

Adult Passenger Transport provided by Adult Social Care and Health – Eligibility Policy

Background

The current policy for the provision of local councils' Adult Social Care services is aimed at promoting the maximum possible independence for the person who uses social care services. In extending this principle to councils' provision of transport services, this proposed policy sets the criteria that will be used to assess when the service user's transport needs can be met best through independent travel arrangements or whether council-provided transport services continue to be necessary.

Principles

In general, this Policy is based on the assumption that people who use social care services will travel independently to take advantage of care provision, except where assessment shows that this is not possible, and is based on the following principles:

- The provision/funding for transport should only be considered if the client requires a comprehensive support package to meet eligible needs in accordance with the Council's Eligibility Criteria.
- Use of transport services should be based on the need to promote independence and to support service users to remain independently in their home for as long as possible.
- Individuals who are assessed and successfully supported will only travel independently if the Council considers it is completely safe for them to do so.
- Transport is provided to enable clients to access a range of community activities/respite and where parents/carers are unable to provide their own transport.
- The assessment of need for transport provision by the Council will be a separate element in the community care assessment; i.e. provision relates to a user's needs, not to the nature of the service they are receiving.
- The assessment will consider what would happen if the Council did not provide transport, for example, are there other ways in which the person can reasonably be expected to attend day opportunities making their own arrangements to get there.

Process

There are 4 stages in the process for assessment of eligibility for the provision of assistance with transport and the identification of appropriate transport as follows:

- Access to existing transport;
- Assessment of mobility;
- Assessment of ability to travel independently;
- Identification of appropriate transport provision for those eligible.

Stage 1: Access to existing transport

Clients will not normally be eligible for transport if:

- They have a mobility vehicle which they drive themselves. In this instance there will be consideration of whether it is reasonable to expect that the service user will use that vehicle in order to travel to the location of the care service/activity.
- They have a mobility vehicle of which they are not normally the driver themselves.

Similarly, there will be consideration of whether it is reasonable to expect that the service user will use that vehicle in order to travel to the location of the care service/activity.

Clients will also not normally be eligible for transport if:

- They have a Freedom Pass (and a reasonable public transport route is available), and have been assessed at Stage 3 as capable of independent travel
- They receive the Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, and:
- this can adequately meet the cost of travel to meet their assessed social care needs;
- they have been assessed at Stage 3 as capable of independent travel.

Stage 2: Assessment of mobility

An assessment will be made of the client's mobility. This will involve assessing issues such as:

- Ability to walk outside (including slippery/icy weather conditions);
- Requirement for wheelchair/ other walking aid;
- Ability to get in and out of property;
- Ability to get in and out of vehicle;
- Risk of falling without support;
- Ability to bear weight to transfer;
- Whether mobile but at a risk when mobilizing due to uncontrollable movements;
- Ability to use stairs, manage gradients, steepness of stairs in home, safety, energy levels.

Clients will be categorized for this purpose as follows:

- No mobility problems;
- Limited mobility problems;
- High/ complex mobility problems.

Some clients may need a weather plan put in place to ensure their safety during harsh or icy weather conditions.

Stage 3: Assessment of ability to travel independently

This assessment considers both physical and social reasons that enable or prevent the client from travelling independently. This will include:

- Extent of the mobility problems identified in Stage 2;
- Availability of family/carers;
- Communication difficulties (for example ability to order taxi or use public transport);
- Psychological factors e.g. mental health, loss of confidence, agoraphobia;
- Experience or risk of harassment;
- Any other factors affecting personal safety.

The assessor will determine whether the client:

- Is capable of travelling independently;
- Requires some training, support or assistance that will enable them to be capable of travelling independently in the near future;
- Not capable of travelling independently

Stages 1 to 3 will determine the eligibility of the client for some form of transport or transport assistance. Assuming the client is eligible under Stage 1 (access to existing transport) then the eligibility will be determined as follows:

		Mobility problems		
		None	Low	High/complex
Capable of Independent travel	Yes	Not eligible Use public transport Walk if more than 1km Use concessionary pass	Not eligible Use public transport Walk if more than 1km Use concessionary pass	Eligible May require door to door service
	Potentially	Eligible Directly-provided transport if no other suitable option	Eligible Directly-provided transport if no other suitable option as last resort	Eligible May require door to door service
	No	Eligible Designated pick-up points near home	Eligible Designated pick-up points near home	Eligible Requires door to door service

Stage 4: Identification of appropriate transport

Once eligibility has been assessed following the table above, it will be the duty of Adult Social Care services to make appropriate arrangements for transport. Directly provided transport services - whether internal or external - will be provided only once other alternatives have been considered and ruled out and not as a matter of course.

The range of provision includes:

- Assistance with using public transport, such as escorts
- Independent travel - provision of independent travel training where it is likely that this would resolve the client's need
- Existing taxi journey - shared with other clients
- Taxi service - solely for the use of the client
- Transport in council vehicles, for example minibuses

The assessment and provision of transport should be reviewed on a pre-determined basis, for example at the annual review. Where clients move from Children's to Adult Social Care services, then their needs will be reassessed by Adult Social Care services in relation to the new services required.

July 2015