

Non Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS) protocol

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Section No.	Title	Page No.
	Key points to note	2
	Staff guidance note (flow chart) re. booking transport	3
1.	Introduction	4
2.	Non Emergency Patient Transport Service Provision	4
3.	Establishing eligibility and authorising requests	4
4.	Eligibility criteria	5
5.	Booking NEPT	6
6.	On the day bookings – less than 24 hrs booking	7
7.	Escorts	7
8.	Escalation procedure	7
9.	One or two way journeys	8
10.	Review of transport needs	8
11.	Discharges	8
12.	Cancellations	8
13.	Standing orders	9
14.	Financial Assistance	9
15.	Quality Standards	10
	TRANSPORT BOOKING FORM	11

Key points to note when booking Patient Transport

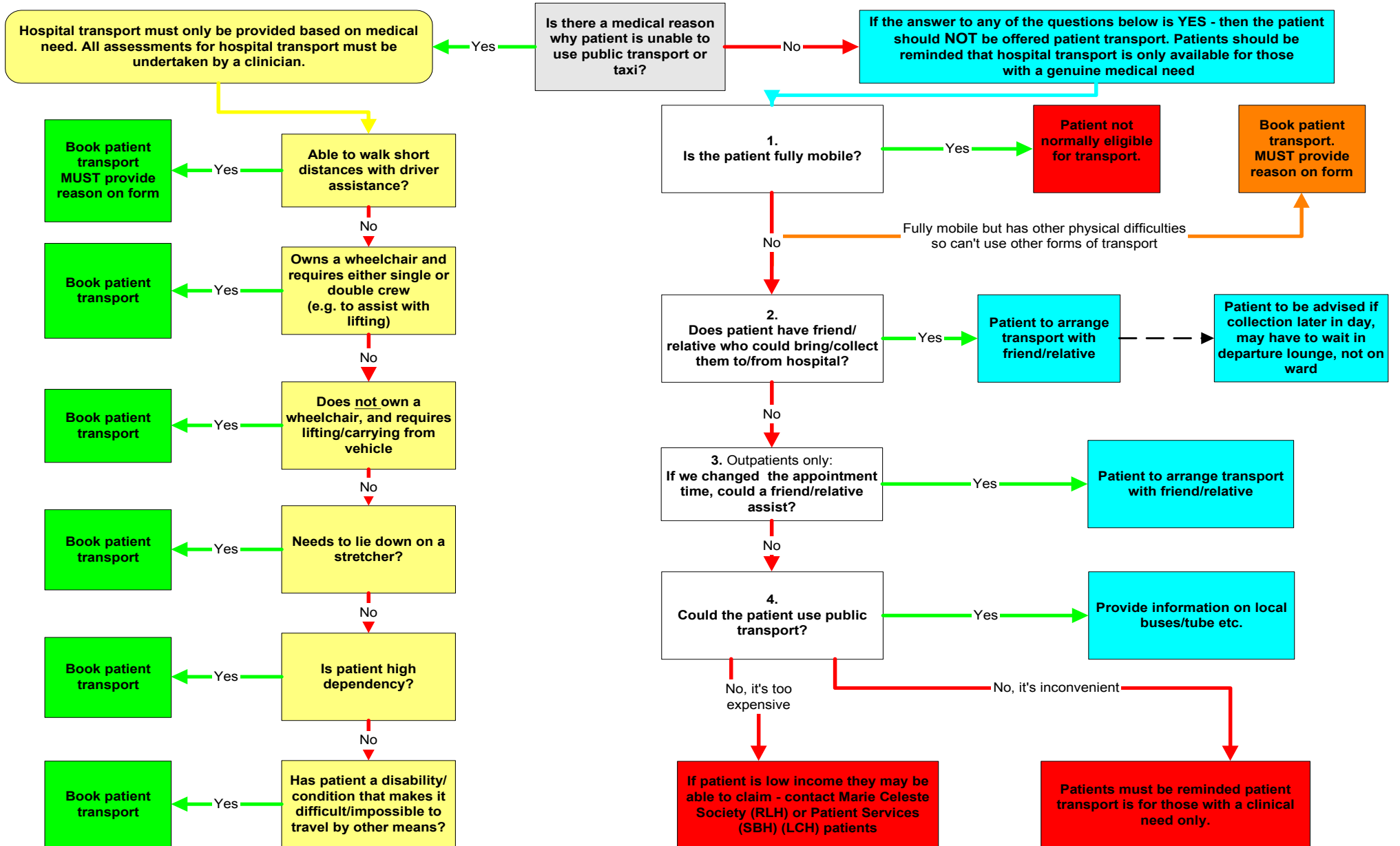
1. Patients must have a medical need to qualify for patient transport. See page xx for eligibility criteria and types of transport.
2. Needs must be assessed by an appropriate clinician:
 - Consultant
 - Hospital Doctor and/or GP
 - Qualified nursing staff
 - Dentist
 - Midwife
 - Therapist
 - Outpatients Health Care Support Workers (assessment only – not authorisation)

Administrative staff may complete the form, provided the patient has been assessed, and the form has been signed by one of the above.

3. Bookings must be made by 12.00 p.m. the day before transport is required at the very latest in order that all journeys can be appropriately planned.
4. If a booking has to be made at short notice and/or on the same day this must be discussed with the Transport office first. Please contact the Transport Planner on **14-7434** who will endeavour to arrange transport.
5. The Transport Service currently operates between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. Monday to Friday, with a reduced service at weekends.
6. Queries/disputes over transport bookings should be referred in the first instance to line managers to resolve.
7. Escorts are limited to one per patient, patients must meet set criteria to qualify for an escort – see page 7 of the protocol.
8. Non eligible transport patients may qualify for financial assistance under the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS), further information is available from the Marie Celeste Society (ext. **14-7304** RLH) or Patient Services (ext. **15-7400** SBH) or ext. **16-2356** for LCH.
9. Further advice, information and patient leaflets on transport can be provided by contacting the Transport Liaison Manager on **14-2056**.
10. A staff guide (flowchart) has been produced and is attached on page 3. Hard copies are available on all wards, clinics and departments.

A copy of the Transport Booking form can be found at the end of this document and is also available on the Trust Intranet.

Guidance note for booking Patient Transport



1. Introduction

1.1 Barts and the London NHS Trust recognises its obligation to provide non emergency patient transport (NEPT) to certain patients who, **due to their medical condition**, are unable to make their own travel arrangements when attending the Trust.

1.2 The aim of this protocol is to:

- define the eligibility criteria for NEPT;
- define the booking procedure for NEPT and, outline levels of responsibility;
- ensure all requests for non emergency patient transport are legitimate and reflect true medical need;
- ensure all staff are aware and understand this protocol, as well as their role in its implementation.

2. Non Emergency Patient Transport Service Provision

2.1 Barts and the London NHS Trust has an in-house non emergency patient transport service. In house services are used to convey patients' resident within the M25 and is available Monday to Friday between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

2.2 A night crew is available for renal dialysis patients and A&E only from the hours between 10pm to 8am (Mon-Thurs) and between 8am and 8pm (Fri to Sun).

2.3 A reduced service is provided at weekends for the transportation of renal dialysis patients, A&E, admissions, discharges and transfers. The on call weekend controller can be contacted on **020 7606 4940 or 07770 480 960**.

2.4 Eligible patients living outside the M25 will be conveyed by a private patient transport provider, arranged through Transport Services.

3. Establishing eligibility and authorising requests

3.1 To be eligible for NEPT a patient must have a clear medical need which prevents them from using public transport. The principle which should apply is that a patient should be able to reach hospital without detriment to their medical condition.

3.2 When assessing patients for Transport they should be routinely asked about their normal day to day methods of getting around when not attending hospital, prior to booking patient transport. **If a patient can get around normally without**

support and or assistance they should not be offered Transport. NB Staff should refer to the flowchart on page 3 for guidance.

- 3.3 Only the following are authorised to assess patients’ eligibility for non emergency patient transport:
- Consultant;
 - Hospital doctor or GP;
 - Qualified nursing staff;
 - Dentist
 - Midwife;
 - Therapist
 - Outpatients Health Care Support Worker (HCSW). (Note. As HCSW are not qualified practitioners, whilst they may be able to assess patients, a qualified nurse must authorise this).
- 3.4 The person authorising must ensure their name and date of assessment is clearly printed and visible on the Transport booking form.
- 3.5 Forms not authorised by an appropriate Health professional will not be processed and will be returned to the relevant Clinician or Department.
- 3.6 A receptionist/ward/administration clerk is permitted to complete the form and book transport, provided the patient and relevant section on the booking form has been authorised by one of the above. Booking staff must ensure their contact details are included on the form.

4. Eligibility criteria

- 4.1 Eligible patients fall into three broad categories:
- those who are not sufficiently mobile and/or medically fit to use public transport or;
 - those who are not sufficiently mobile and/or medically fit and do not have access to an alternative means of travelling to and from the hospital or;
 - Patients who have been advised that due to their medical condition, they should not travel on public transport.
- 4.2 Medical need eligibility criteria are as follows:

Patient eligibility	Description	Transport type
High dependency patient requires a qualified medical crew with a fully equipped ambulance during transportation	A suitably qualified ambulance crew will be planned and allocated. Full reasons for transport must	A fully equipped ambulance with an appropriately qualified crew will

	be written on form.	be allocated.
Needs to lie down on a stretcher, or with legs extended , and is therefore unable to travel by any other means	Patient needs to lie down, or has full length plaster, or cannot bend knee	A double crew with stretcher ambulance will be allocated.
Travels in own wheelchair, and does not need carrying, and needs assistance of one driver and, due to their medical condition, is unable to travel by any other means	Patient travels in their own chair, and lives in a property that is wheelchair accessible e.g. no stairs.	A single crew wheelchair accessible vehicle will be allocated.
Travels in own wheelchair but requires carrying/lifting to and from the vehicle and, due to their medical condition, is unable to travel by other means	Patient travels in their own chair and lives in a property that is not wheelchair accessible e.g. no lifts.	A double crew in wheelchair accessible vehicle will be allocated.
Does not own a chair, but needs to be carried/lifted to and from the vehicle and, due to their medical condition, is unable to travel by any other means	Patient lives upstairs and cannot manage the stairs by themselves, or the patient needs to be lifted to and from the vehicle.	A double crew with a carrying chair will be allocated.
Able to walk unaided/short distances with assistance of one driver, and, due to their medical condition, is unable to travel by any other means	Patient can walk alone, or with assistance of driver, for short distances only e.g. to and from the vehicle.	A single crew ambulance will be allocated.

- 4.3 If the patient is **high dependency**, **further information must be provided on the Transport booking form** relating to patient needs during their transportation. This information is passed to the ambulance crew conveying the patient, to assist with patients needs.
- 4.4 Information on patients' infection status and other requirements e.g. oxygen must also be documented on the booking form. Oxygen requirements should be indicated on the form in litres.
- 4.5 Any special circumstances or additional information about the patient and their transport needs should also be documented on the form.
- 4.6 There are no exceptions to the above criteria. Anyone who does not fall into the above criteria must be refused. If a booking states any of the above and the patient does not appear to fall into one of the above criteria at the first time they are collected for an appointment the driver will refer this to the transport control room manager who will take it up with the departmental head.

5. Booking NEPT

5.1 A transport booking form must be faxed to Patient Transport. Incomplete or illegible forms will be returned to the originating Clinician / Department. The fax number is 020 7377 7435.

5.2 Requests for transport must be forwarded as soon as the need for transport becomes known. **The acceptable minimum notice is by 12pm the day before the requirement for travel (Monday to Friday).**

5.3 Any requests made after 12.00 should first be discussed with the Control Room Manager or in their absence the Planner on duty (telephone **14-7434**) to determine whether there are sufficient resources to transport the patient. A booking form should be completed and faxed to Patient Transport Services.

6. On the day bookings – less than 24 hours notice

6.1 Same day transport requests must be discussed with the Control Room Manager or the Controller on duty to determine whether there are sufficient resources to undertake the journey. If the request is accepted a booking form must be completed and faxed to ensure that the patient meets the eligibility criteria.

7. Escorts

7.1 Escorts take up valuable seats on patient transport vehicles, which could be used for other patients. Escorts are restricted to one per patient. Eligible patients must meet the following escort eligibility criteria:

- The patient is under 16 years of age;
- The patient's condition is such they require constant attention of an escort throughout their journey;
- The patient has severe communication difficulties e.g. has a profound sight or hearing impairment, or has speech or language difficulties and therefore cannot travel alone;
- The patient suffers from a mental illness.

7.2 Unless the above criteria is met patients who require an escort during their visit should arrange to meet them at the hospital.

8. Escalations procedure (e.g. when transport is declined)

8.1 Any disagreements between the decision of staff and the patient should be escalated to the Modern Matron/Sister, Consultant or Head of Service within the Departmental line management structure as soon as possible, to avoid delay to patient.

8.2 Patient Transport Services will be able to provide advice to both staff and patients on the application of the criteria and a patient's suitability for transport (Tel: **14 2056**).

8.3 Where the originating Clinician / Department dispute the decision of the control room, an appeal to reconsider can be made to Patient Transport Services on **14 7150**.

9. One or two way journeys

9.1 Sometimes patients may only require transport for their inbound or outbound journey, as they can make their own way in or home. It is the responsibility of the person assessing the patient to determine whether transport is required one way or for a return journey as well.

10. Review of transport needs

10.1 Transport needs must be reviewed regularly. The Transport Department will initiate regular, general reminders to staff e.g. through Bulletins on the Intranet, to ensure transport requirements are accurate and appropriate.

10.2 If transport is no longer required, it should be cancelled and the patient's record amended accordingly.

11. Discharges

11.1 A patient's journey home should be discussed with the patient upon admission. It is expected patients' will make their own arrangements unless there is a clinical need for hospital transport.

11.2 On discharge, patients should be ready to leave as the driver arrives. The driver will wait 10 minutes on a ward for a patient to become ready. Patients should be sent to the departure lounge at Royal London Hospital, where they meet the departure lounge criteria.

11.3 Transport can only take one bag per patient, as additional luggage takes up valuable vehicle space. Patients should make alternative arrangements for additional items to be transported to their home address. If the patient has a large amount of medical equipment, medicines and/or medical supplies, **further information should be recorded on the Transport booking form.**

12. Cancellations

12.1 It is essential that journeys no longer required are cancelled immediately, to ensure a vehicle can be effectively redeployed where it is needed, and to avoid

abortive journey costs. Cancellations should be notified to the Trust Transport Department Booking Office immediately on **14 7434**.

13. Standing orders (bookings with no end date)

- 13.1 Patients who require a block booking for NEPT (e.g. renal or radiotherapy patients) need to have their eligibility status assessed and reviewed on a very regular basis. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Health Professional to determine whether the patient is eligible, and how long the patient needs to receive NEPT before a review of needs. The Departments listed below must review patients ongoing transport needs at the following intervals:-
- Physiotherapy, speech therapy, radiotherapy, PUVA patients – every 8 weeks;
 - Renal patients every 3 months.
- 13.2 Transport will no longer accept bookings beyond 3 months, for 1 patient at any one time. This will help ensure patients' needs are regularly reviewed and appropriate at all times.
- 13.3 The practice of repeat booking non emergency transport services to ensure discharge or transfer of patients to another Hospital is not permitted under any circumstances. Transport will only be provided for named patients who meet the eligibility criteria and have had a request form signed by an authorised clinician. Patients expected to be transferred can be notified to Patient Transport Services on the Expected Transfer form.

14. Financial assistance

- 14.1 Should a patient not qualify for NEPTS, they may still be entitled to financial assistance and a cash refund for travel to the hospital under the Hospital Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS).
- 14.2 To be eligible for assistance under the HTCS, the Patient must be in receipt of one of the following:
- Income support;
 - Working families tax credit;
 - Income based job seekers allowance.
- 14.3 Patients will only be able to claim the equivalent public transport fare or, if they travel by private car, they may be able to apply for petrol costs up to the equivalent cost of public transport fare. It must be noted that TAXI fares will not be funded under any circumstances.

14.4 The Marie Celeste Society at The Royal London Hospital (Tel: **14 7304**), or Patient Services at Barts and the London Chest hospitals will be able to provide further information on how to apply and who is eligible to claim.

15. Quality Standards

15.1 Transport services aim to comply with the following quality standards:

- Inward journeys – 30 minutes either side of appointment;
- Outward journeys – 90 minutes from time patient is booked ready.

A patient leaflet is available from Transport Services.

16. Transport booking form

16.1 The transport booking form follows on the next page, and is also available on the Trust Intranet. If this form is not fully completed transport will not be arranged and the form will be returned to the referring clinician. If all answers are no then the patient does not require transport and therefore the form should not be completed.

Patient Transport Service booking form

**Is patient able to use public transport, make their own way or travel with a friend/relative?
If YES, do not proceed with this form. If NO, please complete form.**

Surname		Forename		Hospital or NHS Number (compulsory)	
		Patient's telephone number:	Age:	GP PPA code (GPs only)	
Pick up address			Take to		
Postcode			Postcode		
Journey type:		Journey details:			
Inward only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time patient required to attend.....AM / PM			
Outward only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time patient required to leave.....AM / PM			
Both (in and out)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date transport required:/...../.....			
Transport Assessment –circle yes or no as appropriate– Incomplete forms will be returned					
1. Is patient high dependency? (E.g. requires fully equipped ambulance & trained crew). Please describe needs:				Y	N
2. Is patient on a stretcher? Or, does the patient have a full length POP?				Y	N
3. Does patient travel in a wheelchair? Please circle: Owns wheelchair / Does not own wheelchair				Y	N
4. If patient is wheelchair user, will patient require lifting e.g. double crew?				Y	N
5. Does patient need carrying/lifting e.g. double crew?				Y	N
6. Is patient fully mobile BUT unable to use public transport?				Y	N
7. Can patient walk unaided and climb 2-3 steps into a vehicle?				Y	N
Risk assessment for patients' travelling:					
8. Does patient require an escort? Please provide reasons:				Y	N
9. Does patient require Oxygen? Please state how much in litres:				Y	N
10. Does patient have an infection status? If yes, state type.				Y	N
11. Does infection status mean patient must travel alone?				Y	N
Any extra useful information/special instructions (e.g. infection status, terminally ill, electric wheelchair etc.)					
Transport authorised by & position:		Form completed by:		Contact number:	
GP practice stamp		Date:/...../.....		TRANSPORT OFFICE USE ONLY	