



North East Ambulance Service **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

# Transport Care The Patient Charter



Safely there and back.

*For Life*

## Our Patient Charter



## What is the Patient Transport Service?

North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) provides pre planned non-emergency transport for patients who have a medical condition that would prevent them from travelling to a treatment centre by any other means, or who require the skills of an ambulance care assistant during the journey.

### Why we have a patient's charter

We understand that going to hospital can be a worrying time for you. We want your experience of our Patient Transport service to be comfortable and to run as smoothly as possible. This is why it is important that you know what you can expect when using our services.

### Are you eligible?

Please answer all the questions we ask as accurately as possible to help us assess your needs. Have your NHS number available; this is usually shown on your appointment letter or can be acquired from your GP. Could you also give us an up to date contact telephone number.

### Eligibility criteria

Tell us what your requirements are and we will determine whether or not you are eligible for Patient Transport.

If you are not eligible for Patient Transport Services, please contact the Patient Advice Liaison Service on Freephone 0800 0320202 for details of alternative transport providers in your area.

## What we expect from you

If you are eligible for patient transport your booking will be made either by your GP, Hospital Staff or a dedicated call centre.

For booking we need to know your specific requirements. You may be asked questions about your weight, height or your mobility, in order for us to ensure the correct mode of transport is provided for you.

We will need to know for example, if you are hard of hearing, or if you would prefer us to use a specific door to your house.

A text messaging service may notify you of your ambulance booking.



### Is someone accompanying you?

Please ask the person making the booking if you require an escort. We may transport one escort with you if they are needed to help you with communication or sensory difficulties, or you are 16 years old or under.

If your escort is not eligible to travel with you, you can arrange for them to meet you at the hospital.

### Do you need to cancel or change your transport booking?

Please let us know as soon as possible if your appointment is cancelled or you no longer require your transport.

A dedicated Freephone cancellation line is available for you to cancel your ambulance transport, should you no longer require it. The number is 0300 1110247.

If you need to make any changes to your ambulance booking please contact the person who made the booking for you as soon as possible and let them know.

### Mobility

We will ensure you are treated with compassion and dignity and your individual mobility requirements are met.

Please give the person making your booking as much information as possible about your individual mobility needs. In particular, let them know if your wheelchair is electric or manual, or if it is not to a standard specification.

We will ensure that you are properly secured in the vehicle with seatbelts or wheelchair restraints as appropriate. We will supply and fit suitable child car seats that are in line with current legislation. Please ensure you inform us if you use a zimmer frame or a walking aid.

### Wheelchairs

If you need to travel in your wheelchair - is it of a type suitable for securing on a vehicle? Is it in good, safe condition, with solid or fully inflated tyres and are the foot plates and arm rests fitted? Do the brakes work properly and does it have adequate tie down points?

# What you can expect from us

## How we will find your address

Our ambulances are fitted with equipment to enable us to locate patient addresses quickly and our staff will keep in regular contact with our control room to plan the best route for you. Please notify the person who has made your booking, of any information that may help us find your address more quickly.

## Will we get you there in time?

We will provide you with a Patient Transport Service which is delivered within a timely manner in line with the quality standards, which we are required to perform against.

We are unable to give exact collection times from your home to treatment centre. However, on average this will be an hour beforehand, dependent on how close you are to the treatment centre. Please be ready.

We will try to ensure, whenever possible, that your journey time does not exceed one hour.

## What do you need to bring?

If you have been given an appointment card or letter please bring it with you, along with any medication and dietary requirements which you may need during the day.

## Who will collect you?

Our staff carry identification and will introduce themselves to you politely and professionally on arrival. Please ask them to show you their identification so you know who they are.

All our staff receive a regular disclosure and barring service check to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

We will ensure that you are escorted safely from your place of pick up to the vehicle.

## Are our vehicles safe?

Our vehicles are always appropriately equipped and subject to regular maintenance and safety checks. Our vehicles will be clean at all times.

Please don't eat and drink whilst on board our vehicles unless you have a medical reason to do so, in which case, please inform your driver on arrival. Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes, is not permitted on board our vehicles. Please ensure your home is smoke free for an hour before your transport arrives.

## Skilled staff

Our staff are trained and have the skills, knowledge and experience to provide you with a caring, efficient and safe service. Please treat our staff with consideration and respect. Please adhere to any safety advice they may give you. Please note the wearing of seatbelts is compulsory unless medical exemption is provided prior to transport. Please notify us of this when booking transport.

## Respect for our patients

We will ensure that you are treated with compassion, dignity and your individual needs are respected at all times. Our services are accessible by all, irrespective of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. Please advise us of any specific requirements you have for your journey.

## Arriving for your appointment

We aim to transport you to your appointment within the permitted timescales for hospital clinics; no more than 45 minutes prior to your appointment time or 15 minutes after your appointment time.

If you are travelling for Dialysis treatment at City Hospital Sunderland, University Hospital North Durham or Washington Primary Care Centre, you can expect to arrive no more than 30 minutes prior to your appointment time.

Our staff will escort and book you into the specific clinic you are attending. Please notify the staff directly if you do not wish to be escorted to your department or clinic.

## Getting home

After your appointment has finished, please ask the clinic you have attended or use the designated ambulance free phones to notify us that you are ready for your transport home.

We aim to collect you within 60 minutes of being informed that you are ready.

# Tell us what you think

If you have any comments, complaints or compliments please speak to your driver in the first instance. If you are still unhappy please contact the Patients Advice and Liaison Service.

Freepost RLTC-SGHH-EGXJ  
North of Tyne PALS  
The Old Stables  
Greys Yard, Morpeth,  
NE61 1QD

☎ Freephone: 0800 0320202

📱 Text: 01670 511098

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