

# Policy and Procedures

**Title:** Transport Policy

**Date:** 22nd May 2023

**Document Control Register Number:** P025

**Summary:** The BACHS Transport Policy outlines the provision of transport services provided by BACHS to patients and their carer's. The policy also outlines transport services that BACHS will provide other than that of transport services for patients to medical appointments.

**New**

**Classification:** Corporate

**Functional Group:** Transport

**Endorsement Date:**

**Publication Date:** 13th April 2023

**Next Review Date:** 13th April 2025

**Applies to:** All BACHS staff

**National Standard that this P&P applies to:**

**Approved by:** BACHS Board

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## 1. PURPOSE

The Patient and Other Transport Policy defines the scope and processes by which BACHS may provide or coordinate transport services to BACHS' patients and their carers.

BACHS as an organisation believes the provision of transport is integral to providing quality health care to the community and allowing access to services necessary to ensuring best possible health outcomes.

As BACHS is not the sole provider of transport for the community, coordination with other providers (such as the NSW Government) should be undertaken to supplement BACHS' Transport Policy and to provide adequate flexibility and frequency of travel and enable travel to other destinations such as Sydney.

## 2. SCOPE

The primary scope of the service is the provision of transport for:

- Health related transport within the Bourke Shire to attend BACHS' clinic for an appointment;
- Aboriginal community members residing in Bourke Shire who need to attend a medical related appointment or receive a medical service outside of Bourke e.g. Dubbo (Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS) and Integrated Team Care (ITC) eligible patients);
- One carer of the patient provided such can be verified as necessary to the Patient's well-being; and
- Transport assistance required within the Bourke Shire for community events deemed suitable after a written request and approval from the CEO including major community events such as NAIDOC Week.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

The BACHS Transport Policy is based on the following guiding principles. Employees and patients are expected to adhere to these principles:

- Assist patients to coordinate travel and appointments;
- Assist patients to arrange travel needs where travel is beyond Dubbo;
- Maintain a safe mode of travel and in a culturally appropriate manner;
- Be fair and equitable in dealings with patients;

- Communicate with patients in a clear manner in which they will understand; and
- Provide transport where feasible, but where the date or time or destination is unable to be satisfied by BACHS, assist the patient with other transport providers to meet their needs.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY FOR BACHS TRANSPORT SERVICES

To be eligible for BACHS' Transport out of Bourke the patient must:

- Be a patient of BACHS and a living within the Bourke Shire
- Hold a completed IPTAAS form and/or a completed ITC referral form
- Hold a referral form or a letter from the referring Doctor
- Have a proven medical appointment

## 5. DESTINATIONS SERVICED

BACHS will provide or facilitate transport services to or within:

- Bourke Shire
- Dubbo
- Orange
- Sydney

BACHS shall provide the service to Dubbo whilst travel to other destinations will be provided by other transport providers, although arranged by BACHS where possible.

The destinations may alter from time to time based on demand and BACHS resources.

Any travel requirements beyond these destination will be managed on a case by case basis, although as a principle, travel to destinations other than those listed above is the responsibility of the patients and treating medical facility/Doctor or allied health provider.

## 6. DAYS OF TRAVEL

BACHS Transport services will operate same day return services to/from Dubbo each Tuesday and Thursday weekdays, excluding public holidays and the times which BACHS is closed down over the Christmas and New Year period.

Specialist appointments in Dubbo will be booked on either a Tuesday or Thursday. If an appointment is booked outside of those days, alternative arrangements for travel will be sought, including the Transport NSW bus service.

Changes to days of travel are to be posted on BACHS social media platforms and physical posters placed at BACHS reception area. Where dates changes before a booked departure, all patients are to be contacted to inform them of changes to travel.

Services to other destinations will be arranged on an as needed basis and should be managed through the booking process and considering the degree of urgency and availability of appointments/service provision. BACHS will endeavour to meet patient's medical schedules.

## **7. BOOKING OF TRANSPORT**

All transport is booked through BACHS patient booking system on the Communicare system. Transport is booked by BACHS reception at time of booking appointments.

BACHS will inform patients of their need to book and to ensure they show up for the travel. This will be communicated to patients at the time of the appointment being made and then patients will be reminded of this transport to appointments 24 hours prior to the appointment taking place by telephone. Details such as place for pick up, drop off and any associated accommodation arrangements will also be clearly communicated.

BACHS must maintain and coordinate such bookings with the patient and their specialist or allied health provider.

## **8. DEPARTURE AND DROP OFFS**

Departures for Dubbo transport on Tuesday and Thursday will be from a patients home the morning of the travel. Patients will be informed of their travel arrangements at least 24 hours before transport will happen.

Patients will be dropped off at their medical appointment or accommodation.

Return travel will drop patients off at their home or a requested location within Bourke.

Where BACHS is not delivering the service, patients must be informed of the departure and drop off details that have been arranged by BACHS.

## 9. CANCELLATION AND CHANGES

BACHS will endeavour to inform patients at least 24 hours before travel if the service is unable to operate.

Patients must inform BACHS if they are unable to travel as scheduled at least 24 hours before travel.

## 10. VEHICLE TYPES AND USE

BACHS will utilise the most appropriate vehicle to transport patients. The choice of vehicle utilised is based on efficiency, cost and number of persons travelling. It's in BACHS sole discretion to designate which vehicle is used.

## 11. OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION

### **i. Dubbo**

Patients who are eligible for overnight accommodation (through either IPTAAS or ITC funding) will have their accommodation arranged by BACHS. Transport to accommodation will be provided by BACHS if the travel and accommodation arrangements fall on an appropriate day of travel to Dubbo (Tuesday or Thursday). BACHS will endeavour to provide transport to Dubbo but if this is unavailable alternative arrangements will be made. This will include utilising the Transport NSW Coach Service from Bourke to Dubbo. Under IPTAAS and ITC, some patients who can drive may also be eligible for fuel to travel to appointments. These arrangements will be made by BACHS.

If IPTAAS or ITC funding doesn't not apply, patients must arrange their own accommodation.

### **ii. Sydney and Orange**

At times, patients may need to travel to Sydney or Orange to appointments for specialists that may not be available in Dubbo. Travel arrangements will be organised by BACHS for patients who are eligible under IPTAAS and ITC funding. This may include flights to Sydney via Dubbo or utilising the Transport NSW Coach Service to Dubbo and XPT Train service to Sydney.

Travel to Orange will vary depending on available to transport. Taxi vouchers will be provided for patients needing transport to their appointments.

If IPTAAS or ITC funding doesn't not apply, patients must arrange their own accommodation.

## 12. COST OF TRANSPORT

There shall be no cost to the patient or carer for the provision of the service. Patients requiring travel outside of Bourke will need a completed IPTAAS form or an ITC referral form.

All patients and carers are responsible for their own meals and incidentals whilst travelling. Patients who are not eligible for IPTAAS or ITC will also be responsible for out-of-pocket expenses for their accommodation if required to attend appointment.

Should a patient not make a departure time (without notice to BACHS), that person must arrange for their travel back to Bourke and any associated costs.

## 13. RECOVERY OF BACHS COSTS

BACHS is to recover a contribution for transport from each patient through the IPTAAS Travel Assistance payment. The Senior Admin Officer in collaboration with BACHS' Practice Manager will ensure all forms are up to date to recover costs for travel.

## 14. BACHS STAFF DRIVERS AND WH&S

BACHS takes the safety and workplace wellbeing of its staff and patients seriously. The following rules will apply to BACHS Transport under this Policy:

### **i. Driver Hours and Number of Drivers**

BACHS' employees driving BACHS transport vehicles comply with:

- A BACHS driver under this policy shall not drive more than 2 hours without a nondriving break;
- A break must be for at least 10 minutes, before continuing to drive;
- A Driver will not work more than 10 hours in one day;
- BACHS will provide 2 drivers for all trips to Dubbo and beyond to allow sharing of the driving task.

### **ii. Alcohol and drug use**

BACHS has a zero tolerance to alcohol and drug use in the workplace. BACHS' drivers must not consume any alcohol at least 12 hours before commencing their work shift. BACHS drivers must not consume any illicit substances. This is an organisation wide standard and must be upheld by all staff.

### **iii. Smoking**

The BACHS workplace is also a Smoke Free workplace and vehicles used for transport

are deemed a workplace whilst in use. No smoking by drivers or patients is permitted on transport vehicle or within 20 metres of the vehicle.

#### **iv. Mobile phone use**

It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone whilst driving. BACHS drivers must not use any mobile phone or device while providing transport.

#### **v. Licence requirements**

All BACHS employees who utilise a BACHS vehicle to provide transport must hold a minimum Class C full drivers licence.

A breach of the above rules by BACHS employees may result in disciplinary actions including termination of employment.

## **15. TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY NON BACHS PROVIDERS**

There is no guarantee that BACHS will operate all patient travel. Where BACHS patients are transported on the Transport NSW Coach Service or another transport provider, BACHS will endeavour to arrange that booking and inform the patient of any relevant travel details.

## **16. OTHER TRANSPORT REQUESTS**

BACHS may from time to time receive requests for Transport not directly related to the provision of medical services.

BACHS will not provide transport for non-medical purposes including personal travel for any purpose.

To avoid doubt, provision of transport for any personal related travel such as weddings, **social gathering or funerals** is prohibited.

#### **Community Wide Benefits Exception**

The CEO may, after Board approval, provide transport for non-medical services where it is aligned with BACHS' wider community role and community engagement. This may include community sponsored events considered of value to the community as a whole. In such cases BACHS may contribute the use of the vehicle provided the user organisation paying for all fuel and indemnifies BACHS for any damage caused by its use.