

## Ambulance Services to Pensioners and Other Special Needs Groups in NSW

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**Functional Sub group** Corporate Administration - Fees  
Clinical/ Patient Services - Transport

**Summary** Specifies categories of NSW residents able to receive free ambulance services within NSW. Main difference from previously issued policy is that Department of Veterans' Affairs Repatriation Health Card Holders no longer receive free ambulance services with the Department of Veterans' Affairs meeting such transport on a full cost recovery basis.

**Replaces Doc. No.** Ambulance Transport - Pensioners and Others for Free [PD2005\_516]

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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, Affiliated Health Organisations - Declared, Public Health System Support Division, NSW Ambulance Service, Public Hospitals

**Audience** Administration, clinical and nursing

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

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**Director-General**

**Compliance with this policy directive is mandatory.**

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## PROVISION OF AMBULANCE SERVICES TO PENSIONER AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

This Policy Directive replaces Policy Directive PD2005\_516 (Circular 82/5) *“Recognition of Pensioners and Others for Free Ambulance Transport”*.

### 1. Pensioner, Health Care and Commonwealth Seniors Concession Cardholders

All NSW residents who are holders of current Pensioner Concession Cards, Health Care Concession Cards and Commonwealth Seniors Concession Cards will continue to receive free ambulance services within the States borders.

### 2. Department of Veterans Affairs Repatriation Health Cardholders

NSW residents who hold a Department of Veterans Affairs Repatriation Health Card – For all Conditions and some individuals who hold a Repatriation Health Card – For Specific Conditions will **no longer** be entitled to receive free ambulance services from the Ambulance Service of NSW. **This applies irrespective of whether the individual is also a holder of a current Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Concession Card or Commonwealth Seniors Concession Card.**

The Commonwealth Department of Veterans’ Affairs has financial responsibility for emergency ambulance and medically necessary non-emergency ambulance services provided to Veterans benefit card holders. This change brings NSW arrangements in line with other States and Territories.

### 1. Special Needs Groups

The following NSW special needs groups will continue to be provided with free ambulance services within the States borders;

- Wards of the State and others for whom the responsible Minister is providing financial assistance for their care, and those persons requiring inpatient treatment at a public hospital as a result of:
  - a sexual assault, or
  - victims of domestic violence and child abuse where the invoicing of patients for the provision of ambulance services could be detrimental to their well-being.

### 2. Cross Border Repatriation

The provision of free ambulance services does not extend to those who wish to be repatriated to a recognised health facility in NSW, from a recognised interstate health facility, purely to be closer to family and friends. The cost of this category of transport is the responsibility of the concession recipient or the Government Agency.

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*Title: Provision of Ambulance Services to Pensioner and Other Special Needs Groups in New South Wales*

### **3. Authorisation**

Decisions to use an ambulance for cases that are not emergencies should be made on the basis of medical need and should not be influenced by whether or not patients qualify for free ambulance services. The only persons within the NSW hospital system, entitled to warrant a patient for movement by ASNSW, is a registered medical practitioner.

Robyn Kruk  
**Director General**