

Ambulance Service (Non-Emergency Patient Transport) Regulations 2019

The *Ambulance Service (Non-emergency Patient Transport) Regulations 2019* introduced regulation of private non-emergency patient transport (NEPT). This will standardise patient assessment by referring facilities and ensure NEPT providers maintain minimum standards of patient care. Patient assessment and care provided during NEPT must be recorded using standard, Secretary approved forms.

Residential Aged Care facility (RACF) residents may use private NEPT in certain circumstances. If a RACF resident is being transported from a RACF to a private facility, private NEPT may be used. However, there will be a cost for service (which may not be covered by Private Health Insurance). This will need to be discussed and agreed with the resident and/or their family. The appropriateness of Community Transport, or transport by a family member should also be considered.

The approved Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A) must be used whenever a patient is being assessed for NEPT, as even if Ambulance Tasmania is contacted for NEPT, Ambulance Tasmania may refer to a private NEPT.

Referring RACF Responsibility

The referring facility must complete a clinical assessment of a prospective NEPT patient and document the findings on the Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A). This will formally document the patient's suitability for NEPT. Only patients who are assessed as low or medium acuity, and who are stable, can be transported by NEPT.

- Please note that if a RACF resident is assessed as being suitable for NEPT and is being transported from a RACF to a public facility, then Ambulance Tasmania's NEPT service must be contacted.
- A private NEPT service crew must not accept an NEPT patient, unless a completed Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A) has been provided.
- Form 10A must be completed and signed by a registered nurse, registered paramedic or medical practitioner employed by the RACF. The form must then be endorsed by a medical practitioner or the most senior registered nurse employed by and available at the RACF facility. (Note that an enrolled nurse familiar with the patient may commence the Patient Assessment Record, however the registered practitioner must complete and sign the Form).
- Please note an NEPT crew must not accept a patient for NEPT if they do not meet the conditions for transport, or if the crew reasonably believes that the patient is not (or is no longer) suitable for NEPT, for example, if patient condition has deteriorated since the Form 10A was completed.

Two copies of the completed Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A) must be provided to the NEPT service on clinical handover. The RACF must keep a copy of the Record.

NEPT Patient Handover from another Health Facility

A RACF receiving an NEPT patient must be provided with a completed copy of the Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A) attached to a Patient Care Record (Form 10B – which must be completed by the NEPT Crew) on clinical handover. Together these form the official standard, Secretary approved NEPT 'Patient Care Record'. A copy must be kept by the RACF on the resident's file.

Patient Return Trips

If a patient is transported from a referring RACF for an appointment at an intermediary facility (return trip) and the patient's condition is unchanged for the return transport, the original Patient Assessment Record (Form 10A) must be provided to the return NEPT crew on clinical handover. The NEPT service should only commence a new Patient Care Record (Form 10B) if there has been a change in crew.

- Clinical handover for the return trip must include a note on the new Form 10B indicating that the patient's condition is unchanged from the original patient assessment.
- If patient condition has changed and emergency transport is required, Ambulance Tasmania emergency services must be called on 000 and NEPT must not be used.

Purchasing

Books of forms can be ordered by contacting Foot and Playsted by email to adam@footandplaysted.com.au

- Form 10A: packs of 100 sets in triplicate.

Education

Educational materials on the new NEPT provisions are provided on the NEPT webpage, <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/nept> which may be used for staff training purposes.

Questions can be directed to the Department of Health, Regulation and Licensing Unit on 03 6166 3856 or via nept@health.tas.gov.au.

Approved by Manager, Regulation, Licensing and Accreditation Unit, on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Health, July 2024.