

Non-emergency Patient Transport Schemes

Information for patients

The NHS in North Yorkshire and York is committed to providing a comprehensive system to assist patients to access NHS healthcare using Patient Transport Services (PTS), the Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme (HTCS), or promoting the use of community transport services.

This leaflet explains how the system works

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What is the Patient Transport Service?

Patient Transport Services, known as PTS, are typically available for non urgent, planned, transportation of patients with a medical need for transport to and from premises providing NHS healthcare (e.g. hospital or clinic). This service is provided by the NHS at no cost to the patient.

However, PTS is not available for GP or dental appointments.

Are you eligible?

You may be entitled to patient transport if you:

- Need a stretcher for the journey
- Need oxygen or other medical gases during the journey
- Are permanently in a wheelchair
- Have a mental health problem, learning disability, speech, sight or hearing difficulty that prevents you from using public or private transport
- Have a medical condition that would compromise your own or others dignity
- Cannot walk without relying on another person or a walking aid like a Zimmer frame or similar and have no-one to accompany you
- Have side effects from your medical treatment or condition that prevents you from using public or private transport.

What are the possible outcomes?

There are three possible outcomes:

1. You qualify for patient transport, based on your medical need.
2. You do not qualify for patient transport on medical grounds, but your transport costs may be reimbursed because you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit – see financial information section on page 8.
3. You do not qualify for patient transport – see alternative transport contact section on page 7.

How do you request patient transport?

Call the Patient Transport Call Centre on 0300 330 2000

- Your telephone call will include a brief conversation to determine if you are eligible for transport and whether you have any specific needs for your journey.
- Your telephone call is confidential and if you need assistance with the call, a friend or relative may be able to help.

Please contact the patient transport call centre as soon as you get your hospital appointment. Before you ring, make sure you have a pen and paper, NHS number and your hospital appointment details available.

Patient Transport call centre

The patient transport call centre is run by the Yorkshire Ambulance Services NHS Trust and is open 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday (not Bank Holidays).

Please note that you must contact them 48 hours in advance of your appointment. For appointments on a Monday, you must ring before 12 noon on the Thursday before.

In very exceptional urgent cases, a booking may be accepted for the following day provided you make contact with the patient transport call centre before 12 noon.

At the point of booking, you should alert us to any special needs or mobility requirements e.g. problems with access to your home, oxygen requirements or other equipment which you may need to bring with you.

The call centre receives a high volume of calls so please be patient.

If you are deemed clinically eligible for patient transport, you will be given a booking reference number. Please make a note of this number in case you need to contact the patient transport call centre again.

What if you need an escort?

Escorts take up valuable seats on vehicles that could be used for other patients. Escorts are therefore restricted to one per patient and must meet the following escort eligibility criteria:

- Escorts must be booked for children aged 16 years and under.
- The patient has severe communication difficulties, sight or hearing difficulties or a physical, mental incapacity or a consultant has confirmed that the patient requires an escort.
- Any accompanying escort must be capable of assisting the patient. We may not be able to accommodate wheelchair users as escorts.

When will you be collected for your appointment?

Please be available to travel up to two hours before your appointment time. The transport will arrive to collect you within the two hour time period. This may however vary due to hospital location.

Also, journeys can sometimes include unavoidable long waits. Please make sure you bring any medication, drinks or snacks that you may need for the journey.

If you are an in-patient and travelling by patient transport, you are permitted to take one item of luggage to and from the hospital.

What will happen when you arrive at the hospital?

- You will arrive outside the outpatients' department entrance and, if required, be assisted into the waiting area. Where appropriate your patient transport attendant may take you straight to the department if it's in another building.
- You will usually need to return to the outpatients' waiting area after your appointment; a porter may be available to assist you, or a member of staff will arrange for you to be collected.
- Your transport home will be organised.

What should you do if there are any changes?

In order for us to provide you with the best possible service, it is important that you let us know straightaway using the telephone numbers below:

- If you no longer need transport, please call the **Cancellation Line on 0330 333 9970**. This phone number is available 24 hours a day to cancel pre-booked journeys that are no longer required.
- To tell us about changes to your appointment, your address, telephone number, or your mobility please call the **Booking Line on 0300 330 2000**.

Please make sure that you have your original booking reference number available.

Alternative transport contacts

If you are not eligible for patient transport, you can get information about public and community transport in your local area from the following:

York

York Wheels 01904 630080

Harrogate / Craven

Little Red Bus 01423 526655

Ripon CVS 01765 603631

Craven Community Transport 01756 701045

Bentham Community Transport 01524 262753

Hambleton & Richmondshire

Rural Transport 01609 761206

Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale

Dial A Ride 01723 354434

Ryecat 01653 698888

There are many other alternative transport services available, which can be found at the following websites:

City of York

www.york.gov.uk/transport/Public_transport/Community_transport/

County of North Yorkshire

www.northyorkstravel.info/community.php

Financial information

You may be able to claim back some or all of your travel cost if you were not eligible for patient transport and have made your own way to hospital, and if you receive one of the following:

- Income support benefits
- Income based employment and support allowance
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Working tax credit or child tax credit
- Pension credit – guarantee credit
- Aged 16 – 18 in full time education
- Be named on a NHS Low Income Scheme Certificate (HC2 or HC3)

The Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme (HTCS) provides financial assistance to patients in meeting the cost of travel to and from their NHS healthcare.

Further information, and claim forms, are available from the Department of Health helpline on 0845 610 1112.

Quality standards - our pledge to you

NHS North Yorkshire and York aims to ensure that all eligible PTS patients are transported to and from their healthcare in a reasonable time and comfort, without detriment to their medical condition.

We aim to provide a high quality service to our patients and we are committed to continual improvement. It is important you tell us when you are not satisfied with the service provided or inform us of things you think we could do to make improvements. Your feedback helps us to identify problems and gives us the opportunity to put things right.

Similarly, if you feel that a particular member of staff or team deserves special praise or thanks, please do let us know. Your comments will be passed on to the people involved.

For any of the issues outlined above, please contact our Patient Relations Team.

The Patient Relations team give help and advice to patients, carers and families using local NHS services. The team offers support by listening to your enquiries and putting you in touch with other organisations who can also help.

- Call 0800 06 88 000
- Email: nyy-pct.PatientRelations@nhs.net

What if my transport does not arrive?

Occasionally, especially during bad weather, patient transport services may not operate as planned. We will endeavour to contact all patients who may be affected by this as soon as possible.

However, if you have a query relating to your journey on the day of your appointment, please ring the booking number, **0300 330 2000**, and follow the instructions.

Hospital car parking

Many hospitals charge for car parking. Sometimes monthly passes are available to help reduce the cost of parking if you have to attend the hospital frequently.

To find out more about parking, or making a claim through the Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme, please contact the hospital or healthcare provider who is caring for you.

Key telephone numbers:

Patient Transport Bookings	-	0300 330 2000
24 hour Cancellation Line	-	0330 333 9970
Department of Health Order Line	-	0845 610 1112
NHS North Yorkshire and York		
Patient Relations Team	-	0800 068 8000

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