



Requesting Road-Based Transport for Mental Health Patients Subject to Transport Orders Policy

1. Purpose

This Policy sets out the provisions for requesting road-based transport for mental health patients who are subject to a transport order (e.g. a *Form 4A Transport Order* or *Form 7D Apprehension and Return Order*) under the *Mental Health Act 2014* and require road-based Inter Hospital Patient Transport (IHPT) between public health service facilities, or road-based transport from a hospital or community location to a public health service facility.

This Policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Mental Health Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This Policy supersedes Operational Directives:

- OD 0659/16 *Mandatory providers of road based patient transport services for individuals in metropolitan Perth under formal Transport Orders under the Mental Health Act 2014 (Form 4A)*; and
- OD 0664/16 *Requesting Police Assistance for Transport under the Mental Health Act 2014*.

2. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to Health Service Provider staff members who are involved with the authorisation and coordination of transport orders made under the *Mental Health Act 2014*; and provides direction regarding how road-based transfers of mental health patients subject to transport orders must be arranged within or between the following:

- Child and Adolescent Health Service.
- East Metropolitan Health Service.
- North Metropolitan Health Service.
- South Metropolitan Health Service.
- WA Country Health Service to the extent that a Transport Officer service is available locally to carry out road-based transport.

3. Policy requirements

In implementing this Policy, the following must be considered:

- The assessment of the transport risk for a patient subject to an involuntary assessment or treatment order made under the *Mental Health Act 2014* must consider whether the patient can be transported without a transport order (and hence, without the use of Transport Officers or WA Police Force). Transport options to be considered include, but are not limited to, engaging family or friends to assist with transport, or clinicians transporting a patient using a fleet vehicle. Public health service facilities must comply with local policies and protocols when transporting patients without a Transport Order.
- Authorised persons cannot make transport orders unless satisfied that no other safe means of taking the person is reasonably available (*Mental Health Act 2014* s.29(2)(b)).
- A person-centred¹, recovery-oriented², culturally competent³, and trauma-informed⁴ approach must be used to reduce the risk of restrictive practices and trauma for patients during transport, as well as to maximise patient and staff member safety.

The principles and practices set out in the following must be considered in making road-based transport arrangements for mental health patients subject to a transport order:

- a) The [National Standards for Mental Health Services](#), particularly standard 1.9, 'The Mental Health Service upholds the right of the consumer to be treated in the least restrictive environment to the extent that it does not impose serious risk to the consumer or others', and standard 2.2, 'The Mental Health Service reduces and where possible eliminates the use of restraint and seclusion in all Mental Health Service settings'.
- b) The [Chief Psychiatrist's Standards for Clinical Care](#), particularly the 'Transfer of Care' and 'Seclusion and Bodily Restraint Reduction' standards.
- c) The *Mental Health Act 2014*.

3.1 Transport Officers

Where available, use of Transport Officers for road-based transport under transport orders is mandated for Health Service Providers.

Health Service Providers must provide staff members with current information regarding the contact details, hours of operation, and protocols for requesting road-based transport services.

¹ Standard 2, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. 2nd ed. Sydney: ACSQHC; 2017.

² Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. A national framework for recovery-oriented mental health services: Guide for practitioners and providers. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia; 2013.

³ Standard 1.21 and 1.33, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. 2nd ed. Sydney: ACSQHC; 2017.

⁴ Bateman, J and Henderson, C (2013) Trauma-Informed Care and Practice: Towards a cultural shift in policy reform across mental health and human services in Australia - a national strategic direction. Mental Health Coordinating Council.

3.2 WA Police Force

The authorised person issuing a transport order must minimise use of WA Police Force (as the unnecessary attendance of uniformed police officers can exacerbate the distress and stigma experienced by patients and their family, friends and carers).

When Transport Officers are available, the use of WA Police Force to assist in the road-based transport of mental health patients subject to a transport order is the least preferred option.

WA Police Force assistance must only be requested when the patient continues to pose a significant imminent risk of harm to themselves or to another person after the application of appropriate clinical management strategies to mitigate significant transport risks. Requesting public health service facilities must manage identified transport risks while awaiting attendance by WA Police Force.

Where available, Transport Officers must be contacted prior to requesting WA Police Force assistance with road-based transport under transport orders.

Health Service Providers must provide staff members with current information regarding the contact details and protocols for requesting WA Police Force assistance for road-based transport under transport orders.

3.3 Transport Risk Rating

The likelihood and consequences of any clinical risks occurring during road-based transport must be assessed based on clinical assessment of the mental health patient; and must consider the impact of any clinical interventions aimed at alleviating the transport risk, particularly the mental health patient's risk of causing harm to self or others.

Health Service Providers must collaborate to develop and make available to all public health service facilities a form (or, if needed, forms) for mental health patient transport risk rating (referred to in the rest of this document as the *Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form(s)*). The form(s) must align with the terms and conditions of any relevant Transport Officer contract(s) and relevant WA Police Force policies and protocols; and support consistency in:

- a) Decision-making when making road-based transport arrangements for mental health patients who are subject to a transport order.
- b) Facilitating effective communication and handover of transport risks between public health service facilities, Transport Officers and, when necessary, WA Police Force.

3.4 Protocols for using the Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form(s)

a) At time of issuing an order:

Transport Order (Form 4A): To request transport for a mental health patient who is subject to a Transport Order (Form 4A), a *Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form* must be completed. The requesting staff member must determine bed

availability at the destination service via local protocols before requesting road-based transport by Transport Officers or WA Police Force assistance.

Apprehension and Return Order (Form 7D): When issuing an Apprehension and Return Order (Form 7D), a *Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form* and, if relevant, a WA Police Force *Missing Person Form* must be completed.

b) At time of requesting transport:

Where available, Transport Officers must be contacted prior to requesting WA Police Force assistance with road-based transport under transport orders. WA Police Force will work in cooperation with the transport service. Requesting public health service facilities must provide Transport Officers and (if applicable) WA Police Force with a copy of the transport order, the *Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form* and, if relevant, a WA Police Force *Missing Person Form*. Transmission of these forms must be secured in accordance with relevant Department of Health and local policies and protocols.

c) At time of carrying out transport:

When Transport Officers carry out a transport order, they must receive handover from the requesting public health service facility, including the completed *Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form*.

3.5 Transport Officer hours of operation

In areas where Transport Officers are only available during specific hours, public health service facilities may make bookings outside the operational hours. Transport Officers will action bookings during operational hours.

3.6 Cost of Transportation Service

The requesting public health service facility must cover the cost of the transportation service. Private health services that request Transport Officer services will be invoiced directly.

4. Compliance monitoring

Health Service Providers are responsible for monitoring compliance with this Policy.

The System Manager may source information to evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy from Health Service Providers, the Department of Health's Purchasing and Contracting unit and WA Police Force from time to time.

5. Related documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this Policy:

- [Transport Order \(Form 4A\) \(WA Health staff only\)](#)
- [Apprehension and Return Order \(Form 7D\) \(WA Health staff only\)](#)

6. Supporting information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this Policy:

- N/A.

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this Policy.

Term	Definition
Transport Officer	A person authorised to carry out a transport order made under the <i>Mental Health Act 2014</i> .
Transport Order (Form 4A)	An authorised person can make a Transport Order (Form 4A) under the <i>Mental Health Act 2014</i> if satisfied that a mental health patient needs to be taken to the authorised hospital or other place and no other safe means of taking the person is reasonably available.
Apprehension and Return Order (Form 7D)	An authorised person may make an Apprehension and Return Order (Form 7D) under the <i>Mental Health Act 2014</i> in respect of a mental health patient who is absent without leave from the hospital or other place if satisfied that no other safe means of ensuring that the person returns to the hospital or other place is reasonably available.

8. Policy contact

Enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to:

Title: Program Manager, Mental Health Unit
Directorate: Governance and System Support
Email: mhu@health.wa.gov.au

9. Document control

Version	Effective from	Review Date	Amendment(s)
MP0063/17	9 August 2017	August 2020	Original version
MP0063/17 v.1.1	6 September 2017	August 2020	Update to broken link
MP0063/17 v.1.2	29 May 2019	August 2020	Minor Amendment – Fixed Broken Links
MP0063/17 v.1.3	19 December 2019	August 2020	Minor Amendment – Fixed Broken Links and formatted Policy on to latest template
MP0063/17 v.2.0	29 July 2020	August 2023	Major Amendment details summarised below
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title changed to emphasise applicability to road-based transport, noting policy scope excludes air transport.• Section 2.0: Applicability amended to expand scope to include WACHS where applicable.			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3.0: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reworded to emphasise least restrictive care and minimising stigma. ○ Contractor names and references to contractors removed. ○ Guidance regarding how and when to request Transport Officers and WA Police Force amended to align with guidance from key stakeholders. ○ Health Service Providers now responsible for providing public health service facilities with <i>Mental Health Patient Transport Risk Rating Form(s)</i> and information about requesting services from Transport Officers and WA Police Force. ○ Transport Officers able to enact Apprehension and Return Orders (Form 7D) under the <i>Mental Health Act 2014</i>. • Section 4.0: Compliance monitoring amended to align to system manager role. • Section 5.0: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Apprehension & Return Order (Form 7D)</i> added. ○ <i>Mental Health Transport Risk Assessment Form</i> removed. • Section 6.0: The following documents have been removed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chief Psychiatrist's Standard: Seclusion and Bodily Restraint Reduction ○ National Standards for Mental Health Services Standard 2.2 ○ Provision of Road Based Non-Emergency Inter Hospital Patient Transport Contract information (HCN) Mental Health Patient Transport Service Booking Reference Guide 			
MP0063/17 v.2.1	23 August 2023	August 2023	Amendment as listed below.
Policy contact updated from Patient Safety and Clinical Quality Directorate to Governance and System Support Directorate due to the Mental Health Unit transferring from the Clinical Excellence Division to the Strategy and Governance Division.			

10. Approval

Approval by	Dr David Russell-Weisz, Director General, Department of Health
Approval date	27 July 2017

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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