

Patient Transport Service

Objectives

- to provide transport to **essential** medical appointments for people who meet the eligibility criteria;
- to provide transport for a limited period of time (nominally 6 weeks), thus allowing the client enough time to make alternative long-term transport arrangements;
- to provide a linked, integrated service across the state, with other transport service providers;
- to provide a safe, timely and comfortable service that meets clients' needs; and
- to deliver the service through Red Cross registered volunteers driving Red Cross vehicles.

Essential is defined as a medical condition of a serious nature, and test procedures associated with this. General examples are chemotherapy, radiotherapy, major surgery, cardiac rehabilitation and diagnostic tests for life threatening diseases.

Clients eligible for transport:

- are unable to access suitable public transport, and/or live in an area that is remote from public transport;
- do not have an escort or carer to accompany them on public transport to appointments, if accessible public transport exists;
- live independently (consisting of caravan parks, rooming houses or boarding houses, hostels without paid support services attached to the accommodation);
- are unable to drive or to be driven by family/friends to appointments; and
- are not eligible for alternative transport schemes.

Clients suitable for transport must be:

- referred by a medical practitioner stating that they are suitable to travel comfortably in a seated position in a domestic passenger vehicle with other passengers, for an extended period of time, and without medical personnel on board;
- able to safely secure themselves via a seatbelt (exemptions apply to those clients with medical conditions or physical disabilities certified by a registered medical practitioner that they are approved to travel without a seatbelt e.g. mobility impaired, pregnant women and obese individuals);
- able to walk unassisted, or negotiate two steps with the help of a walking frame or stick; and
- able to comfortably enter and exit a domestic passenger vehicle with minimal assistance.

Clients ineligible or unsuitable for transport:

- clients with alternative transport options (i.e. Ambulance, Veteran Affairs and other cards);
- clients requesting transport for non-essential medical or social appointments (e.g. dental, general rehabilitation, hospital to hospital transfers, shopping, pharmacy, post office etc);
- clients requiring treatment, intravenous therapy, oxygen or monitoring, whilst in transit;
- clients that are wheelchair bound (unless they are accompanied by a carer or family member who assumes responsibility for loading and unloading the wheelchair into and out of the Red Cross vehicle, and assuming that there is capacity in the car to fit the wheelchair); and
- clients living in aged care facilities, nursing homes or supported residential services such as aged care hostels with paid support services attached to the facility.

A request requires the submission of a *Patient Transport Service Client Referral Form*. The referral form must and can only be signed by a registered Medical Practitioner, Specialist, or Hospital Transport Coordinator from the referring agency or Hospital the client is attending.

OPERATING HOURS

The operating hours of the service are Monday to Friday, 7.00 am to 7.00 pm. Referring agencies scheduling appointments for regional clients in Melbourne are required to schedule appointments between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm.

PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICE REFERRAL FLOW CHART

