

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

Procedure Responsibilities and Authorisation

Department Responsible for Procedure	Mental Health and Addictions
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Target Audience	Mental Health and Addictions service staff
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Procedure Review History

Version	Updated by	Date Updated	Summary of Changes
5	Kylie Balzer	November 2019	Change from policy to procedure template Review of procedure in line with other DHB procedures Inclusion of safety requirements for children Inclusion of transport by ambulance
6	Kylie Balzer	January 2023	Change to Te Whatu Ora Waikato procedure template Terminology changed to tāngata whaiora and whānau and based on feedback to the procedure Purpose of the procedure rewritten Exceptions section updated Clarification between Acute Care Transport and Transport for Rehabilitation / Therapeutic programme Clarification of decision making by a registered health professional

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

Contents

1	Overview	3
1.1	Purpose.....	3
1.2	Staff group	3
1.3	Patient / client group	3
1.4	Exceptions / contraindications	3
1.5	Definitions and acronyms	3
2	Clinical management	4
2.1	Roles and responsibilities	4
2.2	Competency required	4
2.3	Equipment.....	4
2.4	Procedure	4
3	Audit.....	8
3.1	Indicators	8
3.2	Tools	8
4	Evidence base	9
4.1	Summary of Evidence, Review and Recommendations	9
4.2	Associated Te Whatu Ora Waikato Documents	9
4.3	External Standards	9

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

1 Overview

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the requirements for the transport and escort of tāngata whaiora who are current or proposed tāngata whaiora of the mental health and addictions service. Transport and escort may occur:

- within the Te Whatu Ora campus
- externally to services / environments within the community
- externally to / from other Te Whatu Ora facilities
- from people's place of residence, community facilities to a Te Whatu Ora Waikato facility

It is essential that effective decision making occurs by registered health professionals, inclusive of Duly Authorised Officers in crisis situations to minimise any risks to tāngata whaiora, whānau, and the public. It is also necessary to make sure that the transport and escort of tāngata whaiora is carried out in a manner which is empowering for tāngata whaiora and whānau.

1.2 Staff group

This procedure applies to all Te Whatu Ora Waikato mental health and addictions staff involved in the transport and escort of Mental Health and Addictions tāngata whaiora.

1.3 Patient / client group

Mental Health and Addictions tāngata whaiora.

1.4 Exceptions / contraindications

For information on escorted leave without transport please see the Leave – Adult Mental Health inpatient wards procedure (2184) or the Leave – Puawai Inpatient wards procedure (6266) as appropriate to the context.

1.5 Definitions and acronyms

Duly Authorised Officer (DAO)	Duly authorised officer means a person who, under section 93, is authorised by the Director of Area Mental Health Services to perform the functions and exercise the powers conferred on duly authorised officers by or under the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992
Escort	Accompanying the tāngata whaiora while under the care of the mental health and addictions service or as a potential tāngata whaiora / service user
Transport	Providing the means of transfer of tāngata whaiora by vehicle for the purposes of mental health assessment / care provision

2.1 Roles and responsibilities

All clinical staff are required to understand their role and apply the practices outlined within this procedure in order to provide a safe environment for tāngata whaiora and staff in the transport and escort of tāngata whaiora and whānau members.

Managers are required to make sure that their staff are aware of the transport and escort of tāngata whaiora procedure and review any incidents.

Staff providing transport and escort of tāngata whaiora must have the required health care competencies as per the individual context of transport and escort, and individual health care needs of the tāngata whaiora.

- Te Whatu Ora Waikato vehicle
- Cell phone when transporting tāngata whaiora
- Radiotransmitter for Escorts

2.4.1 Transportation and Escort Assessment

Before transporting any tāngata whaiora a transportation and escort assessment must be completed in consultation with people currently involved with the tāngata whaiora (e.g. Mental Health and Addictions service staff, whānau / friends where appropriate)

The assessment will consider the following:

- Purpose of travel and number of tāngata whaiora
- Time of day and distance to be travelled
- Mode of transportation available
- Tāngata whaiora characteristics: age, gender, culture, physical health; cooperation, current mental state
- Current risk assessment

A transportation plan will be developed for the transport of tāngata whaiora who are acutely unwell based on the assessed needs of the tāngata whaiora and the staffing resources required for appropriate and safe transportation of the tāngata whaiora.

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Facilitator Title:		Operations Manager			Department:	Mental Health and Addictions	
IF THIS DOCUMENT IS PRINTED, IT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE DAY OF PRINTING							Page 4 of 9

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

a) Staffing requirements

b) Mode of transport

The plan will be communicated to the charge nurse manager / team leader or delegate

The plan will be documented in the progress notes in the tāngata whaiora clinical record.

Te Whatu Ora Waikato Vehicles

Child-proof lock

Te Whatu Ora Waikato vehicles must have the child-proof lock on the left rear door engaged at all times.

Transport

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure appropriate passenger safety restraints are available and utilised. Seatbelts are to be worn by all passengers.

Children

Children over seven years old and measuring a height of 148cm may travel when secured by an adult seat belt. Smaller children must be secured in an approved restraint as follows:

Requirements for child restraints

Age of child	The law says you must:
Until their 7 th birthday	Correctly secure your child in an approved child restraint
From their 7 th to their 8 th birthday	Correctly secure your child in an approved child restraint (and if not, in any child restraint or safety belt that is available)
From 8 th birthday to 14 years old	Must use safety belts if available. If not available, they must travel in the back seat.
Over 14 years old	Must use safety belts where they are available.

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

Availability of Approved Child Restraints

Te Whatu Ora Waikato does not own approved child restraints. Where it is necessary to transport a baby or small infant and the parent is unable to provide the necessary resources, a taxi should be requested. The type of child restraint required must be specified when ordering the taxi.

Acute Care Transport

It is recommended that two staff accompany tāngata whaiora in Te Whatu Ora Waikato vehicles at all times (one driver and one escort) for tāngata whaiora who are acutely unwell. A driver of a vehicle cannot be an escort.

Tāngata whaiora are to travel in the left rear seat with a staff member seated beside them on the right. Any decision to alter this arrangement must only be following assessment of negligible risk to self or others by a registered health professional.

The transport plan will consider potential risks that may occur during transport and ensure that staff transporting the tāngata whaiora are aware of who to escalate any concerns to, which arise during travelling.

Rehabilitation / Therapeutic Programme Transport and Escort

For tāngata whaiora being transported and escorted as part of a therapeutic programme all decisions about transport and escort will be made with due consideration of risk, physical wellbeing and mental state by a registered health professional / the multidisciplinary team.

Any decision to transport a tāngata whaiora with a driver only must only occur following an assessment of negligible potential risk to self or others by a registered health professional.

Forensic Service Transport

Transport of tāngata whaiora under the care of the Forensic service is as agreed in the leave plan approved by the DAMHS.

Police Vehicles

General

Where a tāngata whaiora immediate risk to self or others is deemed to be high and this risk is unable to be managed by mental health staff, police assistance may be requested. This should be negotiated with the New Zealand Policy Communication centre. Refer to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Director of Area Mental Health Services and Police.

Where police assistance is requested under Section 41 of the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992, a DAO must accompany the tāngata whaiora or proposed tāngata whaiora at all times to monitor their physical state and address any concerns. This practice may only be bypassed in exceptional circumstances, in consultation with Police, where the risk can be safely managed by police, and it is in the best interests of the tāngata whaiora for the transport to be expedited in a timely manner, rather than waiting for the DAO to attend. Police remain responsible for managing the risk of violence towards self or others.

Where police assistance is not required – any tāngata whaiora or proposed tāngata whaiora – as identified under the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992 must be accompanied by a duly authorised officer (DAO) or delegate. Any delegation of proposed tāngata whaiora under the Mental Health Act sections 8-11 must only be to another registered health professional, and only after a clear and documented risk assessment. Under no circumstances can a whānau member or friend be delegated to transport a proposed tāngata whaiora under section 8-11 of the Mental Health Act without a registered health professional present.

General

The use of a taxi / shuttle to transport tāngata whaiora may be considered under the following conditions:

- Vehicular transport is deemed to be clinically beneficial
- The tāngata whaiora is unable to access anyone to drive them
- The tāngata whaiora does not have sufficient funds to pay for a taxi
- The tāngata whaiora does not pose any risk to others

Ambulance

Medical Emergencies

Emergency equipment is not carried in Te Whatu Ora Waikato vehicles. No tāngata whaiora in a medically compromised state, or whose medical state may deteriorate rapidly, is to be transported in a Te Whatu Ora Waikato vehicle. An ambulance must be called.

Where the tāngata whaiora requires medical treatment at the Emergency Department, it is not necessary for mental health and addictions staff person to accompany them.

Transfers from mental health wards

When a tāngata whaiora is medically compromised, or is unable to be safely transported in a regular vehicle due to increased medical risk, e.g. positional asphyxia, an ambulance must be requested.

Any tāngata whaiora being transferred to a ward must be accompanied by an appropriate registered mental health professional.

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IF THIS DOCUMENT IS PRINTED, IT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE DAY OF PRINTING							Page 7 of 9

Any tāngata whaiora or proposed tāngata whaiora – as identified under the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992 – must be accompanied by a duly authorised officer (DAO) or delegate, when transported by ambulance. The rationale for delegation, including the tāngata whaiora need for oversight must be documented.

Transport for assessment from the Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections is as per the Ministry of Health Guidelines for the safe transport of special patients in the care of Regional Forensic Mental Health service. Transport arrangements are to be discussed with the DAMHS and the Director of Mental Health service.

A Duly Authorised Officer will transport young people under the age of 18 to Starship Hospital – Child Youth and Family Unit for admission under the MH (CAT) Act 1992, along with two other escorts. Other escorts may include: Parent or whānau member, Te Whatu Ora Waikato support worker, Agency Staff, Oranga Tamariki staff, NGO worker or police jailor (decided by the DAO).

For the transportation of young people under the age of 18 to Starship hospital for admission the Duly Authorised Officer must adhere to the requirements of the After Hours Assessment and Admission of Children and Youth to the Henry Rongomau Bennett Centre and Starship procedure (2768).

Significant others may transport the tāngata whaiora to the inpatient facility for an informal admission or community location for assessment after consideration of the risks.

For transfers to another Te Whatu Ora facility the transportation plan will be arranged between the primary nurse, charge nurse manager / team leader and the responsible clinician with the principles of this procedure in mind.

3.1 Indicators

Transport and escort of tāngata whaiora is carried out in accordance with this procedure.

Incident reporting and management

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IF THIS DOCUMENT IS PRINTED, IT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE DAY OF PRINTING							Page 8 of 9

Transport and Escort of tāngata whaiora

4 Evidence base

4.1 Summary of Evidence, Review and Recommendations

- Bay of Plenty District Health Board Mental Health and Addiction Services Protocol Transportation of Tāngata Whaiora / Consumers Version 5
- Southern District Health Board Transporting Clients – Emergency Psychiatric Service (Otago) Version 4

4.2 Associated Te Whatu Ora Waikato Documents

- Mental Health and Addictions [After hour's admissions of children and youth to HRBC and Starship](#) procedure (2768)
- Mental Health and Addictions [AWOL \(Absent without Official Leave\)](#) procedure (3555)
- Mental Health and Addictions [Leave – Adult Mental Health inpatient wards](#) procedure (2184)
- Mental Health and Addictions [Leave – Puawai Inpatient wards](#) procedure (6266)
- Mental Health and Addictions [Levels of Observation in Inpatient Services](#) procedure (5238)
- Mental Health and Addictions [Working with Risk: Assessment and intervention for tāngata whaiora engaged with Mental Health and Addictions services who present at risk of harm to self or others](#) procedure (5241)
- Te Whatu Ora Waikato [Clinical Records Management](#) policy (0182)
- Te Whatu Ora Waikato [Incident Management](#) policy (0104)
- Te Whatu Ora Waikato [Vehicle Usage and Safe Driving](#) policy (0112)

4.3 External Standards

- [Ministry of Health Guidelines for the safe transport of special patients in the care of Regional Forensic Mental Health Services \(November 2022\)](#)
- Ngā Paerewa Health and disability services standard NZS8134:2021
- The New Zealand Rode Code
- Substance Addiction (Compulsory Assessment and treatment) Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights) Regulations 1996
- Land Transport NZ Fact Sheet 7 Feb 2005 Child Restraints
- Privacy Act 2020
- Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment & Treatment) Act 1992 and Amendments
- Criminal Procedures (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act 2003
- Intellectual Disability Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation Act 2003
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and the Police

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