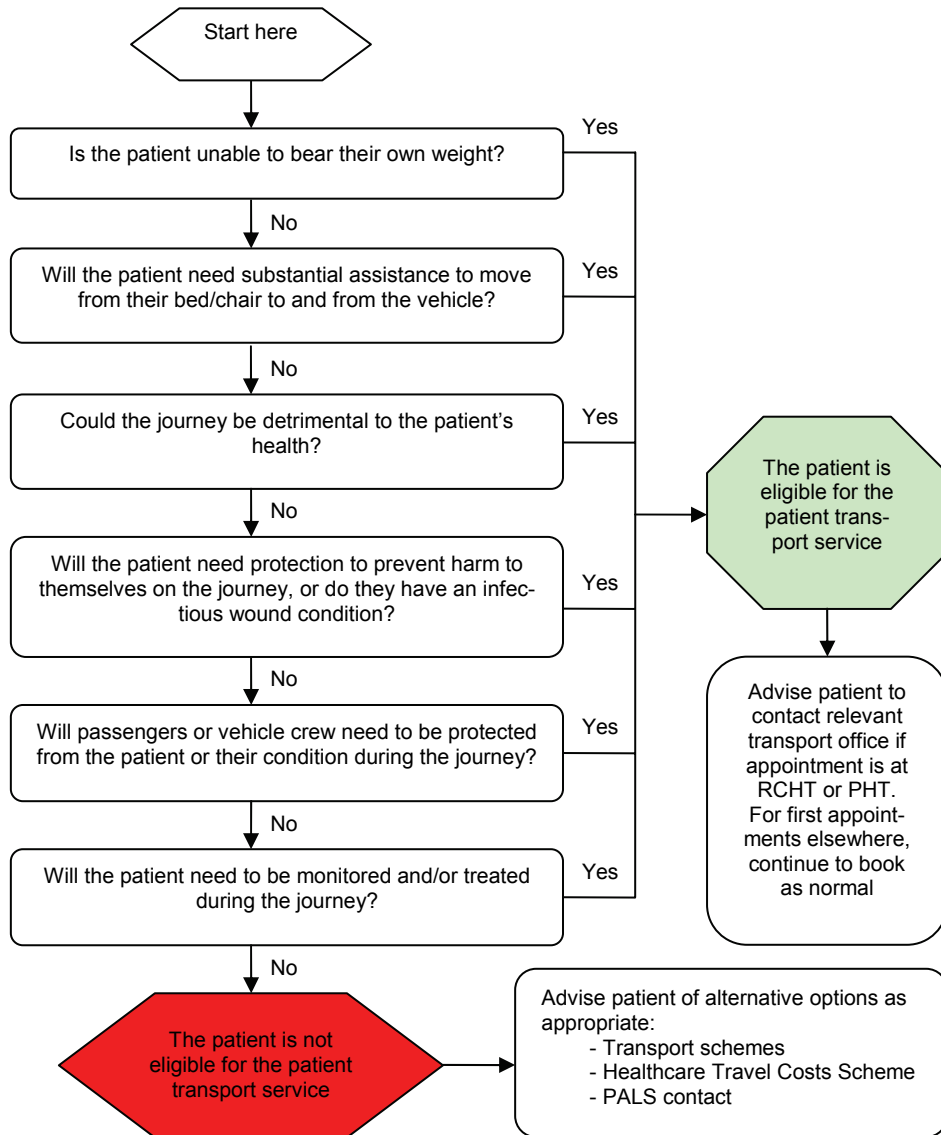


## Patient transport service eligibility flow chart



# The eligibility criteria for NHS funded patient transport

A guide for healthcare professionals

Please ask if you would like to receive this document in large print, Braille, on CD or in any other languages. Please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01726 627967 or email [palsteam@ciospct.cornwall.nhs.uk](mailto:palsteam@ciospct.cornwall.nhs.uk)

### **What is the patient transport service?**

The patient transport service is for patients who are unable to get to their appointments because they have a medical need for transport. It is for patients who are assessed as needing special support or assistance during the journey to their healthcare appointment.

### **Whose job is it to assess patients as needing the patient transport service?**

Patients may be assessed by their referring consultant, GP or other healthcare professional associated with the patient's care.

### **What are the criteria against which patients have to be assessed?**

Patients must have a medical need in order to be eligible for the patient transport service. This means they have a definite or likely requirement for clinical input or assistance during the journey. There are three categories of medical need, which are:

#### *Mobility*

- The patient is unable to bear their own weight.
- The patient will need substantial assistance to move from their bed/chair to vehicle and from the vehicle.

#### *Protection*

- The journey could be detrimental to the patient's health.
- The patient needs protection to prevent harm to themselves (for example, those with mental health problems or the elderly and confused) and/or has an infectious wound condition.
- The other passengers or vehicle crew will need protection from the patient and/or the patient's condition.

#### *Treatment*

- The patient needs to be monitored and/or treated during the course of the journey. Note: a patient requiring medication every four hours may not be eligible for the patient transport service if they are travelling from Truro to Penzance, but they would be eligible if they were travelling from Truro to London, for example.

If the patient meets any of these conditions, then they are eligible for the patient transport service.

### **My patient fits the criteria and is eligible for the patient transport service. What should I do now?**

Qualifying patients with first appointments at Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust (RCHT) or Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHT) should be advised to contact the relevant transport office (RCHT: 01872 253702, PHT: 01752 763511). For first appointments at other hospitals, or for journeys to hospices or nursing homes, clinicians should continue to book with SWAST or as normal.

### **My patient isn't eligible for the patient transport service, but they live in an isolated area and can't access public transport. Are there any other options for them?**

There are various transport schemes available that can arrange transport for patients. One such scheme is Transport Access People (TAP), who can be contacted on 01872 223388.

### **My patient isn't eligible for the patient transport service, but they say they can't afford to travel to the appointments that I'm referring them to.**

If the patient is on benefits or has a low income, they may be eligible to have all or some of their travel costs refunded as part of the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS). Please refer them to the 'Help with travel costs' leaflet (PT001) or PCT website for more information. Patients who have to attend more than three times a week for ongoing treatment can also get help.

### **My patient isn't eligible for the patient transport service, and they're not happy with the decision. Who should I tell them to contact to take the matter further?**

Please advise the patient to contact the relevant hospital's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), details for which can be found on their websites or in the 'Help with travel costs' leaflet (PT001).

### **Where should I go if I want more information?**

Please refer to the 'patient transport' section, under the 'information for patients' tab on the PCT website, or phone the patient transport office at RCHT or PHT as appropriate (details above).