

Protocol for A + E Patient Transport

This protocol has been developed in order to ensure a consistent approach across Hywel Dda. The two main aims are:

- Reduce the high expenditure on Taxis for conveying patients from A + E.
- Ensure that patients with a medical need for specialist transport are not stranded.

WAST EMS Crews have been directed to inform patients that it is their responsibility to make their own way home from hospital and that transport will not be provided. The poster in Appendix A should clearly displayed within all A + E departments.

Between 8.30am and 4.30pm, there are WAST vehicles and other vehicles available to convey patients who have a medical need for NHS-funded transport. The Eligibility Script in Appendix B should be used to determine whether or not a patient should be provided with transport. If a patient is eligible then a Patient Transport Booking form should be completed and handed to the WAST Ambulance Liaison Officer.

Between 4.30pm and 8.30am there are limited resources available to convey non-emergency patients. In most cases, taxis are the only option available. EMS vehicles can be requested to transport non-urgent patients, but availability is limited and priority is given to emergency calls. Due to this, it is recommended that patients with the following requirements should not be discharged outside WAST's normal working hours:

- Patients who need to travel with oxygen
- Patients who need to travel on a stretcher
- Bariatric patients
- Patients who require a double-manned crew.

The only other patients who would be eligible for transport outside of WAST's normal working hours are patients in a wheelchair that cannot travel in a regular taxi and patients that require a nurse escort to travel with them.

A nurse escort is required if the patient is on their own and:

- Is under 18 years of age.
- Has severe communication difficulties that prevent them from travelling on their own safely.
- Has a condition that requires constant support or attention.
- Has a mental health condition that makes it unsuitable for them to travel unaccompanied.

All patients that are not admitted or who are discharged and need to travel home should be provided with access to a telephone in order to arrange their own transport. Patients who are unable to find their own way should be sign-posted to Traveline Cymru or provided with local taxi numbers.

Transport should not be provided to patients simply because they do not have money. Taxi expenditure is now being closely monitored and any inappropriate usage will be fully investigated.

If patients become confrontational or refuse to leave then security should be called to escort the patient off the premises.

It is your responsibility to make your own way home

If you require access to a telephone to arrange transport home, then please ask at reception.

The health board is not able to pay for transport because you do not have money. This would be inappropriate use of taxpayers' money.



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Appendix A – WAST Eligibility Criteria Questions

SECTION 1 – Establish patients with the highest medical acuity

1	Are you/patient receiving regular renal dialysis or oncology cancer treatment?	Yes	Eligible	Continue to question 3
		No		Continue to question 3
3	Do you/patient need to travel with oxygen?	Yes	Eligible	Continue to question 5
		No		Continue to question 5
5	Do you/patient have access to a motorbility car?	Yes		Continue to Question 7
		No		Continue to Question 7

SECTION 2 – Mobility Assessment

7	Do you require assistance with walking or use a walking aid?	No	if answered No to Question 1 & 3 Continue to question 30		
		No	Eligible	if answered Yes to Question 1 (Renal/Oncology) assign T1 Mobility (continue to question 34).	
		No	Eligible	if answered Yes to Question 3 (Oxygen) assign C2 Mobility (continue to question 34)	
		Yes	Do you use any of the following aides to assist you when travelling? (Drop Down Box)		
		Stretcher	Yes	Eligible	Continue to question 9
		Wheelchair	Yes	Eligible	Continue to question 15
		Crutches	Yes	Eligible	Assign C1 Mobility (continue to question 34)

Zimmer Frame/Tri Wheel	Yes	Eligible	Assign C1 Mobility (continue to question 34)
Walking Stick	Yes		Continue to question 24
No			Continue to question 24

STRETCHER PATIENT

9	Are you able to transfer into a carrying chair?	Yes	Continue to question 11
		No	Continue to Question 13

11	Can you travel in the chair for the duration of the journey	Yes	Assign a C2 Mobility (Continue to Question 34)
		No	Continue to question 13

13	Does the property have any steps or obstructions that would cause difficulty in transporting you?	Yes	Assign a C6 Mobility - Consider a Risk assessment before continuing to question 34
		No	Assign a C6 Mobility - Continue to question 34

WHEELCHAIR PATIENT

15	Do you have to remain in your own wheelchair to travel?	Yes	Continue to Question 17
		No	Assign a C2 Mobility (Continue to Question 34)

17	Is the wheelchair a standard size and model?	Yes	Continue to question 23
		No	Continue to question 19

19	Is the wheelchair an electric model?	Yes	Continue to Question 21
		No	Continue to Question 23

21	Does the property have any steps or obstructions that would cause difficulty in transporting you?	Yes	Assign a C5 Mobility - Consider a Risk assessment before continuing to question 34
		No	Assign a C5 Mobility (Continue to Question 34)

23	Does the property have any steps or obstructions that would cause difficulty in transporting you?	Yes	Assign a C4 Mobility - Consider a Risk assessment before continuing to question 34
		No	Assign a C3 Mobility (Continue to Question 34)

ASSISTANCE/ WALKING STICK

24	Do you need assistance from the driver to help you walk?	Yes	Eligible	Assign C1 Mobility (continue to question 34)
		No		Continue to question 26

26	Are you able to climb three small steps?	Yes	Continue to question 28	
		No	Assign a C1 mobility (Continue to question 34)	

28	Are you able to travel in a car?	Yes	Continue to question 30	
		No	Eligible	Assign a C1 Mobility (Continue to Question 34)

SECTION 3 – Eligibility Criteria Continued

30	Do you have any communication or sight difficulties that would prevent you from using public transport? (Visual, hearing or speech impairments?)	Yes	Eligible	Assign T1 Mobility & update the booking details Continue to Question 34
		No		Continue to question 32

32	Do you have a condition or will you experience any side effects from receiving treatment that would prevent you from using public transport?	Yes	Eligible	Assign T1 Mobility & Continue to Question 34
		No		Ineligible continue to Question 36

34	Do you have a medical condition or any special requirements that we need to be aware of? Communication difficulties/weight issues/infections/breathing difficulties?	Yes	Update the booking details with the required information (See Pop up box)
		No	See pop up box

Pop Up Box I can confirm that you are eligible to receive patient transport and you have been assigned to a -- Mobility.

SECTION 4 - INELIGIBLE PATIENT & SIGNPOSTING

36	You are Ineligible for Ambulance Transport, you are expected to make your way independently to your appointment, however we can provide you with details of alternative transport providers. Would you like me to provide you the details?	Yes	Continue to Question 38
		No	Continue to question 40

ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS

38	To inform you that there may be a cost associated with using alternative providers, we can also provide you with information regarding claiming back travel costs. Can you please confirm your postcode so that I can check our database for your nearest alternative providers?	Yes	Inform patient of nearest provider (Continue to Question 48)
		No	Continue to question 40

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

40	Have you considered using public transport? I can provide you with the details for Travel Line Cymru?	Yes	www.traveline-cymru.info or 0871 200 22 33 Continue to Question 50
		No	Continue to Question 46

EXPENSES

42	Patients who make their own way to hospital may be able to claim back some or all of their transport costs if you receive any of the following:-	Income Support Benefit	If patients answers yes continue to question 44	If patient answers no continue to question 46
		Income Based Job Seekers Allowance		
		Working Tax Credit		
		Child Tax Credit		
		HC2 form (Low income Support)		
		HC3 form (Low income support)		

44	To claim back your travel expenses you will need to contact the hospital for further details	Continue to Question 50
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46	Have you considered asking family or friends to take you to your appointment? Alternatively have you considered contacting the hospital to a more convenient time?	Continue to Question 50
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50	If you experience difficulty with arranging alternative transport then please ring us back on this number.
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