



Aberdeenshire
Health & Social Care
Partnership

Assisted Transport Policy for Adult Social Work Services

November 2018

1. Policy Statement

The ability of clients to access health and social care by appropriate means of transport is an essential component of their treatment or care pathway. It is recognised that because of the size of Aberdeenshire and the limitations of the transport network there can be challenges in delivering services and enabling service users to access services.

This policy provides a consistent approach to transport for social work services which is aligned with the strategic aims and outcomes of the Health and Social Care Partnership and supports the objectives of the Grampian Health and Transport Action Plan.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to people who;

- Are aged over 18 and not in full time education.
- Have been assessed as eligible for support using the Aberdeenshire Eligibility Criteria.
- Are ordinarily resident in Aberdeenshire.

3. Principles

Health

- The Health and Social Care Partnership wants to encourage people to be physically active. Walking even short distances can help people to feel better mentally and physically.
- Any decisions regarding procurement of transport should consider the public health impacts of the transport system.

Equality

- Transport will be provided where it is not possible for the person to use public transport or travel by other independent means, this also includes instances where it would not be appropriate for an unpaid carer to provide support with transport in line with the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. Practitioners will use their professional knowledge and case experience in determining an individual's eligibility for support with transport.
- People who are unable to access public transport without assistance should be provided with support to travel where possible so that they are not disadvantaged.

Promoting Independence

- Any transport that is arranged must support the person to be as independent as possible.
- Assistance with transport must support the person to make the best use of their abilities and local resources.
- Any service that is arranged for the service user should be as local as possible. Transport should not be provided to take the person to a resource further away if there is a reasonable alternative closer to where the person lives.

Affordability

- An assessment of need and subsequent package of support should take into account the travel and transport arrangements that can be made from the individual's own resources and the affordability of any transport, including the use of a mobility vehicle or mobility benefits to transport themselves. This should happen regardless of the SDS option that is chosen.
- Any request for help with transport will be underpinned by a comprehensive assessment of need and will take into account the efficient and sustainable use of public resources. The support plan will detail any requirement for transport and the specific eligibility criteria that apply.

Eligibility

- Assistance with travel or transport should only be considered after all the other options have been explored. In addition to this for a request to be considered, all the following (1-5) must apply:
 1. The person is attending a resource or facility for which there is no suitable more local alternative.
 2. The distance is too great for the person to walk independently or with help.
 3. The person does not have it within their own means to transport themselves, including the use of a mobility vehicle (in accordance with section 3.4).
 4. There is no public transport available or the person cannot use public transport or has difficulty accessing public transport unassisted.
 5. There is no assistance with transport available from family or friends (including unpaid carer).

Or

The person is subject to conditions laid down in the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003 and is therefore entitled to assistance with travel.

- Transport is a chargeable service and those who are identified as eligible under this policy will be offered a financial assessment in accordance with the Aberdeenshire HSCP Charging Policy and, where applicable, financial hardship procedures.

Escorts

- Where a person is eligible to be accompanied by an escort to ensure their personal safety, this will be included in their self-directed support plan.

Links to Other Policies and Legislation

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies, procedures, legislation and guidance as appropriate including:

- Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
- Costs in Relation to SDS: Care Management Handbook
- Passenger Transport Strategy 2014
- Grampian Health and Transport Action Plan