INTRODUCTION

From 1 April 2016, South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) will provide the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) for all patients registered with GPs in the Thames Valley contract area. This contract covers all patients registered with GPs in the following CCG areas:

- NHS Oxfordshire CCG
- NHS Aylesbury Vale CCG
- NHS Chiltern CCG
- NHS Wokingham CCG
- NHS South Reading CCG
- NHS North West Reading CCG
- NHS Newbury CCG
- NHS Bracknell and Ascot CCG
- NHS Slough CCG
- NHS Windsor Ascot and Maidenhead CCG
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust
- Berkshire Health Foundation Trust (Mental Health)

SCAS has provided the NEPTS service in these areas previously, but this is a new contract with some enhanced features and service standards.

The purpose of this guide is to provide healthcare professionals (HCPs) within the above CCG areas with a quick reference manual of:

- What the service covers
- Who is eligible to use the service
- How to book your eligible patients onto the service
- Patients and journey types that are not covered by the service
WHAT THE SERVICE COVERS

The Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) provided by SCAS is designed for the non-urgent, planned transportation of patients with a medical need for transport, to and from premises providing NHS funded healthcare and between NHS Healthcare Providers.

A non-emergency patient is one who, whilst requiring treatment which may or may not be of a specialist nature, does not require an immediate or urgent response. The exception to this is patients being moved to rapid assessment and treatment centres (see journey types below).

The types of journey that are undertaken by the SCAS NEPTS service are:

- **Planned Outpatient and Day Case appointments**
The routine movement of patients to and from their place of residence and their appointment.

- **Admissions / Inpatient**
The movement of patients to and from their place of residence or another NHS healthcare facility to Acute, Mental Health, Hospices and Diagnostic contractors.

- **Discharge / Transfers**
The movement of patients from an NHS Treatment Centre to their place of residence or another healthcare facility.

- **Inter-hospital Transfers**
The movement of patients from one NHS hospital to another. If the inter-site transfer is part of the patient’s inpatient episode of care, it is the responsibility of the hospital trust to fund these journeys.

- **Renal**
There is a specific provision for renal patients who require transport to any Renal Unit within the contracted mileage.

- **Urgent Care - Rapid Assessment Units**
The movement of patients to rapid assessment units and treatment centres in the community for frail patients who can be safely managed outside of an acute setting. For the purposes of this service, rapid assessment and treatment centres are defined as multi-disciplinary community-based care facilities.

- **High Dependency**
We provide an enhanced level of service to cover all the needs of high-dependency patients, e.g. complex medical needs, or infectious/communicable conditions or diseases. These journeys do not include the requirement for patient transit under ‘blue light’ conditions.

- **Repatriation**
The repatriation of patients registered to a Thames Valley CCG GP Surgery from hospitals outside of the contract area back into a bedded care facility or to their place of residence.

- **National Spinal Injury Centre (NSIC) Stoke Mandeville**
The routine movement of patients to and from their place of residence and their appointment at NSIC. The majority of these appointments will be pre-planned with 24 hours’ notice.

**Please note:**
- A journey over 100 miles or for a patient not registered to a Thames Valley CCG GP Surgery will need to be booked at least 24 hours in advance.
- Mental Health Patients who are under the care of any Mental Health partnership trusts and are assessed as high risk (e.g. sectioned patients) are excluded from the scope of this contract.
PATIENT ELIGIBILITY

Only patients who meet the eligibility criteria specific to their Clinical Commissioning Group’s requirements will be accepted on SCAS NEPTS service. Patients may be considered eligible if:

- The medical condition of the patient is such that they require the skills or support of NEPTS staff during or after the journey and/or where it would be detrimental to the patient’s condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means.
- The patient’s medical condition affects their mobility to such an extent that they would be unable to access healthcare and/or where it would be detrimental to the patient’s condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means.
- They are recognised as a parent or guardian where children are being transported.

SCAS will use specific eligibility criteria to screen patients, depending on which CCG they fall under. There is one set of eligibility criteria for Buckingham and Berkshire patients, and one for Oxfordshire patients.

Hours of operation

All services are available seven days a week, including bank holidays, during the following hours:

Discharges and transfers: 24 hours per day

Outpatient and inpatient admissions: 06:00-22:00

Renal appointments: 05:00-01:00

Rapid Assessment Units: 08:00-20:00

Repatriations from elsewhere in UK to TV area: 08:00-18:00

National Spinal Injuries Clinic (NSIC) patients: 06:00-22:00
Patients registered with GPs in the NHS Oxfordshire CCG region must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Are unable to stand unaided by another person and cannot manage any journey in private or public transport for the purposes of daily living.
- Have a disability and are genuinely unable to travel by private or public transport to and from their appointments or for the purposes of daily living by virtue of their disability.
- Have a mental health condition or suffer from long term confusion and are unable to travel by private or public transport to and from their appointments or for the purposes of daily living by virtue of this condition.
- Require continuous oxygen therapy during transit or specialist bariatric provision (where the patient weighs above 25 stone and is unable to travel for the purposes of daily living in private or public transport).
- Require a stretcher or sling / hoist during transit.
- Are attending for active treatment likely to cause severe physical side effects e.g. oncology, renal or eye surgery patients or within 6 weeks of transplant.
- Are attending the vascular access clinic and OUH clinical staff have advised transportation is necessary.

Patients registered with GPs in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire CCG regions must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Travelling by any other means would have a serious detrimental effect on the patient’s condition or recovery.
- The patient has restricted mobility and is unable to self-mobilise (i.e. is unable to stand or walk more than a few steps), including from a pre-existing condition, where it would be detrimental to their condition or recovery to travel by any other means.
- The patient requires support from a qualified PTS crew during the journey and is required to lie down for at least part of the journey or they are a stretcher patient.
- The patient is being transferred to another NHS facility and requires medical assistance during the journey.
- The patient requires continuous oxygen or other medical gases or intravenous support.
- Patient with clearly recognised disabilities who are genuinely unable to travel by private or public transport to and from their appointments.
- Have a mental health condition or suffer from long term confusion and are unable to travel by private or public transport to and from their appointments or for the purposes of daily living by virtue of this condition.

Please note that if a patient has been deemed eligible in the past it does not necessarily mean they will be eligible now.

When a patient is identified as ready for discharge, you should explore with them how they will be travelling home.

- Do they have friends or family that are able to collect them?
- Are they able to use public transport?

You should determine if the patient meets the eligibility criteria for NEPTS. You can do this by assessing the patient’s situation against the relevant CCG eligibility criteria.

A patient is not eligible for NEPTS if the transport is required for social or financial reasons.

When patients are not eligible:

- They should be provided with information available from the SCAS Directory of Alternative Transport (DAT). This comprehensive document highlights alternative transport options that patients can access in their local area, such as community transport schemes, voluntary transport groups, private taxis or public transport - see the DAT section on page 5 for more information.
If the patient (or their relative that they are dependent on) is in receipt of the following benefits, they should be given information on the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, or
- They are named on a NHS tax credit exemption certificate, or
- They have a low income and are named on certificate HC2 (full help) or HC3 (limited help)
- They are awarded Universal Credit

It should be remembered that patients in hospital for longer than a month will have benefits suspended.

You should only make a booking request with SCAS if the patient will meet eligibility criteria.

SCAS will monitor bookings to make sure that the eligibility of patients is being judged correctly and that the appropriate transport type is being requested. Where this is not the case we will provide additional information and support on how to apply the criteria and identify patient requirements correctly.

You should gather together all relevant patient information required before making the booking - this will lead to a quick booking process that ensures that SCAS has accurate information to match the request to an appropriate response that transports the patient successfully at the required time.

See the ‘How to Book …’ section for details of the information required to make a successful booking.

DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT

In order to support the conveyance of non-eligible patients to their appointments, SCAS has devised a Directory of Alternative Transport. This directory offers alternative modes of transport for patients to utilise whilst attending hospital appointments.

This directory is available as a PDF, and can also be found on our website at www.scas.nhs.uk/nepts
HOW TO BOOK YOUR PATIENTS ON TO THE SERVICE

All bookings are to be placed using the online booking system, except for the following booking types which are classified as ‘complex’:

- Multi-crew lifts
- Risk assessments
- High Dependency movements
- Bariatric movements
- Out of Area movements

For these ‘complex’ bookings, or any you will need to call the contact centre on 0300 123 3235.

You will need to have the following information to hand before you can successfully book NEPTS transport:

- Patients NHS number
- Name of Patient
- GP Practice that the patient is registered with
- Patients contact details
  - Home address
  - Contact telephone number / Mobile Number if they have one
- Booking Details
  - Date of transport request
  - Time of patients appointment (if being transported to a healthcare centre)
  - Location of patients appointment (if being transported to a healthcare centre)
  - Time patient will be ready for discharge (if being transported home)
  - Time patient will be ready for transfer (if being transported from one centre to another)
- Special Requests
- Mobility – if the patient wishes to travel in their own wheelchair you / the patient must confirm it is ISO7176 compliant at the time of booking
- Specify any additional support the patient might need during transport in terms of people or equipment
- Specify if the patient will be travelling with an escort and the reason for this

Translation into Other Languages

SCAS provides a translation service for patients for whom English is not their first language. To access the Language Line service, an English-speaking friend, relative or support-provider should call the contact centre on 0300 123 3235.

We will then make arrangements for the patient to speak to the translator who will provide the service information in their native language.

Booking Deadlines

Pre-planned Outpatient bookings made after 15:00 for the next day’s service will be considered a ‘same day’ booking.

Pre-planned Discharge and Transfer bookings made after 17:00 for the next day’s service will be considered a ‘same day’ booking, and will warrant a 3 hour pick up window.
## MOBILITY GUIDE - ‘STANDARD’ JOURNEYS
The journey options on this page should be booked using the online system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>Crew</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Single Crew]</td>
<td>1 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistant. No attendant required. Patient can transfer to a seat on the ambulance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIC1</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Travel in chair with single crew]</td>
<td>1 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistant. No attendant required. Patient requires to travel in a wheelchair. Please state if patient is Travel in own chair or Requires crew chair. For patients travelling in electric wheelchair please select Electric wheelchair under Travel requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIC2</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Travel in chair with double crew]</td>
<td>2 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistants. Attendant required in back of resource to administer oxygen, etc. Please state if patient is Travel in own chair or Requires crew chair. For patients travelling in electric wheelchair please select Electric wheelchair under Travel requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Double crew]</td>
<td>2 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistants. Attendant required in back of resource to administer oxygen, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STR</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Stretcher]</td>
<td>2 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistants. Stretcher required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MOBILITY GUIDE - ‘COMPLEX’ JOURNEYS

We can also transport patients that have more complex requirements, such as the mobility restrictions in the table below. These transport requests cannot be booked online and need to be booked by phoning the Contact Centre on 0300 123 3235.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>Crew</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BP STR</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Crew, Ambulance Care Assistants. Bariatric patient travelling on bariatric stretcher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTI CL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Multi crew lift at home address requiring more than 2 crew members. Would require assessment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing an enhanced level of service to cover all the needs of high dependency patients, such as those with complex medical needs or infectious/communicable diseases, where a higher level of crew skills will be needed. Please note this is for routine movements and not urgent, critical or time specific movements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patients who wish to travel in their own wheelchair:

Patients can only travel in their own wheelchair if the make and model is compliant with International Organisation for Standardisation ISO 7176.

You will need this information at the time of booking. If you are unsure if the patient’s wheelchair is ISO 7176 compliant, you or the patient will need to contact the manufacturer.

If you are unable to confirm whether the patient’s wheelchair is ISO 7176 compliant, the patient will need to be transferred to a compliant SCAS NEPTS wheelchair (if possible) for their journey.
CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions regarding the SCAS Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service, call the Contact Centre on 0300 123 3235 or email us at tvnepts@scas.nhs.uk

www.scas.nhs.uk

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