



# Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS)



**What you need to know about the service and if you're eligible to use it.**

## Who can use it?

The Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) is for patients with a medical need. Your GP or clinician will tell you if you are eligible. This normally means:

- you need prescribed oxygen to help you breathe;
- you need intravenous (IV) support;
- you can only be moved by stretcher
- you depend upon medical equipment or aids that won't fit in alternative transport;
- the treatment you are receiving leaves you so debilitated that you can't use alternative transport;
- your illness, condition or disability makes it difficult, impossible or undesirable to be moved by alternative transport;
- you need the skills of a qualified assistant on the journey.

## You can't use NEPTS if:

- you don't have a medical need;
- you're visiting your GP, dentist, pharmacist or optician.

## Can I bring someone with me?

You can only bring someone with you if this has been pre-authorized and;

- you're under 16 years old;
- your condition requires the constant attention of an escort throughout your journey.

- You have difficulty in communicating e.g. hard of hearing, have a speech difficulty or are partially sighted or blind and need a guide dog.
- You have a condition that prevents you from travelling unaccompanied e.g. Alzheimer's or dementia.

## How do I book my hospital transport?

If you're eligible, this will be authorised by your GP or clinician at the time of the first appointment. The transport will be booked by the appointments or the admissions team or can be booked directly with the Surrey Booking Service on 0300 200 1067. You will not automatically have transport for each follow up appointment. Your needs will be assessed each time you attend.

## When would I be collected by the Transport Service?

If you have an outpatient appointment, your transport will be with you in plenty of time so that you arrive promptly for your appointment.

If you're being discharged from hospital you'll be advised when transport will be available to take you home.

## Am I taken straight there?

You do need to be aware that your pick up time could be well in advance of your appointment time as the vehicle may be collecting other patients on route. Likewise on return or discharge you may not be taken directly to your destination. Your time on the vehicle could therefore be longer

than you would wish. Patients may wish to consider taking some refreshments for the journey.

### **If I'm not eligible for NEPTS, can I claim the cost of travelling to hospital?**

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS) may be able to provide financial help. There are very strict rules to ensure only patients eligible for help can claim travel costs. To claim assistance you must be receiving;

- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Pension Credit-Guarantee Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- or be in receipt of an HC2 or HC3 certificate (low Income Support Scheme).

For further information, please see the NHS England website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) and type HTCS in the search option.

### **How to claim**

The amount of reimbursement is based on the most reasonable and cheapest form of public transport available and will nearly always be the equivalent of a bus fare. To claim, you'll need evidence that you meet the above criteria and have evidence of your attendance at the hospital.

Claims are processed at the Cash Office of most of the Surrey Hospitals. You will normally be paid in cash.

### **Other Ways to Help with Transport**

NEPTS and HTCS are both schemes governed by NHS England and commissioned by the Surrey Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

The cost of providing transport is a major factor within NHS finances and as such the eligibility rules are strictly applied.

The Surrey CCGs recognise that, due to the rural nature of Surrey, some patients who are not eligible for NEPTS or HTCS may still require some form of travel advice.

Local councils, and in particular Surrey County Council, both operate and support a number of travel schemes within the county of Surrey.

Further details on the schemes available can be found on their website [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk) or via the Surrey Booking Service telephone line on 0300 200 1067.

There are also regular local buses to all the Surrey hospitals. For the latest timetable details, you can call the Traveline on 0871 2002233 or visit [www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk).

Your local GP surgery may also keep lists of community and voluntary car schemes that may be able to help.

### **What if I'm not happy about the decision that's been made?**

If you feel you have a medical need but have been declined free transport you should, in the case of the first appointment, contact your GP. Once a course of treatment has commenced you should raise the issue with the clinician treating you.

Further help and advice can be sought from the Transport Booking Service at Surrey County Council on 0300 200 1067.

### **Lead commissioner for Surrey:**

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