



We know that this is a confusing time and lots of people have questions about accessing health and social care. We've worked with local NHS Trusts to find the answers to some of the questions you've been asking us about:

Getting to my essential appointment

I've been told there are no Patient Transport Services at the moment because of the pandemic.

What should I do?

There have been changes to how NHS England have told hospitals to work. However, if you have an essential appointment (an appointment that is still being held face-to-face), patient transport services are still operating. If you have an appointment and cannot attend without the aid of patient transport you should contact the clinic.

The clinic told me that I shouldn't use patient transport because I'm shielding. What should I do?

Patient Transport Services are currently transporting vulnerable and shielding patients. They have implemented a range of measures including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and patients, ensuring only one person is travelling at a time, and cleaning vehicles between trips. This is likely a misunderstanding by the clinic but staff have now been briefed about the changes – contact them to arrange your travel.

I'm not comfortable using patient transport because I am extremely vulnerable. What should I do?

Patient Transport Services have implemented a range of safety measures (see above) to make sure that travelling with them is as safe as it can be. If you do not feel that you want to travel at this time, you should speak to the clinic providing your care, who will be able to discuss whether delaying your appointment is possible.

No one has told me when my travel will be. How can I find out if it's been booked?

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is working closely with Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust to make sure people who have essential appointments have the option of patient transport. The clinics where patients are most likely to need transport (e.g. cancer services, spinal injuries) have got arrangements directly with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service to help them book travel in advance. They can explain this to you when they're arranging it. Clinics who don't have these arrangements can still book transport on the day of your appointment, so keep in touch with them to find out the details of your travel.

I'm not usually eligible for patient transport, but I can't travel like I normally do (e.g. getting a lift from friends/family, taking the bus). How am I supposed to get to my appointment?

If you can't travel to appointments like you would normally (for instance you don't live with the people who help you travel, or the public transport schedule has changed) you will now be eligible for patient transport. Let the clinic who provides your treatment know about this change in your circumstances so they can book transport for you.

Who can I talk to if I'm still having problems?

You should first talk to the clinic who is providing your care, to explain your circumstances and ask about transport options. If this doesn't help, The Patient Advice and Liaison team (PALS) at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals are now operating as a helpline and information service. This can be accessed by calling 0114 271 2400 or emailing sth.pals@nhs.net Monday-Friday and the team will try their best to help by liaising with the clinic on your behalf.