

This report updates HOSC Members about the status of the Kent and Medway Patient Transport PTS project (PTS) and outlines the bid evaluation for provision of the service.

### **Procurement and evaluation process**

The Evaluation Team used an initial stage to select a shortlist of bidders based on responses to a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). 14 initial bids were received in response to the PQQ and 6 bidders were taken through to the final stage through an Invitation to Tender (ITT). Of those, five chose to submit a final bid for both lots (i.e., a contact centre and the provision of the journey service)

The final bids were then evaluated using detailed weighted criteria on the basis of 60% for quality and 40% for price. The analysis of bids was completed by numerous subject matter experts, project team members, patients and stakeholders. Following evaluation, scores were moderated, validated and then reviewed by the project sponsor, Head of Procurement and an acute Trust Executive Director.

The NHS Kent and Medway Cluster Board subsequently approved the recommendation for NSL Care Services as the preferred bidder for both lots, subject to satisfactory completion of due diligence, site visits and references. Site visits in early January were attended by the Project Manager, local Commissioner and two hospital managers.

With site visits, due diligence and references all having been completed, official announcement of the preferred bidder was made on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and mobilisation started shortly thereafter.

### **Mobilisation**

Although mobilisation has just commenced, there are key stages to the mobilisation that will be worked through with NSL (see attached report from NSL), including:

- Property (location of estates for vehicles and staff but in liaison with local care and incumbent PTS providers )
- Vehicles (vehicle analysis and ordering of appropriate vehicles/equipment)
- Communications (public education, local care providers and communications to GPs, clinicians and their staff)
- HR/TUPE (this work stream shall involve staff, unions as well as a universal email for staff questions and a monthly newsletter)
- IT/IG (expansion of the current system to meet Kent and Medway requirements and also local care provider integration)
- Telephone and equipment (once estates have been located and identified)
- Training (working with local care providers and incumbent providers to ensure staff meet Kent specifications and NSL's standards)
- Constant liaison with the current care and incumbent providers to assure the Project objectives are met in conjunction with their local operations
- Continued liaison and participation with patients to help develop service

## **Eligibility Criteria**

NSL will be responsible for meeting all of the requirements of the contract including applying the existing eligibility criteria. While all local care providers are currently working together to consistently apply the eligibility criteria, NSL will be required to continue that application and record any non-eligible requests.

It is important to note that as previously advised, there has never been an intention to change the Eligibility Criteria (a copy of which is attached) but to consistently apply it for all patients fairly and appropriately across Kent and Medway. The previously agreed Eligibility Criteria was agreed throughout the entire South East Coast several years ago and is based on 2007 guidance issued by the Department of Health.

That guidance defines patient transport as: *“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.”*

The Department of Health also states that PTS *“could also be provided to a patient’s escort or carer where their particular skills and/or support are needed e.g. this might be appropriate for those accompanying a person with a physical or mental incapacity, vulnerable adults or to act as a translator.”*

The South East Coast Eligibility Criteria is based on this guidance and outlines the principle for the entitlement to non-emergency PTS as:

- The patient having a medical condition such that they require the skills of ambulance staff or appropriately skilled personnel on, or for the journey (*And/Or*)
- Following a documented clinical decision, it has been determined that the medical condition of the patient is such that it would be detrimental to the patient’s condition or recovery if they were to travel by any other means
- Where the entitlement to PTS is clear the patient will be offered PTS regardless of distance and circumstances.
- An agreed assessment tool will be used to determine the patient’s entitlement to PTS services and the type of PTS services that are available for patients to travel in, to and from their place of treatment

## **Ineligible patients**

Patients that apply for transport but are not eligible will be referred to numerous alternative methods of transport including public transport, volunteer car and other voluntary organisations, hospital travel schemes and other modes of transport. The Project Team is compiling a current list of the volunteer organisations within Kent and Medway alongside local care and PTS providers. NSL will liaise with volunteer organisations to learn what services they provide and will maintain a current referral list to help those ineligible patients. The Project Team feels that it is crucial that ineligible patients are not abandoned but are assisted to locate alternative transport methods.

One of the first questions that will be asked when transport is requested is how a patient is normally able to get around (i.e., their own car, etc.) to help determine eligibility.

Recent examples of ineligible patients have been a patient (who had been receiving transport in the past) whose only medical condition was dyslexia or a patient who had been receiving hydrotherapy with transport in the past but is now mobile and can get into her own vehicle.

Whereas an example of eligible patients may be someone with advanced multiple sclerosis that cannot self-support or a patient with recent knee replacement surgery. This condition, however, may change over a period of time, thereby changing eligibility. Another example would be a recent inpatient episode for a deaf patient having procedures on both of his eyes or an elderly lady attending Medway hospital for major surgery. She cannot put shoes on her enlarged feet currently as she has diabetes and gangrene. Once she has recovered, she may be able to use her mobility car.

### **Future Commissioning**

West Kent will be leading on the contract for all Kent and Medway CCGs. The service will be managed by Kent and Medway Commissioning Services (KMCS) once the restructure has taken place after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. Both the Project Manager and the Associate Director in charge of the project are expected to continue to manage this Project through mobilisation and implementation during the early phases. Once the service has been established, contract management will be led by a KMCS contract manager in conjunction with a West Kent CCG lead.

### **Conclusion**

The Project Team will provide another update to HOSC after the mobilisation stage of this project and request that HOSC continue to support this project.