

RVS Community Car Services
in Suffolk

01473 749 927

Healthwatch Suffolk

Helpline:
info@healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk

01449 703 949

Age UK Suffolk Countywide Information

Helpline:

01473 351 234

If you would like any part of this document in another format - such as EasyRead, Large print, Braille, Audio - and/or translated into another language, please contact us on 01473 770 014.

Age UK Suffolk would like to thank colleagues from RVS Suffolk, Suffolk County Council Passenger Transport Unit, GoStart Community Transport, Suffolk Disability and Health Action Group for their help with this factsheet.

Non-emergency transport to hospital

updated information
June 2015

Introduction
This factsheet contains guidance for patients in Suffolk about help available with transport to and from hospital for non-emergency NHS healthcare appointments.



Non-emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS)

NEPTS is for patients whose physical or mental condition, or mobility problems mean that they are unable to travel in any other way and who require the skills of staff to support them during their journey.

If you feel you meet the criteria call the NEPTS transport line on page 7. Before your booking is processed you will be required to answer some questions to check you are eligible. It is important you answer these questions accurately.

Before telephoning the transport booking line... make sure you have to hand...

- your NHS number
- name and address of your GP practice
- details of your appointment at the hospital clinic (date, time, department).

If you are refused transport what should you do?

- Call the NEPTS transport line and ask for your case to be reassessed
- If you are still refused you can ask for an assessment by a clinician
- If you are still unhappy call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) - contact number is listed on page 7.

What other ways are there to get to hospital? (charges will apply)

Community Car Services

Community Car Services use volunteers driving their own cars on a non-profit-making basis to help you make essential journeys. Journeys must be booked in advance. You pay towards travel costs, which can be a mileage rate. Look at Suffolk Community Transport's website or ring them for details of operators in your area (see page 7).

Dial A Ride

Dial A Ride are local door-to-door transport services, using fully accessible minibuses operated by community transport organisations. You must become a member of your local Dial A Ride service. As a member you then book journeys in advance. Journeys are normally undertaken within a 10 mile radius of where the Dial A Ride scheme is based. You are charged the equivalent of a local bus fare. Look at Suffolk Community Transport's website or ring them for details of operators in your area (see page 7).

Good Neighbour Schemes

Good Neighbour Schemes use volunteer car drivers and operate in some Suffolk towns and villages. You pay for travel costs. Find out more from Community Action Suffolk and Suffolk Community Transport (see pages 7 and 8). On all of the community transport services a friend or assistant may be able to travel with you. These services may also help you with transport to appointments at your doctor, dentist, chiropodist or local clinic. These services rely on volunteers and may not always be able to help. If you have regular support from a home care agency or company, they may be able to provide transport to hospital. You may be required to pay for the home carer's time as well as the mileage covered and parking.

Hospital Rides

Hospital Rides is a car sharing scheme which aims to match people who need transport with those driving to hospital. This can be arranged via their website www.hospitalrides.co.uk

Is there any help with the cost of travel to hospital?

You can apply for travel vouchers if you are eligible for a bus pass and live in a remote area or cannot benefit from free bus travel because of disability. Travel vouchers can be used to help pay for most community transport, taxis or private hire vehicles. The value of these vouchers is £100 per year and you can apply by ringing 0345 6000 659.

Please note: You cannot hold both travel vouchers and a free travel bus pass. You would need to choose between your bus pass, or vouchers.

There is more information on travel vouchers from Suffolk on Board's website here. <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/tickets-fares-concessionary-travel/concessionary-travel/free-travel-bus-pass-voucher-scheme/>

Good Neighbour Schemes do not normally accept travel vouchers.

If you are on Pension Guarantee Credit or named on certificate HC2 or HC3, you are entitled to claim your necessary travel costs to receive NHS treatment while under the care of a consultant or, in some cases, following a referral for tests by a GP or dentist. You should be able to submit your claim for the cost of transport and be reimbursed in cash on the day of your appointment. You will need to obtain a receipt from your transport operator and it is helpful if you ask for this at the start of the journey.

Always raise any questions about your journey with the hospital before you travel. Contact details for the relevant department at local hospitals are as follows:

Hospital	Tel numbers	Location in hospital
Ipswich Hospital	No direct transport line. Call Finance Office 01473 702124	South Finance Office (opposite children's ward and Bramford ward). Use South Entrance (No 6).
James Paget Hospital, Gorleston	Direct Transport line 01493 452044 (Main line 01493 452452)	Patient Travel Office in main reception area (opposite League of Friends shop).
West Suffolk Hospital	Direct Transport line 01284 713168 01284 713409 (Main line 01284 713000)	Ask staff member or volunteer in main reception to show you the location of the General Office.
Addenbrooke's, Cambridge	Direct Transport line 01223 216357 (Main line 01223 245151)	Outpatients reception.
Papworth Hospital	Direct Transport line 01480 364276 (Main line 01480 830541)	Car Parking & Patient Travel office in main reception.
Norfolk and Norwich Hospital	Direct Transport line 01603 289769 (Main line 01603 286286)	Patient Services Office hatch in East Block, on Level 2.

You will need to present at the hospital office:

- a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions, showing what benefits you are receiving. People of pensionable age must be on Guaranteed Pension Credit - and it must say this on the letter. Alternatively you must present your HC2 or HC3 certificate. The letter or certificate should be dated within the last year.
- appointment letter/card
- car parking ticket and/or bus/train ticket or receipt from your community transport operator.

If necessary, you should be able to receive payments in advance of travel to your appointment. Please contact the hospital or clinical commissioning group (CCG) for your area for further information on how to do this (hospital numbers on page 5, CCGs numbers on page 7).

If you are not on Guaranteed Pension Credit

If your income is low, and your savings are less than £16,000, you can apply for help with travel costs to hospital under the NHS Low Income Scheme. You will have to complete an HC1 application form or you can claim retrospectively with form HC5T. Call PALS to get these forms. If you are over retirement age, and have nobody to help you fill the form in, contact Age UK Suffolk's Benefits Advice Service for assistance on [01449 674222](tel:01449674222).

Useful contacts

NEPTS (Non-emergency Patient Transport Service)

Patient Transport Clinical Assessment and Advice Service for Suffolk [08458 500 774](tel:08458500774)

Helpline for transport for patients living in the Gt Yarmouth & Waveney area [08456 038 115](tel:08456038115)

PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)

Suffolk [0800 389 6819](tel:08003896819)
Waveney area [0800 587 4132](tel:08005874132)

Clinical Commissioning Group

West Suffolk [01284 758010](tel:01284758010)
Ipswich and East Suffolk [01473 770000](tel:01473770000)
Gt Yarmouth and Waveney [01502 719500](tel:01502719500)
Healtheast

Suffolk Community Transport

Helpline: [01473 353 006](tel:01473353006)
www.suffolkcommunitytransport.org.uk
or email: admin@suffolkcommunitytransport.org.uk

Suffolk On Board

Helpline: [0345 6066 171](tel:03456066171)
www.suffolkonboard.com

Community Action Suffolk

(for details of Good Neighbour Schemes) [01473 345 400](tel:01473345400)

Suffolk Travel Line

(to apply for travel vouchers) [0845 600 0659](tel:08456000659)