

Non-emergency patient transport services (NEPTS)

Procurement group update

August 2026

Dear colleagues,

This briefing provides an update on the procurement of non-emergency patient transport services (NEPTS) for the North West which launched in January 2026:

- Lot 1 – Cheshire and Merseyside: following the identification of an error within the documentation relating specifically to lot 1, the decision was taken to abandon. This was an isolated issue which had no impact on lots 2 and 3. No contract has been awarded, and a new procurement is due to be carried out.
- Lot 2 – Greater Manchester and Derby and Derbyshire (Glossop): an intention to award notice has been published today (Monday 3 August), naming HATS Group Ltd as the intended provider. The contract will not be formally awarded until the eight-working-day standstill period following publication of the notice has concluded.
- Lot 3 – Lancashire and South Cumbria and North East and North Cumbria (North Cumbria place): the process was abandoned as there were no viable bids submitted. No contract has been awarded, and a new procurement is due to be carried out.

NHS Greater Manchester and NHS Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) will, subject to completion of the standstill period and formal contract award, work with HATS Group Ltd and the current provider, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), to support a smooth transition ahead of the proposed new contract start date of 1 April 2027.

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB, and NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria and NHS North East and North Cumbria ICBs, will carry out two separate procurements over the coming months. Timelines are currently being developed, and we will keep you updated as this work progresses. In the meantime, patients in these areas will continue to have access to non-emergency patient transport services.

NEPTS includes three main service elements:

- **Planned NEPTS**, which supports routine outpatient activity, including transport to and from appointments.
- **Unplanned NEPTS**, which supports short-notice or same-day demand, including some hospital discharges.
- **Enhanced priority service NEPTS**, which supports time-critical journeys, including for cancer and dialysis patients.

The procurement was led by the North West Ambulance Commissioning Team, working with a procurement group made up of representatives from the five ICBs mentioned above. This team was supported by the NHS Shared Business Services (SBS) procurement team.