



## Guidance for escorts accompanying patients from care homes

The guidance for Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) staff when called to care homes on a 999 call and the care home has been unable or unwilling to send an escort, is as follows:

- There is no legal requirement for a care home to send an escort with a patient. During out-of-hour periods, sending a member of staff may in fact compromise patient care at the home. This remains the case when a Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLS) is in place. However, it is best practice for care homes to send an escort when staffing levels permit doing so.

Staff can question if an escort is necessary, especially due to COVID-19, as hospitals are limiting visitors. If staff are arranging care home staff/family to meet the resident at the hospital, YAS staff will ensure that this meets local hospital current guidelines.

- Where an escort cannot be sent, a full handover will be provided and relevant documentation about the patient should be handed to YAS staff. There are several methods for dealing with this. The minimum information expected is:
  - demographic information (name, date of birth and address)
  - past medical history
  - current medical status or reason for transfer
  - drug history
  - contact telephone number and person at care home
  - details of any next of kin and whether they are meeting the patient at hospital
  - Do Not Attempt Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) if applicable
  - hospital passport/"this is me" information if applicable.

The information above may also be accompanied by a bag containing patient's clothes and other personal items for use while in hospital.

### **Patient Transport Service (PTS)**

The only occasion when an escort is a legal requirement on the Patient Transport Service (PTS) is when the patient is aged 15 years and under. All other escorts should be pre-booked on PTS and are based on patient need, using defined eligibility criteria.

This states that an escort is legitimate if the patient:

- would be at risk or vulnerable if travelling alone
- has severe communication difficulties
- has a sight, hearing or speech impairment
- has a physical or mental health problem which prevents them from travelling alone
- requires a chaperone for religious or cultural reasons or needs a translator.

In the rare eventuality of a patient not having mental capacity or being unable to communicate for themselves and an escort is not accompanying the patient, relevant notes about the patient will be handed to the crew.

The minimum information expected is:

- demographic information (name, date of birth and address)
- past medical history
- current medical status
- drug history
- contact telephone number and person at care home
- details of the next of kin and whether they are meeting the patient at hospital.

For more information, please contact the Care Homes Team, email [yas.carehometeam@nhs.com](mailto:yas.carehometeam@nhs.com)