

NHS KENT AND MEDWAY PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

NSL is a public sector outsourcing specialist working for the NHS, Local Authorities and Central Government. We employ over 5,000 staff and are an Investors in People Gold organisation and an Investors in People Champion. We are a large, experienced PTS provider working with 15 NHS trust across the UK, delivering over 900,000 patient journeys per annum.

SERVICE OVERVIEW

The service was tendered in 2 Lots and NSL have been selected to deliver both:

- Lot 1 Patient Transport Service Centre (PTSC)
- Lot 2 Patient Transport Journey Provision Service

Lot 1 – Patient Transport Service Centre

The Lot 1 PTSC will be the first point of contact for patients accessing PTS in Kent. All patients who are Kent residents will access the service through a single dedicated number which will be chargeable at local rate from a landline telephone.

The PTSC will be co-located with an existing patient booking service at our centre in Shrewsbury, driving economies of scale. The staff at the PTSC will focus on ensuring that patients can access the service quickly, with minimum waiting time and that patient bookings are entered accurately. The PTSC represents the ‘first impressions’ of the NHS and we are focussed on ensuring that we get it right first time at the beginning of the process. The call takers at the PTSC will apply the NHS Kent and Medway Eligibility Criteria consistently to all callers to ensure that only those who meet the criteria access the service. Where a caller does not meet the eligibility criteria, we will offer advice and assistance to help identify an alternative transport solution for them. This will include signposting them to the voluntary sector, if appropriate. In this way, we will ensure that the limited resources available are directed towards those truly in need. Within the Lot 1 Service, NSL will provide a liaison officer to work with each healthcare organisation in Kent to facilitate adequate, effective operational management for patient transport and patient discharges. This Liaison Officer will be based in Kent and will also provide the link between the PTSC and the PTS service itself.

Lot 2 - Patient Transport Journey Provision Service

Within this service, the following will be provided:

- A routine service between the hours of 7.00 – 21.00, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, with reduced activity at weekends.
- Services for same-day and short-notice requests to provide a 2 hour and/or planned time slot service on a 24/7 basis. This will include facilitating same day discharges and inter-hospital transfers.
- A time slot where packages of care are being organised or where bed swaps are being organised at a specific time. Examples of timed responses are for the day hospitals, rehabilitation units and diagnostic scan appointments where arrival and return times for each session are critical to ensure patients receive maximum benefit from their attendance.
- A tailored service for patients receiving intensive treatment e.g.: Renal dialysis, Radiotherapy, etc.

It is our intention to operate the PTS service in Kent from 5 bases. This is shown in the map below and the lay down is broadly: Dartford, Medway/Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Ashford and Canterbury. The operating base locations have been selected to ensure that the majority of locations in Kent are within 45 minutes of a base.



Our proposal includes a fleet of 90 new vehicles covering the full spectrum of mobility types and includes 43 ambulances (multi-seat, stretcher, bariatric and HD).

Car - Operational	29
Wheelchair	18
Ambulance - Multi Seat	28
Ambulance - Stretcher	8
Ambulance - Bariatric	5
Ambulance - High Dependency	2
	90

To increase efficiency and control, all vehicles will have vehicle tracking and mobile data

devices for real time despatch and control. Patient journeys will be allocated to drivers/crews by locally based planners and controllers using the Meridian Booking system. In addition to directly employed staff, we will use voluntary drivers and qualified bank staff where appropriate. We use volunteer drivers successfully in our other operations and we believe this using correctly vetted local volunteers adds flexibility and commitment to the overall service.

A key value added part of our proposal is the introduction of floorwalkers at the major acute hospitals. In our experience, correctly managing the discharge process is a vital part of a successful service. The floor walker’s role is to liaise directly with hospital staff in the discharge lounges and on the wards themselves. They will attend bed meetings and will be the NSL point of contact at the hospital for PTS matters. This will give us early visibility of peaks in activity and enable informed planning for on the day discharges.

As with Lot 1, there will be a strong focus on performance and efficiency to ensure that we deliver a high quality, cost effective service. To ensure this, there are a range of Key Performance Indicators in the contract and measures that are yet to be formally agreed but which will be predominantly patient focussed. The NSL management structure will mirror that of NHS Kent and Medway to ensure that we provide escalation and scope for discussion at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. We see ourselves as a partner rather than a contractor and will ensure that the service delivery develops over time in line with the requirements of the CCGs.

Essential services within Lot 2 include:

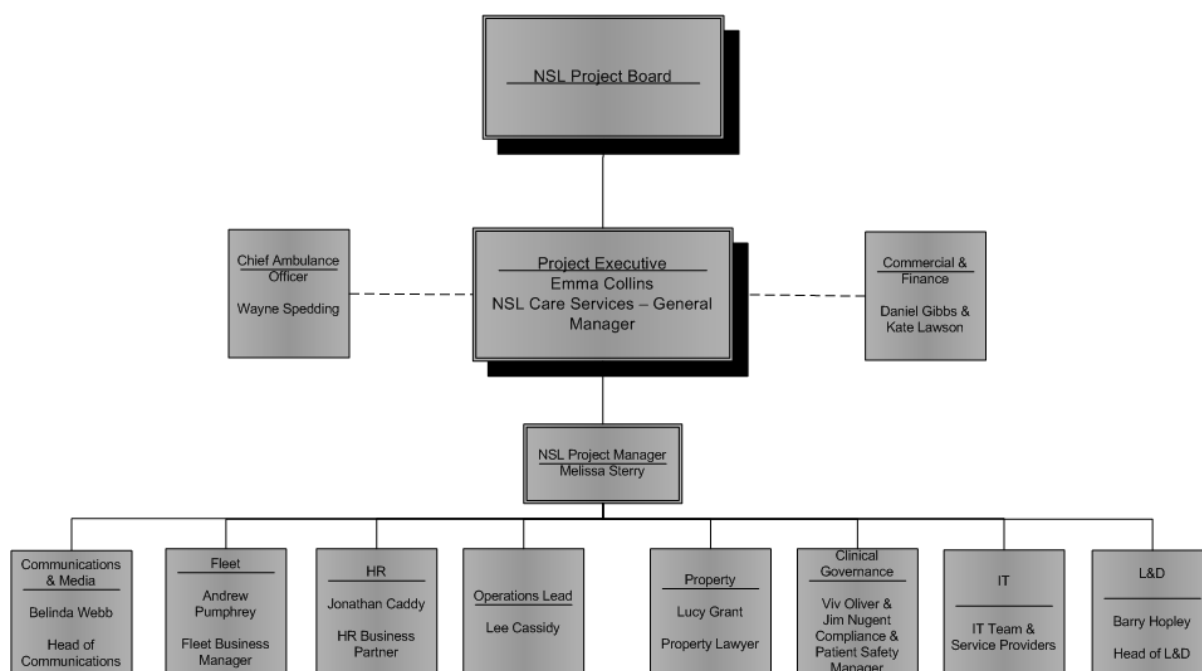
- All high dependency transfers
- Services for renal dialysis and oncology
- Urgent discharges and transfers to support system management where covered by this contract
- End of life transfers to home/hospice for critically ill patients

These services must continue and must not be suspended for any reason, including during periods of major incidents, adverse weather, staff shortages, industrial action, fuel disputes or other emergencies.

IMPLEMENTATION

NSL has a track record of successful implementations and has mobilised over 60 new contracts in the last 10 years, including 9 PTS contracts. We have wide experience of TUPE transfer and more than 60% of our workforce has transferred into NSL from other organisations (both public and private).

We have identified our project implementation team and these individuals are already working with NHS colleagues in Kent, attending meetings and starting the implementation process. The following organisation chart shows the levels of support that NSL will be applying to the mobilisation of the PTS service in Kent.



Our intention is to provide a largely seamless transition from the existing providers to NSL. This will involve extensive communications and stakeholder engagement to ensure that those impacted by the change are fully informed of the process. This includes liaising closely with local print and news media (in conjunction with the NHS Communications and Media Team) to ensure accurate and positive reporting of the transition.

On Day 1 of the new contract the only change we would expect our patients to notice is new vehicles and blue uniforms.

Alastair J Cooper
Managing Director - NSL Care Services