

## Helicopter Transport of Patients - Procedures to be Followed

**Document Number** PD2005\_473

**Publication date** 21-Feb-2005

**Functional Sub group** Clinical/ Patient Services - Transport

**Summary** Outlines procedures to be used when requesting patient transport by helicopter.

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**Applies to** Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations - Non Declared, NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Dept of Health, Public Hospitals

**Distributed to** Public Health System, NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Department of Health, Public Hospitals

**Review date** 21-Feb-2010

**File No.** 6241

**Previous reference** 87/40

**Issue date** 18-Feb-1987

**Status** Active

### Director-General

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is **mandatory** for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, N.S.W.

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D. -	K. -		File No.: 6241
E. -	L. -		Circular No.: 87/40
F. -	M. -		Issued: 18 February, 1987
G. -	N. -		

Distributed in accordance with Circular List/s A,B,C,H & J.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN REQUESTING  
HELICOPTER TRANSPORT OF PATIENTS

Procedures have been standardised for requesting patient transport by helicopter. These will vary depending on whether the request is for a primary response or for secondary transport, and whether, the transport remains within the same region, or crosses regional boundaries.

Three aeromedical helicopter services have been given approval to undertake patient transport at the request of the Ambulance Service. These are:

- . The Helicopter Rescue Service of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia.
- . The National Safety Council of Australia (Victoria Division).
- . CareFlight.

1. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING PRIMARY RESPONSE BY HELICOPTER

- 1.1 Requests for helicopter primary response to rescue incidents and accidents may be initiated by Ambulance Officers, Police Officers and in particular circumstances by State Emergency Service Personnel. The Surf Life Saving Association may request helicopter response to incidents occurring along the coastal shores.
- 1.2 In the Sydney Metropolitan area the response shall be co-ordinated by the Police Duty Operations Inspector. This is designed to avoid duplication of helicopter response with inherent on site dangers.
- 1.3 In Illawarra, co-ordination is through the Regional Ambulance Co-ordination Centre.

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- 2.8. Regional Ambulance invoices referring hospital at standard Ambulance rate for inter-hospital transfer.

3. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING TRANS REGIONAL INTER HOSPITAL  
PATIENT TRANSPORT BY HELICOPTER.

- 3.1. Referring doctor/hospital obtains admission to admitting hospital.
- 3.2. Referring doctor/hospital requests Ambulance transport of patient through local Ambulance Control and states preference for helicopter.
- 3.3. Regional Ambulance Co-Ordination Centre passes request to Air Ambulance Control.
- 3.4. Air Ambulance Control confers with referring doctor to determine that helicopter transport is the most appropriate method under existing circumstances.
- 3.5. Having confirmed that helicopter transport is indicated, Air Ambulance Control requests the nearest, most appropriate helicopter, from among those operators approved to provide patient transport and requests helicopter transport.
- 3.6. Air Ambulance Control requests assurance from the helicopter operator that the proposed flight will be planned so that conditions requiring the declaration of a Mercy Flight are not anticipated.
- 3.7. Air Ambulance Control issues the selected helicopter operator with an Order Number, which is the authority to undertake the transport.
- 3.8. Air Ambulance Control confirms with Regional Co-Ordination Centre that helicopter transfer of patient has been requested.
- 3.9. Helicopter operator undertakes transport as requested, and invoices Air Ambulance in accordance with an agreed rate, for the use of the helicopter.
- 3.10. Air Ambulance invoices referring hospital at standard Ambulance rate for inter-hospital transfer.

G MESSITER  
Secretary