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To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1 February 2013

Subject: Patient Transport Services

1. Introduction¹

(a) The Department of Health defines Patient Transport Services (PTS) in the following way:

- *Non-emergency patient transport services, known as PTS, are typified by the non-urgent, planned, transportation of patients with a medical need for transport to and from a premises providing NHS healthcare and between NHS healthcare providers. This can and should encompass a wide range of vehicle types and levels of care consistent with the patients' medical needs.*

2. Eligibility

(a) PTS is there to enable eligible patients to access care in hospital, community or primary care settings *“in a reasonable time and in reasonable comfort, without detriment to their medical condition. Similarly, patients should be able to travel home in reasonable comfort without detriment to their medical condition.”* The precise definition of “reasonable” will vary according to different local circumstances.

(b) The Department of Health has set out the following broad principles for eligibility:

- Where the medical condition of the patient is such that they require the skills or support of PTS staff on/after the journey and/or where it would be detrimental to the patient's condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means.
- Where the patient's medical condition impacts on their mobility to such an extent that they would be unable to access healthcare and/or it would be detrimental to the patient's condition or recovery to travel by other means.
- Recognised as a parent or guardian where children are being conveyed.

¹ This Note summarises and takes excerpts from: Department of Health, *Eligibility Criteria for Patient Transport Services (PTS)*, 23 August 2007, http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalassetset/dh_078372.pdf

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- (c) It is for the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) to determine the exact details around eligibility locally.
- (d) PTS could also be provided for a patients' carer or escort where appropriate.
- (e) PTS eligibility does not include those with a 'social need' rather than a 'medical need.' Charges can be levied 'for the provision of transport to patients with a social need' with the following provisos:
 - *The scheme must be profitable as it is unacceptable for it to be subsidised from NHS funds;*
 - *The profit must be used for improving the health services; and*
 - *Income Generation schemes must not in any way interfere with the provision of NHS services to patients.*
- (f) PTS providers may be from the NHS sector, independent sector, or a combination.