

---

# Appendix five – Types of patient transport operational across New South Wales

Across New South Wales, various kinds of emergency and non-emergency patient transport are provided by NSW Ambulance and other NSW Health entities, which are described below.

**Emergency transport:** Under the Service Agreement between the Ministry of Health and NSW Ambulance, NSW Ambulance is responsible for the provision of emergency services, described as ‘...transport and retrieval services for emergency and time sensitive patients,’ which sees patients transported to hospital emergency departments.

**Non-emergency patient transport:** the Service Agreement between the Ministry of Health and NSW Ambulance includes ‘Health Transport Services’ as a purchased service, which requires NSW Ambulance to work with HealthShare NSW and Local Health Districts in reducing reliance on the emergency fleet for non-emergency patient transport in regional and rural New South Wales. HealthShare describes Patient Transport Service on its website as providing low-acuity transports for patients requiring transport to, or from a health facility such as a hospital or rehabilitation unit not requiring a time-critical emergency ambulance. In New South Wales, non-emergency patient transport is delivered by NSW Ambulance, Local Health Districts and HealthShare.

**Interhospital transfers:** NSW Ambulance has a Service Level Agreement with each Local Health District in New South Wales to provide interhospital patient transport. The Service Level Agreement defines interhospital service as the ‘provision of ambulance services to patients from a public hospital to another public hospital.’ Local Health Districts with patient transport fleets in place can also complete interhospital patient transfers.

**Transport of involuntary patients under the *Mental Health Act 2007*:** If an ambulance officer believes on reasonable grounds that a person is mentally ill or mentally disordered as defined under the *Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)*, and that it would be beneficial for their welfare to be dealt with under that Act, they can take that person to a public mental health facility for the purpose of a mental health assessment. A person detained under the *Mental Health Act* may only be taken to, detained, assessed and involuntarily treated in a declared mental health facility, unless they require treatment for a non-mental health condition.

Because resources across all mental health services vary and fluctuate, particularly in rural and remote areas. NSW Health staff, paramedics, and police officers are authorised to provide transport for patients who are being managed in a smaller rural hospital and require transfer to a larger hospital for definitive treatment. Where transport is provided by NSW Ambulance, it is managed as an interhospital patient transfer.