

Welton & District Patients' & Doctors' Association Voluntary Car Scheme

Driver Procedures And Guidelines



The voluntary car scheme provides transport to and from any medical appointment for all patients registered with Welton Family Health Centre who would otherwise have difficulty sourcing transport to such appointments.

Procedure

Volunteer Drivers may elect to provide transport services for one or more of the following categories according to their interests and availability:

A. A dedicated day each month to be on call to take patients to and from the Health Centre. The Transport Coordinator will maintain a list of drivers and their dedicated dates and the Health Centre will notify drivers by phone, late afternoon the day before, of patient transport requirements. Drivers can then if they wish phone patients to advise of pick up times. Surgery starts at 8:30 AM. Closing times vary, but can be as late as 8 PM. Drivers may set their own finish time, and should inform the Transport Coordinator if they are not able/willing to work until the surgery closing time.

B. Providing pre-booked transport for patients to medical appointments both local and distance (hospital, dentist, optician, chiropodist, etc.). When patients request transport through the Health Centre, the patient's appointment details will be entered on the database and the Transport Coordinator will then contact drivers by phone or email to secure a driver for the journey. The Coordinator will then provide full details and agree pick up times with the designated driver by phone and confirm the booking with the patient.

C. Emergency support comprising a list of drivers willing to be contacted by the Health Centre to provide same day transport, providing they are available at the time. This list is prepared and maintained by the Transport Coordinator and retained by the Health Centre.

The Transport Coordinator will maintain a list of drivers and their interest in some or all of these activities.

Should you not be available for a period of time, e.g. holiday, please inform the Transport Coordinator as this will save time and effort in arranging patient transport.

All bookings must be arranged through the Health Centre and not from patients direct, however well you know them. Should a patient be involved in multiple appointments and you are prepared to provide transport please inform the Transport Coordinator who will enter the appointments onto the database and allocate you to each appointment.

The only exception to this would be if you take a patient who is to be admitted. It is then acceptable, and with your agreement, that you give the patient your telephone number to contact you direct for the return journey. Please inform the Transport Coordinator of the return journey so that it can be recorded.

The PDA will not authorise any deviation from the pre-arranged medical appointment except for the collection of prescriptions. N.B. Any deviation will be at the driver's own risk and will not be covered by the PDA's public liability insurance.

Charging for journeys

Patients will know there is a charge for this service, currently 40p per mile, and payable directly to the driver. Please try and keep some change with you, as many of the patients using the service are elderly and may not have ready access to change. Parking, toll charges and any other unavoidable expenses are also payable by the patient. N.B. You must charge the patient the correct rate. No free or discounted trips as this can cause problems for the next driver when picking up the patient and may also confuse the patient.

Please make a note of the mileage when you leave home and when you arrive at the destination. This doubled will be the distance charged to the patient. Mileage is from driver's door and back to the driver's door. If more than one patient is collected from an area and for the same journey then the charge should be split between them.

Drivers would normally wait for the patient except for hospital admission or when it is known that the appointment will take some time and waiting would be unreasonable. This would incur a double journey, to be charged to the patient. This duration is at the discretion of the driver but a 1 to 2 hour wait at a local hospital should be acceptable.

Journeys to the Health Centre will be charged at a flat rate per village as per the price guide.

Parking

At Lincoln County Hospital there is a cul-de-sac adjacent to the Oncology & Radiotherapy department (near the mini roundabout), where volunteer drivers may park for free provided they display the appropriate parking permit. If this area is full, or is not convenient, you may use one of the public car parks. A number plate recognition system (ANPR) is in use to record vehicles entering and leaving the car parks. The Transport Coordinator has provided a list of PDA driver vehicle registrations to the hospital, so there is no need to take any action on using a public car park, but please display your permit. If for any reason you use a different vehicle you will need to present your voluntary driver identity card to the reception desk in the main entrance to obtain free parking. In this instance, you may need to provide the name of the patient and clinic. Drivers are also provided with a covering letter to present to the receptionist if there are any problems. There are also designated 20 minute parking areas for use by volunteer drivers while getting the patient out of/in to the vehicle. The laminated parking cards provided should be displayed when using these areas as they are monitored closely by parking staff; and many are covered by the ANPR system which will automatically issue parking fines to over stayers. This applies to both the Main Hospital and the Maternity Wing/St Anne's Road area.

Boston Pilgrim and Grantham General have also introduced ANPR cameras to control parking. On each visit to these hospitals please present your ID card to Main Reception (Boston) or Facilities (Grantham) to have your vehicle details cleared from their respective parking systems.

Parking at John Coupland Hospital, Gainsborough is free to all hospital users.

Other hospitals may charge, please ask a parking attendant or at the main reception to see if they offer a concession to voluntary drivers.

We do not have the authority to park in any area that may restrict access to hospitals or clinics.

Volunteer Driver Reimbursement

Mileage claim forms are issued to all drivers for completion quarterly to be submitted to the Transport Coordinator. These forms are used to prepare annual performance statistics by the Transport Coordinator and to calculate payment to the driver, which will be made via bank transfer. It is important that you complete and return claim forms for all journeys, even if you do not require reimbursement, so that the Transport Coordinator may produce accurate statistics. The statistics will be available to anyone interested at the end of August each year. Drivers away from home in excess of 4 hours may claim reasonable costs for refreshments, obtaining receipts where available. These expenses should be submitted together with the quarterly mileage claim to the Transport Coordinator.

Guidelines

Always be prompt. Ensure you have the patient's telephone number in case of delay.

Offer a choice of seating and adjust seats as appropriate to suit e.g. to provide more legroom.

An adult (who must also provide and fit any required child restraint device) must accompany all children under the age of 16. Further information on Car Child Seat regulations is provided in a separate document.

In the event of an accident or breakdown, where practical arrange alternative transport e.g. a taxi, for the patient to attend their appointment or to return home as appropriate. The PDA will reimburse any expenses incurred via the Transport Coordinator.

Assisting Patients

If a patient asks for your assistance ensure that any assistance given is within your capabilities. You are not expected to lift or otherwise manhandle patients, provide personal care or do anything other than provide a transport service; and must not do so, unless the request is trivial (e.g. offering an arm to assist whilst walking), or you have received appropriate training and you are able and willing to do so safely. In all other circumstances, if a patient requires assistance they must have arranged their own carer in advance of the appointment. Should a patient require such assistance from you, you must decline to take them, and inform the Transport Coordinator.

The PDA offers training in the handling and use of wheelchairs to all drivers. You will not be asked to carry patients who require a wheelchair unless you have undergone such training, with the PDA or elsewhere.

If you are asked to chaperone a patient or assist them in the Hospital or Clinic setting politely inform those present that it is not within your remit or your responsibility and refer the request to the clinic staff, who are responsible for providing this service themselves.

If you are requested to enter a patient's home to provide assistance please note that this is outside the normal remit of the PDA and, if undertaken, would be at your own risk.

The Patient's condition is not the driver's concern, so please do not quiz patients regarding their medical condition and reason for journey. However, if you do not feel confident to transport them please contact the Health Centre for further advice and guidance.

If the patient's appointment is likely to be a long one and you are returning to pick them up it is essential the patient is fully aware of the time and location. Patients have been known to get lost!! The clinic will usually oblige by phoning you to advise a return time.

Data Protection

The PDA and therefore its volunteer drivers are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and must abide by its provisions. Patients' personal data is provided to drivers to enable them to complete patient transport requests and is to be treated as strictly confidential and is only to be used to facilitate the safe transport of the patient. Further details of the GDPR regulations and their impact on drivers are given in the GDPR Volunteer Driver Guidelines document.

Safeguarding

As a professional and an adult, it is your duty to protect and safeguard the passengers you encounter. To assist with this, all drivers must complete an online safeguarding module on joining the scheme and when their ID badge is due for renewal thereafter (currently every three years).

It is essential for you to share any concerns you might have with the relevant social care team by calling the Lincolnshire County Council Customer Service Centre (LCC CSC) on 01522 782155. If you are uncomfortable reporting your concerns directly you may ask the Transport Coordinator to do so on your behalf; but it is preferable that the CSC hear your concerns first hand.

Drivers are not expected to resolve or investigate incidents, but are requested to act responsibly and report any concerns.

For more guidance on what to do if you are worried a passenger is being abused or neglected please refer to the LCC Safeguarding Driver Pack document provided as part of your joining pack, and available from the LCC safeguarding website (maxrespectdrivertraining.learningpool.com).



General

If you believe a patient is abusing the system e.g. there is reliable transport at the patient's home, please discuss this with the Transport Coordinator.

Complaints - If a driver has any complaints regarding a particular journey please ensure full details of the event including names of people involved, date, time etc. are submitted to both the Transport Coordinator and the head receptionist at the Health Centre as soon as possible.

Driver meetings are held periodically providing an opportunity to meet other drivers, compare experiences and suggest scheme improvements.

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