



NETS Return Transport Service

Introduction

The Return Transport Service has been established to transfer babies and young infant patients¹ from a tertiary neonatal ICU to a hospital closer to home which can continue care now that the patient no longer needs intensive care. This includes convalescent patients as well as palliative care patients. In addition to helping families, the service aims move babies as soon as they are ready and to ease bed block in neonatal intensive care units. Patients are transported by an experienced nurse employed by NETS (NSW). The Return Transport Service provides a safe method of transporting patients and a parent and such items as stored expressed human milk. This Service is being trialled and during the trial period the Return Transport Service will only be offered to patients who meet the following criteria:

Criteria for using the Return Transport Service

- Current inpatient of a public hospital
 - Neonatal or Paediatric Intensive Care Unit including;
 - High Dependency Units
 - Special Care Unit
- Stable for transfer
- Current weight 6 kg or less

¹ For the trial period: Weight ≤ 6kg and length < 65cm

- Receiving respiratory support which is not expected to increase during transport

Treatments provided by the Service

- Respiratory support
 - Face mask FiO₂
 - Nasal prong FiO₂
 - High/Low/Micro flow FiO₂
 - Incubator O₂
- Tube/Transpyloric/PEG feeds
- Peripheral IV therapy
- Central line therapy (eg TPN and Lipids)
- Incubator care (thermal support)
- Cardiorespiratory monitoring
- Antibiotic administration

Exclusion criteria

- Patients who are:
 - intubated²
 - on CPAP or BiPAP
- UVC or UAC
- Tracheostomy
- Being cared for using devices which either aren't approved or certified for use or securing in an ambulance or aircraft or else are not familiar to NETS Return Transport Nurse.
- Cytotoxic medication required
- Patient receiving opioid infusion

² Patients on a ventilator can be moved using a NETS' medical team.

- Patients who have had a significant change in management in the 24 hours prior to preferred transfer date

Fees and charges

The referring hospital will be charged for the transfer of a patient according to the Schedule of Fees published by NSW Health and available at the NETS website. Fees may be charged if a booking is cancelled after a team has reached the referring hospital. An emergency rate is applied for bookings received after 18:00 the day before the date of transfer.

How to book

Bookings can be made on the NETS website; www.nets.org.au/ReturnTransport. Since this is a public site, access requires pre-registration as a health professional.



Advantages of Return Transport Service

- Actively assist early discharge from ICU
- Safely move closer to home
- Decrease bed block and stresses in ICUs
- Decrease stress on families and allow families to be closer to home and support systems
- Maintain activity and skills in special care units
- Allow families to become connected with vital local resources
- Safe and effective method of transport
- Transferred with an experienced neonatal nurse and experienced driver who are familiar with the mobile environment
- The patient is transported using the correct vehicles and equipment suitable to the patient's size, weight and condition
- The service is cost effective as it saves the referring hospital paying for a vehicle as well as losing a critical care nurse off the unit

What is required of the referring ICU?

- Discuss the discharge plan with the family early in their ICU stay
- Inform parents of transfer
- Make a referral to the receiving hospital; including detailed clinical information
- Negotiate timing of bed availability
- Complete online booking form
- Medical review on the day of transfer
- Provide the NETS nurse with:
 - detailed discharge summary; to ensure continuity of care

- Nursing transfer form
- Copies of relevant x-rays etc.
- Patient Health Record
- Formula or Human milk adequate for the journey
- Fresh or frozen human milk stored according to Health policy and labelled with addressograph details and date/time expressed or de-frosted
- Copy of current charts (medication, fluid prescription, fluid & observation)
- Ensure patient is identified with ID bands & addressograph labels

A full checklist is available on the NETS website

Find more information at
www.nets.org.au or call the NETS
Operational Coordinator on
1300 36 2730



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