Fact Sheet for Clinicians

Patient Transport Decision Making Matrix

Where patient transport is required, the referring hospital must determine the most clinically appropriate mode of transport and level of assistance required with consideration to the patient's clinical condition and required medical intervention as specified below and in line with the Ambulance Transport and Handover Policy.

In some instances, ambulance may be the only suitable transport option.

Risk Level	Clinical Criteria	Modes of transport
Low	Patient can travel independently by road/air if: • Clinically stable and at low risk of deterioration in transit. • Independently mobile. • Able to sit comfortably with a seatbelt for the duration of transfer. • No cognitive impairment.	• Volunteer transport services. • Public transport. • Taxi services. • Commercial flight. • Commercial bus.
Medium	Patient can travel by road/air with assistance if: • Clinically stable and at medium risk of deterioration in transit. • Independently mobile over short distances with aids (e.g., crutches, walking stick / frame, wheelchair). • Able to sit comfortably with a seatbelt for the duration of transfer. • Light assistance (x1 person) with mobilisation and transfer is required at arrival and departure points. • Moderate to severe communication difficulties (e.g., vision, hearing, speech, limited English). • Severe to moderate cognitive impairment (e.g., Dementia).	• Access Cab. • Corporate Shuttle. • Patient escort.
High	Patient must travel in ambulance* by road/air with comprehensive assistance if: • High risk of clinical deterioration in transit. • Significant risk of harm to themselves or others. • High level of monitoring or intervention required in transit (e.g., ventilation, intravenous infusions). • Immobile and requires barouche in transit. • Highly infectious and presents a community risk which is unable to be mitigated through protective measures (e.g., application of wound dressing, patient education). • Heavy assistance (x2 persons +/- lifting aids) with mobilisation and transfer is required at arrival and departure points. **requirement to transport via ambulance must be reviewed by SAAS.*	• Ambulance (metropolitan and intrastate) • MedSTAR

Government of South Australia
SA Health