

Eligibility Criteria for the Non-Emergency Sussex Patient Transport Services (NEPTS)

1. Introduction

The non-urgent Sussex Patient Transport Service (PTS) is responsible for safely and effectively transporting eligible patients between where they live (or reside) to, from and between NHS-funded healthcare facilities in Great Britain in a timely manner, to attend a healthcare appointment or treatment. This does not include Primary Care appointments e.g. GP, dentist, pharmacist.

Each patient's entitlement to PTS is determined via the application of Eligibility Criteria, comprising a standard assessment process based on their current physical and mental health and mobility. The revised Eligibility Criteria, as set out below, will be effective from 1 April 2016, and will be applied to all booking requests. These Criteria have been developed in conjunction with clinical experts and patient representatives. Patients who are found eligible will be offered PTS regardless of distance and circumstances.

Patients are responsible for arranging and funding their own non-urgent transport to and from healthcare facilities, unless medical transport is required. The NHS is not required to fund, or provide, transport for patients without an applicable medical condition, for social or financial reasons, or to private patients. Patients on a low income who require financial assistance may be supported by the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (subject to their individual eligibility)

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

The NHS expects patients to make their own way to and from healthcare facilities unless there is a clearly defined medical reason why they cannot use conventional transport options. This includes public (e.g. buses and trains) and private (e.g. cars, bikes and taxis) transport, and lifts from the patient's support network (e.g. friends, carers, neighbours, relatives).

2. Principles

Not all patients attending a health facility will be entitled to PTS. The principle for the entitlement to PTS is defined as:

- The patient has a medical condition such that they require the skills of ambulance staff or appropriately skilled personnel on, or for the journey; and/or
- Following a documented clinical decision, it has been determined that the medical condition of the patient is such that it would be detrimental to their condition or recovery if they were to travel by any other means.

3. Patients who are entitled to Patient Transport Services (PTS)

Patient Transport will be provided to patients who meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. They cannot manage any journey in private or public transport for the activities of daily living* due to current mobility issues or mental health condition;
2. They are unable to travel by private or public transport for the activities of daily living due to their disability, and are not in receipt of an enhanced mobility element of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**;
3. They are attending for active treatment which causes them physical side effects;

4. They attend frequent, reoccurring healthcare appointments for the same condition, who are deemed eligible for PTS by a clinician at their treatment centre; or
5. They are unable to travel via alternative means for the activities of daily living because it would be detrimental to their current medical condition.

4. Escorts

All requests for a patient to travel with an escort (e.g. a relative or carer) to provide support or supervision during their journey must be made at the time of booking. Escort requests will be approved for eligible patients who meet the following criteria:

1. Aged 16 or under;
2. A disability that prevents them travelling alone on private or public transport, where the escort will provide an enhanced level of care not available from the PTS crew, both during the journey and at the destination;
3. A current mental or physical health problem that prevents them travelling alone; or
4. A medical condition that requires constant supervision for their safety or the safety of others.

Escort requests for patients to travel with a dependent who does not meet the criteria above will be reviewed by exception.

5. Appeals and Reviews Process:

If a patient is deemed not eligible the Provider will provide alternative transport options to the booker.

If the Health Care Professional or patient are not happy with the outcome of their assessment it can be reviewed with a team leader on the day any request is made to confirm that the criteria has been applied correctly and whether there is any other supporting information that can be applied to the questions to determine the outcome.

If the patient is still assessed as not eligible then the Health Care Professional or patient can be provided with the relevant CCG PALS details if they wish to raise the matter further.

Patients who abandon their booked journey will have their eligibility for PTS suspended until they have been reassessed. Patients' eligibility may also be reviewed subject to feedback from healthcare providers or PTS staff.

*The Activities of Daily Living (ADL) are defined as: The things we normally do in daily living including any daily activity we perform for self-care, such as feeding ourselves, bathing, dressing, grooming, work, home-making, and leisure. The ability or inability to perform ADLs can be used as a very practical measure of ability/disability in many disorders.

** Patients in receipt of an enhanced mobility element of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are not usually eligible for PTS as their mobility allowance covers the costs of their transport to and from healthcare appointments. However, these patients may be entitled if they have a temporary medical need (e.g. a leg in plaster) unrelated to the condition(s) for which they receive their mobility allowance, or if they are found eligible for PTS under any

of other criteria. In these cases, eligibility will be assessed via the standardised process, applying the remaining criteria.