

Agenda Item:

12

Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	24 June 2014
Officer	Director for Adult and Community Services
Subject of Report	Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services – Report from Dorset Advocacy – Help with NHS Complaints
Executive Summary	<p>Following the presentation of a report on non-emergency patient transport services (NEPTS) to the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2014, members agreed that a wider investigation into the issues raised should include input from all stakeholders. As providers of the Help with NHS Complaints service, Dorset Advocacy was therefore asked to provide a report from their perspective, reflecting the impact as reported to them by patients and their families and/or carers.</p> <p>The report details the five complaints received by Dorset Advocacy on NEPTS since 1 October 2013, in the form of case studies. The complaints identify common themes regarding access to staff to arrange transport and failure to keep timely collections when transport has been arranged.</p>
Impact Assessment: <i>Please refer to the protocol for writing reports.</i>	Equalities Impact Assessment: Not applicable.
	Use of Evidence: Report produced by Dorset Advocacy – Help with NHS Complaints.
	Budget: Not applicable.

	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council’s approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW (Delete as appropriate) Residual Risk HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW (Delete as appropriate) <i>(i.e. reflecting the recommendations in this report and mitigating actions proposed)</i></p> <p>(Note: Where HIGH risks have been identified, these should be briefly summarised here, identifying the appropriate risk category, i.e. financial / strategic priorities / health and safety / reputation / criticality of service.)</p> <p>Other Implications:</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee consider the evidence provided alongside that provided in the six reports provided by other stakeholders, and use this as a basis for discussion with the authors.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>The work of the Committee contributes to the County Council’s aim to protect and enrich the health and wellbeing of Dorset’s most vulnerable adults and children.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Report Originator and Contact</p>	<p>Name: Ann Harris, Health Partnerships Officer Tel: 01305 224388 Email: a.p.harris@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>



Dorset Advocacy

Information from
complaints and
enquiries received
related to E-zec
Medical since October
2013

1 Introduction

Dorset Advocacy has been commissioned to deliver the provision of independent NHS complaints advocacy (NHS Services) across the Boroughs of Bournemouth, Poole and the County of Dorset.

In response to a request from the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 March 2014 Dorset Advocacy is able to supply anonymised data relating to the new Patient Transport service. Five complaints have been raised via our service since the new contract commenced.

2 Complaints received

The complaints are detailed as below.

1. Ms A contacted Patient Transport to arrange for transport to enable her to attend an appointment in November at Blandford Community Hospital. Transport was duly arranged and agreed.

Ms A expected confirmation to be sent in the post but when this didn't arrive she telephoned to ensure the arrangements were indeed in place for her appointment. She was told she should receive a phone call the day before her appointment to remind her as the patient of her appointment and the transport arrangements.

Ms A did not receive a telephone call and half an hour before her appointment she was still waiting for transport to arrive. Ms A phoned the company who told her not to worry and a taxi duly arrived 20 minutes later.

The taxi driver told Ms A there had been no prior booking and she had come as an urgent booking.

On the way to the hospital Ms A was told this sort of thing happened quite often.

Ms A was half an hour late for her appointment but due to her foresight at being able to phone in and warn of a delay her consultant was able to see her.

Ms A wrote to E-zec Medical and did receive a response which apologised sincerely for her experience. She was told that the failure to call prior to the appointment was due to resource constraints and that the company had agreement to recruit more call handlers and recruit more road crew.

Ms A was reassured by the company that the unprofessional comments from the taxi company would be addressed and escalated to the Operations Manager to develop services during ongoing service reviews and education of their staff.

Ms A has not needed to use the service again and was grateful for support to make her complaint, because she felt it "important to make a fuss about this...incompetence".

2. Ms B came to Dorset Advocacy once she had made her complaint. As a patient she relies on patient transport to get her to Dialysis treatment 3 times a week. She wished to complain about the general running of the service. She was concerned at

late collections causing her to be very late for her appointments. Ms B wanted to let the company know the stress she experiences not knowing whether or not she is going to be collected. In addition there is a risk of losing treatment opportunities due to very late missed appointments.

In response to her complaint Ms B was looking for the outcomes of service improvements, so that dialysis patients are able to attend their appointments on time and that E-zec recognises the importance of such treatments and the need to respond accordingly.

Ms B also raised the concern that trying to contact E-zec was problematic as they were difficult to get hold of.

3. Mr C telephoned E-zec Medical Transport and was on hold for 30 minutes with the call remaining unanswered. Mr C's home phone ran out of charge and his call was aborted. Mr C felt it was unacceptable to wait in excess of 30 minutes for a call to be answered and his experience shows that he has consistently had to wait for excessive periods of time for the phone to be answered, if at all.

Mr C was at pains to point out that once he is able to talk to E-zec Medial he has no issues with the service which is delivered.

4. Ms D was collected by E-zec Patient Transport at 9.55am to take her to her local hospital for an appointment. She is usually taken to Pathology (as she has to have a blood test prior to her appointment in Oncology) and then collected from Oncology afterwards.

Ms D was due to be collected at 12.45 from Oncology after her 11.45am appointment. She was not collected at all and was left waiting for several hours before her daughter finally managed to organise a taxi home for her at 15.30.

When her daughter contacted E-Zec to question this she was told they turned up to collect her Mum at 11.45 but she wasn't there. Her daughter pointed out that they were not due until 12.45 as her Mum's appointment was 11.45. However both she and her mother were in the waiting room at 11.45 and nobody from E-Zec arrived.

The attitude of the person on the phone at E-Zec was very rude and Ms D's daughter felt like she was being given a "ticking off". She tried contacting E-zec herself between 13.00 until 15.30 to get E-Zec to collect Ms D and ended up having to get a taxi for her.

Her daughter said "they just don't listen and they haven't got their systems right".

The desired outcome of the complaint was to receive formal confirmation by email to ensure all booking details regarding the planned journeys are correct.

5. Mr E organised for Ezec transport on two occasions. On both occasions he requested that they bring a wheelchair and on both occasions they did not and he had to struggle to attend his appointments as they dropped him some distance from the location. These occasions involved transport to his local pharmacy in Poole for an ECG and later the same month for a Diabetic Eye Test.

On the second occasion for his eye test Mr E was told he would have to wait 90 minutes to be taken home - he cancelled the transport and arranged for a private taxi at a cost of £10 for a taxi.

Mr E has limited mobility and he arrived at both appointments very unwell.

These complaints identify common themes about access to staff to arrange transport and failure to keep timely collections when transport is arranged.

Benita Moore
Operations Manager
Dorset Advocacy

May 2014