

**Changes to Somerset Non-Emergency Patient Transport:**

**1. Clearer Descriptions on which patients are entitled to funded Patient Transport Services (PTS) based on 'medical need':**

- You use prescribed oxygen when mobilising and/or would need the skills of patient transport staff to administer oxygen during the journey
- You can only be moved by stretcher
- You cannot stand or walk more than a few steps and you depend on medical equipment or aids, which cannot fit into a car, bus or taxi.
- When accessing a hospital (or similar) appointment, you have an illness, condition or disability or have received treatment, which prevents you using a car, bus or taxi unaided.

**2. Booking Processes with the Patient Transport Advice Centre:**

- The process has been updated and restructured to make it easier for the call advisors and patients; it has clear, objective questions relating to patient eligibility and taking into account both medical and social need criteria.

**3. Patient Transport Database**

- A database has been developed to provide a better service for patients, who will now only have to submit their details once, rather than repeat with each booking team. The database is managed and controlled by the Patient Transport Advice Centre and is also available to booking teams in the Somerset Trusts on a read only basis.
- This will ensure a more consistent approach across the health community in determining eligibility for specific patients and will avoid inexperienced staff overriding decisions made by other booking teams.

**4. Patient Transport Application Appeals Process**

- GPs will no longer routinely act as gatekeepers for the PTS process. When a decision regarding eligibility is challenged by the patient, or carer, in future it will be addressed by the hospital trusts. Each hospital trust has agreed to identify an appropriate clinical manager who has a solid understanding of the eligibility rules.
- Where the patient, or carer, appears to have a reasonable challenge then the call will be passed to the Patient Transport Advice Centre Supervisor who will make arrangements for the patient to be conveyed to their appointment. In Trusts where this has been agreed, the patient will also be met in the hospital by the clinical manager for an assessment regarding future eligibility. Otherwise the patient will be given the benefit of the doubt and the cost of the journey passed on to the Trust.

- The decision made by the clinical advisor will then be recorded for future reference on the shared database. It will not affect the patient's right to turn to PALS.

## **5. Patient Transport Leaflet**

- The Patient Transport Service information leaflet has been updated to reflect the latest eligibility criteria and information for patients.
- This literature will be distributed to all GP Practices and shared widely across Somerset health and social care communities. The CCG asks practices to display this prominently in the patient waiting areas.

## **6. Patient Transport Booking Letter**

- The letter sent by the Patient Transport Advice Centre confirms that transport has been booked for the patient's appointment. It now includes direct reference to the patient's own responsibilities in terms of:
  - accuracy and honesty in the information they give as part of the application process
  - the timings of journeys, including patient ready times
  - the need to notify PTAC should any of their relevant services change.