

**North Yorkshire County Council
Scrutiny of Health Committee
21 June 2019**

**Briefing note - Refresh of Patient Transport Service (PTS) Eligibility
Criteria Provided by Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS)**

Purpose of briefing

To provide committee members with details of the impact of the refresh of the eligibility criteria for the Patient Transport Service, six months on. This is a briefing note for information.

The briefing focuses on the service commissioned by the Hambleton Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group.

Primary Objectives of Our Collaborative Work

The primary objective of this work was to:

- Improve the quality of the Patient Transport Service provided by Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) to the local population, through increasing YAS' operational flexibility and wherever possible extending their operational cover.
- Successfully integrate the six largest voluntary car schemes, currently operating across the HRW area, within YAS on a sign posting basis as alternative transport options for our patients to consider.
- Comply with the statements and principals established by NHS England regarding patient transport eligibility (2007 guidance refers) in our work to refresh our local eligibility criteria for PTS.
- Secure the future affordability of our PTS contract with Yorkshire Ambulance Service.

Stakeholders Involved in the eligibility refresh

Hambleton Richmondshire & Whitby (HRW) CCG were joined by colleagues from Scarborough Ryedale (SR) CCG, Harrogate and Rural District (HaRD) CCG, Vale of York (VoY) CCG, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS), North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the six largest voluntary car schemes operating across the Hambleton Richmondshire & Whitby localities in completing this work.

The preparatory work and rigorous testing of the various iterations of the refreshed criteria started in 2017.

The new criteria were introduced across VoY and SR CCGs in July 2018 and subsequently across HRW and HaRD CCGs in October 2018.

VoY and SR CCGs both opted to include all their patients in eligibility checks,

however HRW and HaRD CCG only required saloon car and self-managed wheelchair patients to be assessed for mobility.

HRW and HaRD CCGs also excluded all renal, chemotherapy and cancer patients from any eligibility checks.

Quality and Activity Outcomes (October 2018 – February 2019)

Validated information (HRW CCG), in the five months since the refreshed eligibility criteria were introduced indicates that their application has worked effectively and as we intended in the vast majority of instances.

Activity levels across HRW CCG for Saloon Car (SC) patients have reduced by an average of c35% per month which is within the planning range.

Activity levels for the Wheelchair (W1) group, a much smaller cohort of patients, have not changed materially since the changes were made.

Performance against the three headline (national) key performance indicators for PTS reports the following changes across HRW CCG since October 2018:

- KPI 1 - % of patients picked up within 120mins before their appointment:

Improved from 90% in October 2018 to 92% in February 2019

- KPI 2 - % of patients arriving at hospital between 0 and 120mins before their appointment:

Improved from 94% in October 2018 to 95% in February 2019

- KPI 3 - % of pre-planned patients picked up within 90 minutes of being declared ready:

Improved from 89% in October 2018 to 93% in February 2019

All six voluntary car schemes have seen a manageable increase in their activity levels since the changes came into being, mainly driven by their integration and signposting to their services by YAS.

Appeals

HRW CCG has received 34 appeals to date. All appeals were all dealt with personally by the CCG's Head of Urgent & Emergency Care or his named deputy.

YAS had correctly applied the refreshed criteria in all HRW CCG cases, and on review none of the HRW CCG appeals were found to be vexatious and all had reasonable grounds to appeal.

All 34 appeals heard to date have been upheld.

The volume of HRW CCG appeals has reduced to two in March 2019 and one in April 2019, with a peak of nine appeals recorded in November 2018.

HRW CCG aim to complete all appeals within 24hrs of their receipt, and have achieved that standard for all appeals heard to date.

HRW CCG has also approved extended periods of eligibility for patients where, following their original appeal, there has been a sensible reason to do so (e.g. the patient has multiple planned hospital appointments over the next 12months).

Hospital Attendance

Since the changes were implemented HRW CCG has not been advised of any material changes to hospital DNA (Did Not Attend) appointment rates at the Friarage Hospital, James Cook Hospital, Darlington Hospital, Harrogate Hospital or York Hospital indicating that the changes in criteria are not having any unintended consequence on hospital appointment attendance for our patients.

Patient Complaints

Since the changes were implemented HRW CCG has received zero complaints and one PALS inquiry (October 2018) related to the changes in criteria for PTS.

Next Steps

North Yorkshire CCGs and YAS continue to jointly review the mobilisation of these changes exploring any consistent themes which when addressed may help improve the process for both our patients and YAS.

John Darley
Hambleton Richmondshire and Whitby CCG
10 June 2019