

A guide for healthcare professionals



Requesting ambulance transport



This guide is designed to make it quicker and easier for healthcare professionals (HCPs) to request an ambulance for patients who need urgent or emergency transportation to hospital or between hospital sites. **For ease, we have introduced a single, dedicated telephone line for healthcare professionals to use: 0345 140 0144**

During the call, you will be asked clinical questions about the patient's condition. In a life-threatening situation or an emergency request, the attending clinician must make the call to ensure accurate information is provided. Where delegation is unavoidable, the individual making the request for support must be able to answer basic triage questions about the patient's condition.

When you book transport, a clinician from our Clinical Hub may get back in touch with you for further assessment to ensure the right response is sent to the patient.

Requests must be based on patient clinical need and not based on other issues such as capacity/flow challenges or availability for hospital staff escorts.

Emergency ambulance transport cannot be booked for repatriations or step-down transfers/discharges to non-hospital facilities and outpatient appointments.

Booking checklist

Before calling, please consider whether your patient could make their own way to hospital or may be eligible for the Patient Transport Service. If not, please ensure the patient is ready to travel and that you have the following information:

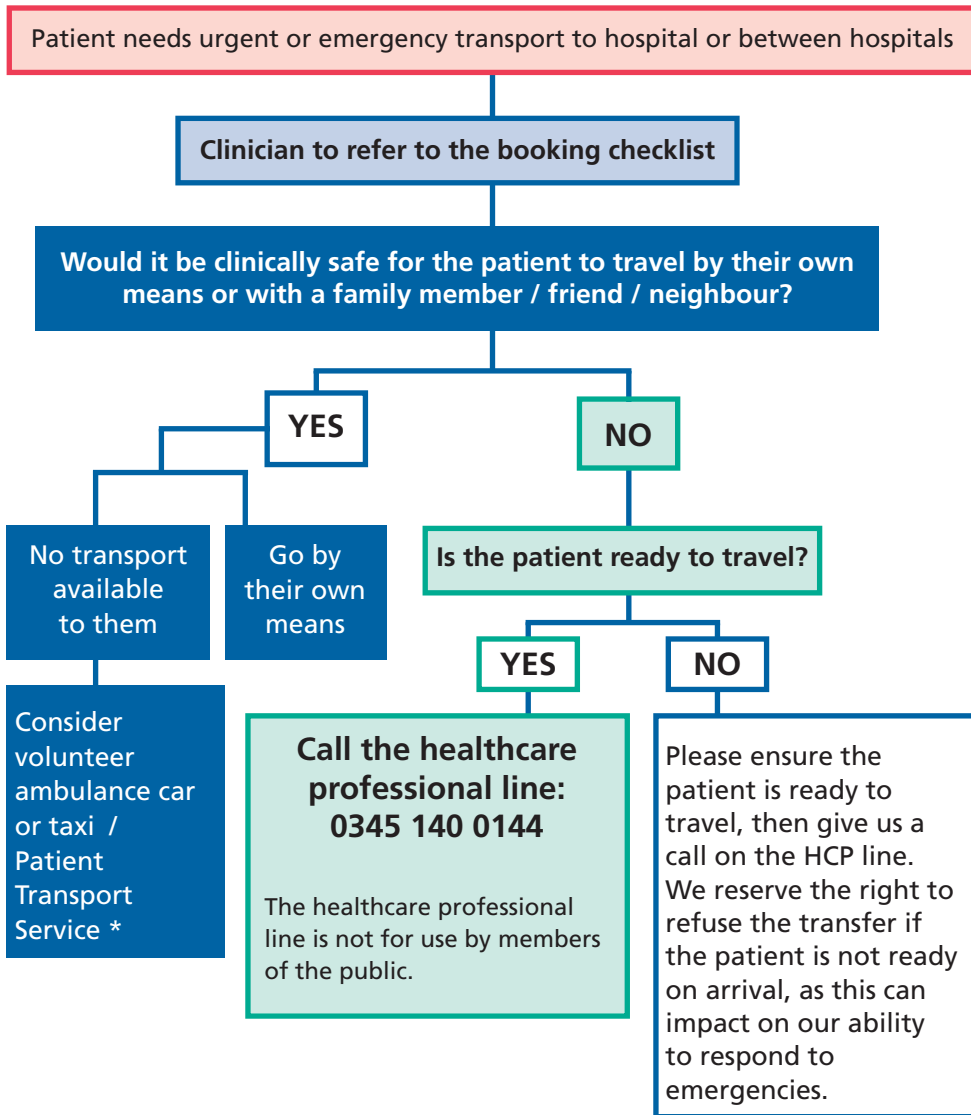
NEWS2*	NEWS2*
Patient's mobility (walking/wheelchair/stretcher / incubator – including type)	Summary of patient's condition
Advise if there are any family or clinical escorts	Name of authorising HCP
If the patient requires medication en route, is it ready to transport?	Contact details of authorising HCP
Could the patient travel with others as part of a multi-occupancy transfer?	Location the patient needs collecting from
Destination (inc. ward/clinic)	Probability of clinical deterioration
Special requirements/ instructions	Patient's full name
Anything else you think we need to know	Patient's NHS number

*The National Early Warning Score (NEWS2) found overleaf should be used to help your decision making, but is not to replace clinical judgement.

NEWS2

Physiological Parameter	3	2	1	0	1	2	3
Respiration rate (per minute)	≤ 8	9 - 11	12 - 20	≥ 25	9 - 11	12 - 20	≥ 25
SpO ₂ Scale 1 (%)	≤ 91	92 - 93	94 - 95	≥ 96	94 - 95	94 - 95	≥ 96
SpO ₂ Scale 2 (%)	≤ 83	84 - 85	86 - 87	≥ 88-92 on air ≥ 93 on oxygen 93-94 on oxygen 95-96 on oxygen ≥ 97 on oxygen	86 - 87	86 - 87	≥ 88-92 on air ≥ 93 on oxygen 93-94 on oxygen 95-96 on oxygen ≥ 97 on oxygen
Air or Oxygen?	Oxygen		AIR		Oxygen		AIR
Systolic blood pressure (mmHg)	≤ 90	91 -100	101 - 110	111 - 219	91 - 110	101 - 110	111 - 219
Pulse (per minute)	≤ 40	41-50	51-90	≥ 131	41-50	51-90	≥ 131
Consciousness			Alert		Alert		
Temperature (°C)	≤ 35.0	35.1 - 36.0	36.1 - 38.0	≥ 39.1	35.1 - 36.0	36.1 - 38.0	≥ 39.1

Reproduced from: Royal College of Physicians. National Early Warning Score (NEWS2): Standardising the assessment of acute-illness severity in the NHS. Updated report of a working party. London: RCP, 2017.



In immediately life-threatening emergencies, you can always reach us on 999.

When you call the healthcare professional line, the questions we ask will collect the clinical information needed to determine the level of response required. There are four levels of response ranging from life-threatening emergency to non-urgent, which can be up to a four hour response time.

	Types of condition
Life-threatening emergency	Where immediately life-saving clinical interventions are needed from the ambulance service in addition to emergency transport to an appropriate emergency department or specialist receiving unit e.g. cardiac arrest, birth units requiring immediate assistance, acute severe or life-threatening asthma in an urgent care facility.
Emergency	Patients assessed as needing immediate clinical care in hospital in an emergency department or specialist receiving unit e.g. acute myocardial infarction, acute stroke, serious injury, sepsis, patients requiring limb-saving surgery.
Urgent (non-blue light response)	Patients assessed as requiring urgent admission or transfer with conditions that are not immediately life, limb or sight threatening e.g. urgent assessment by a specialist, urgent admission to hospital or investigations to inform on-going care, such as urgent CT or MRI.
Non-Urgent (non-blue light response)	Patients assessed as not urgent but require transport for ongoing care within a clinically appropriate time frame e.g. patients who are clinically stable in their current environment and are being transferred for elective or semi-elective procedures or investigations.

Who will transport your patient?

Paramedic	Registered healthcare professional, able to respond to full range of emergencies and assess patients. Trained in advanced life support including airway management skills. Can administer a wide range of drugs and qualified to drive under blue light conditions.
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	Able to respond to full range of emergencies, assess patients, identify patient deterioration and seek support from senior clinicians. Trained in basic life support and can deliver a shock using an AED. Able to administer range of drugs. Qualified to drive under blue light conditions.
Urgent Care Assistant	Can assess patients, identify patient deterioration and seek support from senior clinicians. Non-blue light transfers only.
*Patient Transport Service	All PTS bookings are subject to an eligibility assessment. Carry out 'on the day' or next day transfers, trained in basic life support, can identify patient deterioration and seek support from senior clinicians. Non-blue light transfers only. There is an online PTS portal where you can: manage direct booking of transport; update the time patients are ready for transportation; view booked activity and see if it has been allocated to a PTS resource; and access support for discharge and flow planning in those hospitals where it is in use. Email PTS.OnlineReferrals@nwas.nhs.uk to get access to the online booking system.

Visit www.nwas.nhs.uk/professionals for more information and to download a booking checklist.