

# Thames Valley Priorities Committees

## Buckinghamshire/Milton Keynes Priorities Committee

### Policy Statement 50: Eligibility for NHS Transport for Patients in Non-Emergency Situations

Date of issue: July 2007

**EXPLANATORY NOTE:** NHS-funded transport includes ambulance, voluntary or taxi provision for non-emergency journeys to hospital and day centres.

Patient transport costs incurred by NHS Trusts are currently included in tariffs in the 2007/08 NHS Costing manual. As such, these costs will be funded indirectly by the PCT. PCTs will pay directly for transport costs for those eligible patients travelling with a condition that is excluded from the tariff.

#### PATIENTS:

It is patients' responsibility to get themselves to and from their health care appointment or hospital admission. At all times patients must arrange their own transport, unless they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Patients requiring continuous oxygen or intravenous support
- Patients who are unable to stand or walk more than a few steps and cannot use public transport and cannot manage in a family car
- Patients requiring medical equipment or aids that cannot be accommodated by private or general public transport
- Patients requiring a stretcher
- Patients with clearly recognised disability or illness who are genuinely unable to make the requisite journey
- Patients whose treatment may debilitate them in a way that cannot be accommodated by public and private transport

#### ESCORTS:

Only professional escorts will normally be allowed to travel; a family/friend escort may travel **only** if the patient falls into one of the following categories:

- Is under sixteen years of age
- Has significant communication difficulties, including learning difficulties, impaired sight or is hard of hearing
- Has mental health problem that prevents him/her travelling alone
- The patient's medical condition is such that he/she requires constant supervision for safety
- The patient requires a carer to assist him/her at their destination.

#### NOTES:

1. *This policy does not affect those entitled to remission of charges under the National Health Service Regulations 2003.*
2. *Patients' rights to treatment under current Choice Policy should not be affected by their requirements for transport.*
3. *Under normal circumstances a patient receiving mobility allowance is NOT eligible for NHS funded transport.*
4. *Exceptionally transport may be provided where patient safety or dignity would be compromised if using private or public transport, even where this is not related to medical condition. However, patients may be charged for transport under these circumstances.*
5. *Mobility needs alone do not necessitate an escort, as the patient's mobility needs will be met by ambulance transport or hospital staff.*
6. *The Lead clinician is responsible for all decisions relating to patient transport eligibility.*

*This statement will be reviewed in light of new national guidance*

#### NOTES:

1. *Exceptional circumstances may be considered where there is evidence of significant health impairment and there is also evidence of the intervention improving health status.*
2. *This policy will be reviewed in light of new evidence, national guidance or guidance from NICE.*
3. *Buckinghamshire/Milton Keynes Priorities Committee policy statements can be viewed at <http://www.mkpct.org.uk/content.asp?ContentID=548>*