

## Ambulance Service Charges

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

**Summary** Ambulance Service charges, including charges for primary services and inter-hospital services.

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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, NSW Ambulance Service, Public Hospitals

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### Director-General

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is **mandatory** for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.

## AMBULANCE SERVICE CHARGES

Charges, including Inter Hospital Charges payable by Area Health Services under the Ambulance Partnership Agreement, are effective on and from 1 July 2009.

1 In this policy directive:

- **“primary emergency service”** means the provision of ambulance services by road ambulance, fixed wing aircraft or helicopter or a combination of these, from the scene of an accident, illness or injury to a public hospital or other destination nominated by the Ambulance Service of NSW.
- **“primary non-emergency service”** means an ambulance road service that is booked no later than 6pm on the day prior to service delivery with the Service to commence and be completed between the hours of 8am and 6pm on the nominated service delivery date, otherwise the primary emergency service charge will apply. [All services provided by a dedicated Patient Transport vehicle, where available, irrespective of time of booking or time of transport, are classified as “non-emergency services”.]
- **“inter-hospital emergency service”** means the provision of ambulance services by road ambulance, fixed wing aircraft or helicopter or a combination of these, from one public hospital to another public hospital.
- **“inter-hospital non-emergency service”** means an ambulance road service that is booked no later than 6pm on the day prior to service delivery with the service to commence and be completed between the hours of 8am and 6pm on the nominated service delivery date, otherwise the inter-hospital emergency service charge will apply. [All services provided by a dedicated Patient Transport vehicle, where available, irrespective of time of booking or time of transport, are classified as “non-emergency services”.]
- **“treat-not-transport service”** – means a service where a patient is provided with ambulance services at the scene of an accident, illness or injury and does not require ambulance transport to a health facility or any other destination.
- **“standby services”** – means a service where an ambulance or ambulances are required to stand by at scenes such as industrial accidents for the purpose of providing services to emergency workers or others at the scene of the incident. Neither transport nor treatment may be required.

### Fees

- 2 The fee for a **primary emergency service** by road ambulance and/or fixed wing ambulance and/or helicopter shall be charged on a kilometre basis calculated pursuant to clause 8, on the scale of \$301 callout, plus an additional charge of \$2.72 for each kilometre or part thereof, provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,938.

- 3 The fee for a **primary non-emergency service** by road ambulance shall be charged on a kilometre basis calculated pursuant to clause 8, on the scale of \$237 callout, plus an additional charge of \$1.47 for each kilometre or part thereof, provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,938.
- 4 The fee for an **inter-hospital emergency service** by ambulance shall be charged as follows:
- road ambulance - on a kilometre basis calculated pursuant to clause 8, on the scale of \$510 callout, plus an additional charge of \$5.09 for each kilometre or part thereof, provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,772.
  - fixed wing ambulance - on a kilometre basis calculated pursuant to clause 8, on the scale of \$3,143 callout, plus an additional charge of \$1.47 for each kilometre or part thereof (road travel associated with fixed wing cases is charged at the \$5.09 for each kilometre or part thereof), provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,772.
  - helicopter - on a time basis calculated pursuant to clause 9 on the scale of \$5,396 for the first thirty (30) minutes or part thereof, with any further period charged at a rate of \$118.09 per six (6) minutes or part thereof.

Charges for road or fixed wing transport under this clause shall be paid by the hospital or health service sending the person being transported. However in the case of helicopter transport under this clause, the transport fee shall be apportioned equally between the hospital or health service sending the person being transported and the hospital or health service receiving that person.

- 5 The fee for an **inter-hospital non-emergency service** by ambulance shall be charged as follows:-
- road ambulance - on a kilometre basis calculated pursuant to clause 8, on the scale of \$234 callout, plus an additional charge of \$1.44 for each kilometre or part thereof, provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,772.

Charges under this clause shall be paid by the hospital or health service sending the person being transported.

- 6 The fee for a **treat-not-transport service** shall be calculated in accordance with the primary emergency service fee scale (clause 2).
- 7 A **standby service** fee, payable by the owners of premises or vehicles involved in dangerous incidents or events where an ambulance is required to be present (for example at chemical spills or other industrial accidents), shall be calculated in accordance with:
- the primary emergency service fee scale (clause 2) for the first hour or part thereof (provided that such total fee shall not exceed \$4,938); and in addition
  - \$42.50 for every 15 minutes after the first hour.

Note that a treat-not-transport service provided by an Ambulance standby service is covered in the standby service fee provided the treatment is related to the event. However, the provision of a 'primary emergency service' emanating from a standby dangerous incident or event shall be deemed as such and a fee, calculated in accordance with Clause 2, applicable.

### Calculation of Transport Kilometres

- 8 The total number of kilometres for the provision of services by ambulance (or ambulances) shall be calculated by determining the total number of kilometres that are travelled by road or, in the case of transportation by fixed wing aircraft or helicopter, that would have been travelled by road had no fixed wing aircraft or helicopter been available, in accordance with the distance –
- (a) from the base ambulance station nearest to the location where the person was picked up/treated by ambulance, to that pick up/treatment location; and
  - (b) from that pick up location (where transport occurs), to the place where that person disembarked from the ambulance (or, where more than one ambulance was used in the transport, disembarked from the last ambulance used in that transport); and
  - (c) from that place of disembarkation/location of treatment, to the base ambulance station referred to in subclause (a).

### Calculation of Transport Time for Helicopters (Inter-hospital)

- 9 The number of minutes for **a service by helicopter (other than a primary response service)** shall be calculated from the time the helicopter engine or engines are turned on, or, if the engines are already on, the time at which the helicopter is dispatched by an air ambulance controller, to the time the helicopter engine or engines are turned off at the helicopter's operational base, or the time at which the helicopter is otherwise dispatched by an air ambulance controller or other authority.

### Charging Criteria

- 10 Where two or more persons are transported/treated concurrently by the same ambulance or ambulances, each person shall be charged a fee calculated in accordance with Clauses 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 as appropriate to that transport.
- 11 Clause 10 shall not apply when two or more persons are transferred concurrently by ambulance (or ambulances) between any public hospitals in New South Wales.
- 12 Ambulance attendances at sporting and recreational fixtures are to be on the basis of cost recovery. A treat-not-transport service provided by an Ambulance in attendance at sporting and recreational fixtures is covered in the attendance fee. However, in the case of the provision of a primary emergency service at sporting and recreational fixtures a fee shall be calculated in accordance with Clause 2.

- 13 Budget supplementation is **not** available to fund any increased costs resulting from this policy directive with such costs to be met from within existing allocations.
- 14 The above rates are applicable in relation to NSW ambulance services provided to Residents of NSW (Primary) and Public Hospitals in NSW (Inter-hospital).
- 15 Residents of other States or Territories, which are not a party to a Reciprocal Rights Agreement as to primary ambulance services (currently Queensland and South Australia do not have an agreement), shall be charged full cost recovery as follows:

Primary	Road		Fixed Wing Emergency	Helicopter Emergency
	Emergency	Non Emergency		
	\$'s	\$'s	\$'s	\$'s
Call-Out	590	237	590	590
Variable Rate	5.33	1.47	5.33	5.33
Max.Charge	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- 16 Ambulance Services are GST-free under section 38-10 of the GST Act where the service is provided to a person as part of their treatment. Ambulance Services deemed GST-free are as follows:
  - primary emergency service
  - primary non-emergency service
  - treat-not-transport service
- 17 Ambulance Services deemed a taxable supply (in which case current rates should be grossed up in accordance with Treasury Circular No.00/06) are as follows:
  - inter-hospital emergency service
  - inter-hospital non-emergency service
  - standby service
  - ambulance attendances at sporting and recreational fixtures