all new drivers.



Ambulance Car Service (ACS) and Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) Information

Volunteer Development Team

Doc No :-

Version : 3

Information Sheet

- 5) Undergo a driving assessment
Before being accepted as a volunteer, you will be required to take a driving assessment with a driving instructor from the Trust.
- 6) Declare all driving convictions
All driving convictions, past present or pending, must be declared at the time of applying and also subsequently as an ACS driver. Failure to declare any convictions may result in your application being withdrawn. A Maximum of 3 points is allowed when applying for the role. Thereafter you must notify us of any driving convictions etc., and you will be required to complete a driving mandate as we will regularly check your license via a third party with the DVLA
- 7) MOT Certificates and Insurance
At the time of applying you will be requested to supply us with a copy of your current insurance certificate and MOT certificate (where applicable) and thereafter on an annual basis (MOT's will be checked online).
- 8) Enhanced DBS Checks
Owing to the nature of the Trusts' business, volunteers will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check (formerly CRB check). Volunteers will only be accepted subject to verification of details provided through the Disclosure and Barring Service check. If your DBS Application is returned containing information a formal risk assessment will be carried out.

Payment of Expenses

Volunteers are not paid for their services but are reimbursed mileage expenses in arrears at a rate of 44p per mile. This can be claimed each month using Smartphones which are provided.

Conveyance of Patients and Escorts

Journeys are planned as efficiently as possible and will inevitably result in the transportation of more than one patient per car to save unnecessary duplication of mileage and expense.

Escorts should only be conveyed where booked or authorised by Control. No other passenger should travel as any spare seating may be needed for additional patients on return journeys. Animals must not be carried, the exception to this being assistance dogs, with the consent of the volunteer.

Appointment Times

It is most important that the appointment times given are met, as many of the patients you will carry will be attending specialised treatment and failure to meet these times may result in treatment being delayed or missed. If any doubt exists in this matter, advice may be sought from Scheduled Care Control.



Ambulance Car Service (ACS) and Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) Information

Volunteer Development Team

Doc No :-

Version : 3

Information Sheet

Safety of Patients

Attention is drawn to the need for seat belts to be worn by the driver and all passengers.

Care of patients conveyed by the Volunteer Car Service

This service is for patients who are unable, for medical reasons to travel to or from treatment centres by public transport. Patients may be anxious and therefore should be treated with consideration and understanding at all times. Volunteers must help them to enter or alight from their cars and see them safely into hospital or settled in their own home on return or discharge. The sympathetic handling of patients is the prime responsibility of our service. You will be required to ensure that any discharged patient is seen safely into their house, preferably into the care of a relative or neighbour.

Ambulance Scheduled Care Control

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to notify Scheduled Care Control of any changes/alterations to planned work on the day.

Scheduled Care Control is available 24 hrs. a day. Control staff may ask you to convey patients at short notice (depending upon your availability).

Identification

Upon commencement as a volunteer, you will be provided with Ambulance Car Service signage for your car and an identification badge. These should be visible at all times and only when transporting patients on behalf of the trust.

Unemployment and Volunteers registered as Unemployed

As previously stated the Ambulance Car Service is purely voluntary and reimbursement of expenses is paid to volunteers. Should you be registered as unemployed it is your responsibility to ensure that any effects on benefits being received by you are discussed with the relevant benefits provider.

Cessation of volunteer availability

If you decide you no longer wish to be a volunteer you must notify the Volunteer Development Team in writing or Email.

Training

Prior to commencement in the volunteer role you will be required to satisfactorily complete an induction training program, this includes attending a 4 day Induction course and some e-learning modules (these can be done at home). Thereafter annual statutory and mandatory training will be provided.

Age

Must be over 18 years of age (Maybe unsupervised/Lone worker)



Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

Thank you for requesting details on the Volunteer Portering Service (VPS), this is a voluntary service and does not constitute any contractual arrangements or contract of employment with the North East Ambulance Service. Volunteer positions have been created by North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, (NEAS). The volunteer post holder will be an integral part of the Scheduled Care service conveying patients to and from Scheduled Care vehicles and wards and departments of the Hospital. This will include patients attending hospital for outpatient appointments and treatment as well as those ready for discharge home from Hospital Wards / Discharge lounges

Key Duties & Responsibilities:

To liaise with the Volunteer Development Team, Scheduled Care Team Managers and other NHS staff for the effective extraction and delivery of patients to and from Wards / Departments and Discharge Lounges. Smooth handover of Patients and their personal belongings, medication and medical notes to Trust Staff and or Scheduled Care Crews on a daily basis.

To maintain a readily available supply of wheelchairs at the hospital entrances.

To monitor and record on a daily log sheet the time saved to convey patients to / from vehicles / wards.

To work alongside Scheduled Care crews, Ambulance Car Service (ACS) volunteers and liaise with Scheduled Care Control and Registration departments as required.

Other Duties:

The above is only an outline of the tasks, responsibilities and outcomes required of the role. The volunteer will carry out any other duties as may reasonably be required by the Volunteer Development Team.

Training

Prior to commencement in the volunteer role you will be required to satisfactorily complete an induction training program, this includes attending a 3 day Induction course and some e-learning modules (these can be done at home). Thereafter annual statutory and mandatory training will be provided



Ambulance Car Service (ACS) and Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) Information

Volunteer Development Team

Doc No :-

Version : 3

Information Sheet

Volunteer Porter Personal Specification:

Communication Skills	Good communication skills to establish maintain and gain the co-operation of work colleagues. Good interpersonal skills Ability to gain respect and credibility with managers / staff.
Planning Skills	Ability to prioritise own time, be effective and efficient.
Autonomy	Flexibility Be prepared to work well together with others or unsupervised.
Equality & Diversity	Commitment to Equality and Human Rights
Physical Skills	Be able to walk long distances, push wheelchairs and be able to complete minimum moving and handling skills.
Age	Must be over 18 years of age (Maybe unsupervised/lone worker)



Ambulance Car Service (ACS) and Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) Information

Volunteer Development Team

Doc No :-

Version : 3

Information Sheet

All Volunteers MUST comply with the following

Equal Opportunities:

At North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust we are committed to equality, diversity and human rights. This means we work to make sure our staff, volunteers, patients and communities are treated fairly and with respect

We will promote a working culture that embraces diversity and delivers measurable benefit through empowering, engaging, supporting and developing all employees and volunteers to contribute and benefit from a great place to work. We recognise the importance of developing an inclusive culture where diversity is fully embedded into business practices which will influence change around reducing health inequalities and improve the patient experience.

We want to ensure our principles are embedded in the way we work and within legal frameworks to prevent discrimination and unequal treatment..

Health & Safety:

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), it is the responsibility of individuals at every level to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions in the workplace. This includes co-operating with the organisation and colleagues in complying with health and safety obligations to maintain a safe environment and particularly by reporting promptly any defects, risks or potential hazards.

Risk Management:

Support the implementation of the Trust's Risk Management Strategy. Help the Trust meet its risk management obligations by being aware of hazards and risks within their work environment and working with the Risk Officers and other relevant people, for the elimination and reduction of unacceptable risks..

Use of IT Systems:

All volunteers will be encouraged to use any IT facilities/equipment that are made available.

Confidentiality:

The volunteer will be expected to maintain the complete confidentiality of all material and information to which they have access and process.

Data Protection:

The volunteer must, if required to do so, process records or information in a fair and lawful way. They must hold and use data only for the specified, registered purposes for which it was obtained and disclose data only to authorised persons or organisations.

Infection Control Responsibility:

The volunteer will be expected at all times to practice in accordance with the infection control standards specified in the Community Infection Control Policy and in accordance with the Health Act (2006) Code of practice for the Prevention and Control of Health Care Associated Infections.



Ambulance Car Service (ACS) and Volunteer Porter Service (VPS) Information

Volunteer Development Team

Doc No :-

Version : 3

Information Sheet

Accountability:

Directly accountable to the Volunteer Development Team

Flexibility:

The Trust is currently working in a climate of great change within the NHS. It is therefore expected that all volunteers will develop flexible practices to be able to meet the challenges and opportunities of working within the new NHS.

No Smoking Policy:

All NHS Trust's operate a NO SMOKING policy and all volunteers must be aware of it

Code of Conduct:

All volunteers must adhere to the principles of our Code of Conduct (copy supplied upon commencement of duties)

NEAS - Mission, Vision & Values:

Our Mission - Why we wear our badge.

Safe, effective and responsive care for all.

Our Vision - Where our badge will take us.

Unmatched quality of care, every time we touch lives

Our Values – How our badge will take us there.

Respect

Take responsibility and be accountable.

Compassion.

Pride.

Strive for excellence and innovation.

Make a difference – day in day out.