

Air transport planning and authorisation

Standard operating procedure (SOP) | PTR-SOP-004

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Title	Air transport planning and authorisation
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Prepared by	{{roles.quality_lead.name}}, Quality lead
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Replaces	None (new document)
Standards and criteria supported	System S6 (Patient transfers and referrals), criterion S6.9, S6.23
Evidence basis	E-006, E-009
Status of this document	Recommended best-practice model. A hospital may adopt, adapt or replace it with an equivalent that meets the same criteria.

At a glance: what to do

1. Air transport is authorised by the clinical lead before it is booked.
2. Confirm seats for the patient and escort, equipment, oxygen and the airline's acceptance.
3. Only use an operator with a current contract and aviation certificate.
4. Record the authorisation and the confirmations.

Stop and get help straight away if: an air transfer is booked or flown with no authorisation, or with the airline's acceptance not confirmed.

1. Purpose

To make air transport planned, authorised and controlled (S6.9, S6.23).

2. Scope

Applies to	Clinical and support staff in the hospital
Locations	All wards, clinics and departments of {{facility.legal_name}}
When	Whenever the activity described is carried out
Does not apply to	Activities covered by another document listed in section 15

3. Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning in this SOP
Clinical lead	The doctor or nurse in charge of the area at the time

4. Background and rationale

A patient on a commercial flight needs seats, oxygen and medical equipment agreed with the airline in advance. Without that agreement, the patient can be refused boarding or travel without what they need.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Duties in this SOP	Competence needed
Clinical lead	Authorises the air transfer	Clinician
Dispatch lead	Books and confirms the arrangements	Trained dispatcher

6. Equipment, materials and resources

Item	Specification or standard	Check before use
Records and forms named in this document	Current version	Checked before use

7. Safety and infection prevention

- Stop and call for help if a patient is at immediate risk. Do not delay urgent care to complete paperwork.

8. Before you start

- Confirm the forms and equipment named in this document are available and current.

9. Procedure

Follow the steps in order. Where a step says "If", take the action for the case that applies. Do not skip a step. If a step cannot be done, use section 11 and section 12.

Step	Action	How to do it	Key point
1	Authorise.	• The clinical lead signs the authorisation with the reason for air transport.	Air is a decision, not a default.
2	Confirm.	• Confirm seats, equipment, oxygen and the airline's acceptance for the patient's condition, in writing.	Confirmed in writing.
3	Check.	• Complete the aircraft and cabin check (PTR-FRM-004) before departure.	Checked before it flies.

Decision points

- No decision points in this procedure.

10. Special situations

Situation	What to do
Out of hours	Follow the same steps. Use the on-call contact on the wall of the area.

11. Problems and escalation

- Any serious problem goes to the duty clinical lead at once and to the clinical director the same day.

12. Monitoring and compliance

What is checked	Target	How often	Who	If the target is missed
Air transfers with authorisation before booking	100%	Monthly	Clinical lead	Escalate to chief executive
Air transfers with airline acceptance confirmed	100%	Monthly	Dispatch lead	Escalate to clinical lead

13. Records

Record	Where it is kept	Kept for
Record named in this document	Patient record or the area file	{{facility.records_retention_years}} years

14. Training and competence

- Staff are trained in this document at induction and refreshed each year, with a recorded competency check.

15. Related documents

ID	Title	Relationship
PTR-FRM-004	Aircraft and cabin check	Check form
PTR-POL-002	Transfer insurance, cross-border and data sharing rules	Insurance

16. Evidence

ID	Source and status
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus.
E-006	ASF Policy Framework v1.2. Adapted.
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus.

EC = ASF Expert Committee consensus. Items marked EC are reviewed by the Committee each year.

17. Change history

Version	Date	What changed	Approver and signature
1.0	{{document.effective_date}}	First version	Pending Expert Committee approval