Guide to Retrievals and Bed-finding for Far West Local Health District Patients

NSW
GOVERNMENT

Guide to retrievals and bed-finding for Far West Local Health District (FWLHD)

Inter-hospital transfer/retrieval of patients in NSW is to be conducted according to the Policy Directives listed below:

- Critical Care Tertiary Referral Networks and Transfer of Care (ADULTS) PD2018_011
- Inter-facility Transfer Process for Adults Requiring Specialist Care PD2011_031.
- NSW Paediatric Clinical Care and Inter-hospital Transfer Arrangements PD2023_019.

Referral pathways and processes

FWLHD maintains preferential referral pathways to:

- South Australia (SA) for patients from Broken Hill and remote District facilities
- Victoria for patients from Wentworth and Balranald.

If SA cannot accommodate a NSW patient, a NSW destination must be sourced using the existing referral pathways detailed below.

FWLHD time urgent transfer/retrieval of adult patients (16 years and over).

Patient requiring urgent critical or urgent specialist care for a life or limb threatening condition where the required clinical care is outside the skillset or capabilities available in FWLHD.

Immediate response required (refer to Flowchart 1).

Referral pathways

Referral is to the Royal Adelaide Hospital (or an alternative SA hospital).

In the event this cannot be achieved within a clinically acceptable timeframe, referral is to:

- Westmead Hospital, Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) for **major trauma** patients
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney Local Health District (SLHD) for **non-trauma** patients.

A FWLHD adult patient requiring a time-urgent transfer/retrieval must be immediately referred to the NSW Ambulance Aeromedical Control Centre (ACC). FWLHD referral to the ACC is not to be delayed by waiting for further clinical information or bed-finding attempts.

The NSW ACC is responsible for bed finding and coordinating all FWLHD time urgent transfers/retrievals for adult patients (16 years and over) irrespective of destination (SA or NSW) and type of care required (critical or specialist care). This ensures FWLHD clinicians can provide care to the patient.

Role of the Virtual Intensive Care Unit (vICU) or remote Emergency Department (rED)

Bed-finding and patient transfer/retrieval must not be delayed by a request for a vICU or rED consult. A vICU/rED consult is not a prerequisite or a mandatory requirement for NSW ACC to conduct bed-finding and arrange transfer/retrieval.

When vICU/rED clinicians have been involved in the care of a FWLHD adult patient, a three-way conference call to discuss the patient's clinical condition will occur prior to bed-finding. This will be coordinated by the FWLHD referring clinician and will include vICU/rED and NSW ACC clinicians. Note vICU/rED clinicians do not have a role in bed-finding.

Once the NSW ACC have located a bed at an accepting hospital, a three-way conference call coordinated by the NSW ACC clinician with the FWLHD referring clinician and the receiving clinician at the intended destination will occur.

Governance

FWLHD maintains clinical responsibility for patients located within their facilities. ACC will confer with FWLHD and vICU/rED to determine who will provide clinical support to FWLHD while the patient awaits arrival of the transfer/retrieval team.

When the retrieval team arrives at the bedside, they take over care and assume clinical responsibility of the patient.

Escalation of issues related to the time-urgent transfer/retrieval of an adult patient

The FWLHD treating doctor or site/nurse manager must contact:

1. NSW Retrieval Consultant via the NSW ACC on 1800 650 004
2. In-hours: FWLHD Executive Director – Medical Services (EDMS)
3. After-hours: FWLHD Executive On-Call.

The NSW ACC Retrieval Consultant will escalate the issue if required to:

1. The designated contact in South Australia Health (Executive Director, Health Services Programs on 0488 548 021)
2. The Executive Director, NSW Ambulance Aeromedical Control Centre.

If there is a difference of opinion regarding the urgency of transfer/retrieval between the FWLHD treating team and the NSW Retrieval Consultant, the FWLHD Executive will discuss this with the NSW ACC Retrieval Consultant.

If further escalation is required:

1. The FWLHD Executive will contact the FWLHD Chief Executive (CE)
2. If required, the FWLHD CE will contact the NSW Ambulance (NSWA) CE
3. If required, FWLHD CE will contact the Deputy Secretary, System Sustainability and Performance, NSW Ministry of Health.

FWLHD non time urgent transfer of adult patients (16 years and over)

Patient with an urgent but not immediately life or limb threatening condition where FWLHD can only provide temporary stabilisation and management.

Patient with an acute but not urgent condition needing access to higher acuity care not available in FWLHD.

Patient being transferred for a non-urgent planned procedure, treatment or appointment.

The timeframe by which the patient should receive higher acuity care is agreed between the referring and receiving clinicians (refer to Flowchart 2).

Referral pathways

Referral is to the Royal Adelaide Hospital (or an alternative SA Hospital).

In the event this cannot be achieved within a clinically acceptable timeframe, the referral is to:

- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, SLHD **non-trauma patients**
- Westmead Hospital, Western Sydney Local Health District **major trauma service**
- Nepean Hospital, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD) **regional trauma service**
- Orange Health Service, Western NSW Local Health District (WNSWLHD) **regional trauma service.**

Once a transfer destination is confirmed, FWLHD will contact the NSW ACC to arrange the transfer of the patient to the accepting hospital.

Escalation of issues related to the non time urgent transfer of an adult patient

The FWLHD treating doctor or site/nurse manager must contact the FWLHD Executive Director Medical Services (EDMS) during daytime hours on weekdays, weekends and public holidays.

If the patient's condition deteriorates requiring a time urgent transfer, immediately refer to Flowchart 1: FWLHD time urgent transfer of an adult patient (16 years and over).

Paediatric patients (under 16 years)

Patient referral is in accordance with the FWLHD Guideline Paediatrics –NETS and FWLHD – Inter-facility Retrievals and Transfers of Paediatric Patients Referred from FWLHD.

Contact numbers

Organisation	Contact
NSW contact numbers	
NSW Ambulance Aeromedical Control Centre (ACC)	NSW Adult State Retrieval Consultant 1800 650 004
NSW Ministry of Health	Executive On call 0459 897 716
Nepean Blue Mountains LHD – Nepean Hospital	Clinical Coordination HUB 0437 320 151
Sydney LHD – Royal Prince Alfred Hospital	Royal Prince Alfred Bed Manager 0425 262 558
Western NSW LHD vCare	Western NSW LHD Patient Flow 1800 492 227
Western Sydney LHD – Westmead Hospital	Westmead Hospital, Trauma Consultant on Call Contact via switch: (02) 8890 5555
Newborn Emergency Transport Service (NETS)	Contact: 1300 362 500
South Australian contact numbers	
South Australia Health	Executive Director, Health Services Programs, South Australia Health 0488 548 021
Royal Adelaide Hospital	Contact via switch: (08) 7074 0000
Adelaide Women's and Children's Hospital	Contact via switch: (08) 8161 7000
Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide	Contact via switch: (08) 8204 5511

Flowchart 1. FWLHD time urgent transfer/retrevial of an adult patient (16 years and over)
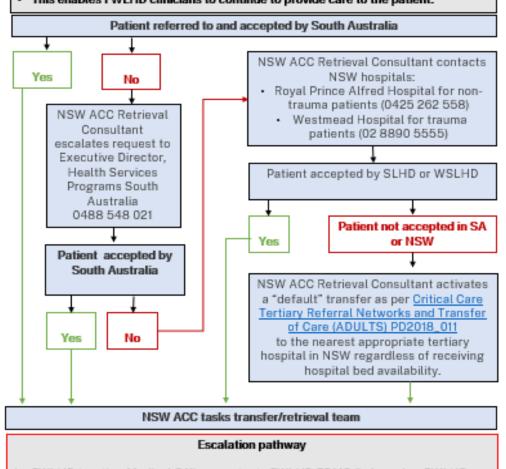
FWLHD time urgent transfer/retrieval of an adult patient (16 years and over)

Patient requiring urgent critical or urgent specialist care for a life or limb threatening condition where the required clinical care is outside the skillset or capabilities available in FWLHD.

Immediate response required

FWLHD Treating Medical Officer contacts the NSW Ambulance Aeromedical Control Centre (ACC) Retrieval Consultant on 1800 650 004

- FWLHD Medical Officer and NSW ACC Consultant discuss clinical situation and determine transfer priority.
- FWLHD Medical Officer advises FWLHD Patient Flow Manager or Nurse/Site Manager of pending transfer.
- **The FWLHD referral call to the NSW ACC is one phone call.**
- **The NSW ACC are then responsible for bed finding and coordinating the transfer/retrieval.**
- **This enables FWLHD clinicians to continue to provide care to the patient.**

Patient referred to and accepted by South Australia

Yes | **No**

NSW ACC Retrieval Consultant escalates request to Executive Director, Health Services Programs South Australia 0488 548 021

Patient accepted by South Australia

Yes | **No**

NSW ACC Retrieval Consultant contacts NSW hospitals:
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital for non-trauma patients (0425 262 558)
- Westmead Hospital for trauma patients (02 8890 5555)

Patient accepted by SLHD or WSLHD

Yes

Patient not accepted in SA or NSW

NSW ACC Retrieval Consultant activates a "default" transfer as per Critical Care Tertiary Referral Networks and Transfer of Care (ADULTS) PD2018_011 to the nearest appropriate tertiary hospital in NSW regardless of receiving hospital bed availability.

NSW ACC tasks transfer/retrieval team

Escalation pathway

1. FWLHD treating Medical Officer contacts FWLHD EDMS (in hours) or FWLHD Executive on call (after hours).
2. If required FWLHD Executive will contact the FWLHD Chief Executive (CE).
3. If required FWLHD CE will contact the NSW Ambulance CE.
4. If required FWLHD CE will contact the Deputy Secretary, System Sustainability and Performance.

- FWLHD maintains clinical responsibility for patients located within their facilities.
- NSW ACC will confer with FWLHD and vICU/rED to determine who will provide clinical support to FWLHD while the patient awaits arrival of the transfer/retrieval team.

Flowchart 2: FWLHD non time urgent transfer of an adult patient (16 years and over)

FWLHD non time urgent transfer of an adult patient (16 years and over)

Patient with an urgent but not immediately life or limb threatening condition where FWLHD can only provide temporary stabilisation and management.

Patient with an acute but not urgent condition needing access to higher acuity care not available in FWLHD.

Patient being transferred for a non-urgent planned procedure, treatment or appointment.

The timeframe by which the patient should receive higher acuity care is agreed between the referring and receiving clinicians .

FWLHD Treating Medical Officer contacts the Royal Adelaide Hospital on 08 7074 000 (or alternative South Australian hospital)
- FWLHD Treating Medical Officer to discuss clinical situation, determine transfer priority and request a bed.
- FWLHD Medical Officer advises Patient Flow Manager or Nurse/Site Manager of pending transfer.

Patient referred to and accepted by South Australia

Yes

No

FWLHD Treating Medical Officer contacts NSW hospitals.
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital for non-trauma patients (0425 262 558)
- Western NSW LHD (1800 492 227) or Nepean Hospital (0437 320 151) or Westmead Hospital (02 8890 5555) for trauma patients.
- FWLHD Treating Medical Officer to discuss clinical situation, determine transfer priority and request a bed.
- FWLHD Treating Medical Officer to advise Patient Flow Manager or Nurse/Site Manager of pending transfer.

If patient clinically deteriorates whilst waiting for transfer, the FWLHD Treating Medical Officer will urgently reassess the patient and escalate to a time urgent transfer if required. (Refer to Pathway 1 – Time urgent transfer/retrieval).

Patient accepted by NSW

Yes

Patient not accepted in SA or NSW

FWLHD Treating Medical Officer contacts ACC to arrange transfer

Escalation pathway

1. FWLHD treating Medical Officer contacts FWLHD EDMS (in hours) or FWLHD Executive on call (after hours).
2. If the patient's condition deteriorates requiring time urgent transfer/retrieval, the time urgent transfer/retrieval pathway should be followed with immediate referral to ACC to facilitate bed-finding and transfer/retrieval (see Flowchart 1).