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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Non-emergency Patient Transport Service?

The Non-emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) is funded by the NHS for patients who, due to their mobility needs or medical condition, are unable to travel safely by other means.

### Who provides the Non-emergency Patient Transport Service?

The Non-emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) is provided by E-zec Medical Transport Services on behalf of your local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) or NHS trust. You can find out more about E-zec by visiting [www.e-zec.co.uk](http://www.e-zec.co.uk)

### Who is eligible to use the Non-emergency Patient Transport Service?

To find out if you are eligible to use NEPTS, you'll need to be assessed against national criteria by calling your local booking and information team. You can also find out more about eligibility criteria via this [site](#) and this [site](#).

Usually, NEPTS is available to you if:

- Your medical condition means you cannot use other forms of transport without damaging your health.
- Your mobility means that you would be unable to use any other means of transport – for example, stretcher patients.
- You need the skills and support of specialist patient transport staff – for example, to administer oxygen during the journey.

### Who pays for NEPTS and is it free for patients?

The local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group pays for this transport, for any patient registered with a local GP who is eligible for NEPTS transport. It is free for patients who are eligible for the service.

### What training do NEPTS staff have?

E-zec ambulance crews (also known as ambulance care assistants) have a wealth of experience and expertise in delivering high-quality patient care with an empathetic approach.

Each member of our team has undergone an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service, been driver-assessed and undertaken a full accredited in-house training programme.

### How do I book non-emergency patient transport?

If you are a patient, or a patient's nominated representative, please call your local booking and information team – the number for your team can be found on our website: [www.e-zec.co.uk/our-locations](http://www.e-zec.co.uk/our-locations).



If you are a clinician or a healthcare team booking transport for patient discharges or transfers, please use the [Patient transport online booking](#) service as it is quicker and easier than booking by telephone and will allow you to track patients and flag them as 'ready' for transport quickly and easily.

First-time users of the system will need to contact [IT Support at E-zec Medical](#) to organise a unique username and password. Training can be provided if required.

If you're unable to make patient transport bookings using the online system, please call your local booking team who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including public and bank holidays.

Please make sure you have all the relevant patient information and **correct mobility code** ready when you contact us.

### **Can patients take their belongings on the transport when being discharged or transferred?**

We ask that patients are discharged or transported with only their essential items and that family or friends have already taken the patient's belongings home for them. Our ambulance crews will only be able to transport luggage and equipment that is essential and can be safely secured during the journey. If family or friends are unable to take a patient's belongings, please book our equipment service to arrange for these items to be collected and transported.

### **What happens after I've booked my transport?**

We will call you to confirm your booking and if you booked directly, you'll also receive confirmation by letter or email.

### **When will I be picked up for my appointment?**

It's not possible to give an exact time, but you will usually be picked up within the two-hour window before your appointment time. This is because we may have to pick up other patients on the way to the hospital or clinic.

### **What will happen when I arrive at my destination?**

You will arrive outside the hospital or clinic's main entrance. If required, we'll assist you to get to the waiting area, clinic, outpatient department or ward you need for your appointment.

### **What happens after my appointment has finished?**

Usually, a return journey is included in the transport provided for outpatient and day-patient appointments, unless otherwise agreed at the time of booking. When your appointment has finished, please wait in the main reception area of the hospital or clinic where you've had your appointment, and you'll be collected from there.

### **If I have a follow-up appointment, will I automatically be entitled to NEPTS?**

No. You'll need to be assessed each time you need to book transport to check that you are still eligible. The exception would include eligible dialysis and oncology patients who attend recurring appointments frequently and whose circumstances remain the same.



### **What should I do if my appointment changes or I need to cancel my patient transport?**

If your appointment changes for any reason, or you need to cancel your patient transport booking, it's really important to let us know as soon as you can by calling your local booking and information team.

### **Can I bring someone to travel with me?**

Only in certain circumstances. A family member, friend or carer may only travel with you if you:

- Are under the age of 16 – an escort **must** travel with the patient
- Rely on a translator
- Rely on a carer for communication or have significant communication difficulties, including learning difficulties, impaired sight or are hard of hearing
- Have mental health issues that require a known carer to accompany you
- Have a medical condition that requires constant supervision for safety.

**Please note that mobility needs alone do not necessitate an escort, as the patient's mobility needs will be met by our ambulance crew or the hospital staff.**

### **Can I book an all-female or all-male crew?**

In some circumstances, this may be possible. This would need to be agreed and booked with as much advance notice as possible, at least 48 hours ahead. You will also need to provide information to support the request.

### **What do I do if my patient transport doesn't arrive on time?**

Please contact us and we'll check on the whereabouts of your transport and let you know what's happened.

### **What happens if I'm not ready when the transport arrives to collect me?**

As there may be other patients to collect on the way, patients are generally asked to be ready to be picked up from their home at least two hours before their appointment time. If you are not ready when the transport arrives, the crew or driver will have to decide how long they can wait without compromising the arrangements for other patients. If they can't wait for you and need to move on to another pickup, there is no guarantee they will be able to return at a later time.

### **What happens if the patient is not ready when the transport arrives to collect them from a ward or clinic?**

If a patient is not ready for transport when our crew arrives, we can only wait for **10 minutes**. This is to ensure other patients are not delayed or left in the ambulance for longer than necessary.

If the crew has to leave without the patient because they are not ready for transport at the agreed time, a new booking will need to be made using the online booking system (clinical teams only) or by calling your local booking and information team.



### **What are the other transport options?**

If you're not eligible for NEPTS, there are other community programmes that may be more suitable. You will find these on the website for your CCG or NHS trust.

When you call, we'll also let you know about some of the alternative services that may be available in your local area – for example, public transport, local volunteer groups, subsidised local minibuses or similar. Many volunteer groups require a donation towards costs at a pre-specified level.

If you'd like to know more about some of the alternative services that may be available in your local area – for example, public transport, local volunteer groups, subsidised local minibuses or similar – please visit:

[Royal Voluntary Service](#)

[Age UK](#)

### **Where can I go for financial support with transport, if I'm not eligible for NEPTS?**

If you're not eligible for the Non-emergency Patient Transport Service, but you do receive income support or other qualifying benefits, you may be able to claim back some, or all, of your travel costs through the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HCTS). The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme provides financial assistance in meeting the cost of travel to and from NHS appointments. Please call **0300 330 1343** or find out more on the [NHS England website](#).

### **How do I give feedback on the service I've received?**

We value all feedback from those who use our service. If you have a compliment, complaint or comment, please contact us in any of the following ways:

**Post:** Patient Experience Team, E-zec Medical Transport Ltd, Arthur Oakley, Gatehouse Road, Hereford, HR2 6RQ

**Phone:** 0300 777 8844

**Email:** [patientexperience@e-zec.co.uk](mailto:patientexperience@e-zec.co.uk)

