

For the Record – Press Statement

Publication and reporter	Express & Star, Mathew Growcott
Date of article	08/04/16
Headline	Hospitals dish out £580,000 for taxis
First paragraph/s of article	<p>Hospital trusts across the Black Country and Staffordshire spent more than £580,000 providing taxis to transport patients, new figures show.</p> <p><i>Paragraph relating to the Trust</i> The Dudley Group NHS Foundation spent £37,118 on private vehicles for patients. Paula Clark, chief executive, said: “Taxis are paid for by the trust in specific circumstances and only where it is safe and appropriate to do so.”</p>
Press enquiry	<p>The Trust was contacted by the Express and Star following the publication of figures by the Health and Social Care Information Centre which showed that The Dudley Group spent £37,118 on taxi for patients in the 2014/15 financial year.</p> <p>The reported asked for a summary of the circumstances in which a private taxi would be used to transport a patient. .</p>
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAULA CLARK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>Taxis are sometimes used by the Trust to transport patients home after discharge when they are unable to return home on their own or with friends or family. Taxis are paid for by the Trust in specific circumstances and only where it is safe and appropriate to do so. Some of these circumstances include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients who have a physical disability or condition which affects their mobility • Patients leaving hospital with wheelchairs who are not registered disabled (for example after an operation or procedure) • Patients who would otherwise be unable to return home after discharge and for whom public transport would not be safe or appropriate • Patients who normally would have returned home using the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service but this has not been available due to short notice 	

or high demand.

A significant proportion of the Trust's spend on patient taxis is due to our commitment to improving patient experience for those with dementia or acute confusion. Confused elderly patients who are discharged are escorted home in a taxi by a member of our Acute Confusion Team.

The member of staff will travel with the patient in the taxi, settle them in at home, check they have everything they need and ensure they are safe in their home environment before they leave. This service has greatly improved the care and safety of discharge for this vulnerable group of patients.

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Notes for editors

For further information please contact the Alice Ford, Communications and Staff Engagement Officer for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust via (01384) 244403 or email alice.ford@dgh.nhs.uk