

CANCER SOCIETY AUCKLAND VOLUNTEER DRIVING SERVICE

Information for Referrers

SERVICE AIM

To **improve access to cancer treatment** by organising volunteers to transport patients to their cancer treatment and treatment-related appointments.

SERVICE CONTEXT

- The driving service is one of Cancer Society Auckland's **Supportive Care Services** that include Cancer Information, Community Liaison Nursing and Counselling and Psychology.
- The driving service is managed and run by paid staff from Cancer Society Auckland's **Volunteering Service**, who recruit, train and supervise the volunteer drivers and organise the drives. The Cancer Society Auckland respects and values the drivers' donation of time and costs.

KEY INFORMATION

The driving service:

- **Operates where possible within the service prioritisation criteria, specifications and referral and service delivery process.** At no stage does the Cancer Society Auckland guarantee to provide transport or take on the responsibility of ensuring people can get to and from treatment. Requests may be declined when they are outside prioritisation or service criteria or when a driver cannot be found.
- Operates from **Orewa/Whangaparaoa in the North to Papakura in the South and includes suburbs to the East and West.**
- **Prioritises patients whose transport or treatment needs are greatest.**
- **May require five working days or more to arrange drives (or rearrange them when appointment dates change** or when appointment times change by more than half an hour). Appointment times must be between **9.30am and 2.30pm** (to avoid peak traffic). Please note that times for **distant suburbs** may be more restricted.
- **Patients need to be mobile enough to walk to and from the car.** If they use a **mobility aid** it must fit in a car boot.
- Requires the information requested on the Cancer Society **referral form** (available on our website [CLICK HERE](#)) which can be faxed, emailed or taken to the driving office. Driving service staff may need to ask clinical staff for additional information about appointments and patient suitability before they are able to action a referral or as the patient's condition and appointments change throughout treatment.
- Asks that referrers give patients the Cancer Society Auckland Volunteer Driving Service **'Information for Patients'** (available on our website [CLICK HERE](#)).
- Please see page 2 for **detailed information** on prioritisation criteria, service specifications and referral and the service delivery process.

CONTACT THE DRIVING SERVICE

Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-4pm (closed public holidays and between Xmas and New Year)

Visit the office: Radiation therapy patient waiting area, Auckland City Hospital (Building 8)

Phone the office: (09) 379 6352

Email: Drivers@akcansoc.org.nz

FAX: 09 308 0175

Phone the service manager: (09) 308 0244 if you are unsure about service prioritisation criteria or specifications for a particular patient or if you have any questions or concerns.

SERVICE PRIORITISATION CRITERIA

- Patients with limited social support to assist with transport.
- Patients with several cancer-related appointments in one week.
- Patients too frail to use public transport or drive themselves to an unfamiliar location.
- Patients who need to complete treatment without delay.
- Patients having investigations during their treatment.

SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS

- **The driving service encourages patient independence.** The Cancer Society Community Liaison Nursing Service may be able to provide additional assistance for patients with transport problems.
- **Driving service staff members are not clinicians** and have no prior relationship with patients; they rely on referring clinicians to know how the service operates, to refer eligible patients and to provide the service with the information needed to organise drives.
- **The volunteer drivers do not provide patient care;** vulnerable patients (e.g. who speak no English, are very frail, are psychologically or physically unwell, are at risk of seizures) must be accompanied by a supporter who is able to assist them. Please understand the limitations on what we can ask of the drivers; many are of retirement age or drive small cars.
- **Transport may be offered one way only at times;** for example when a driver can only be found for one way, the appointment is lengthy or there is a delay during the appointment and the driver (who will have been 'booked' for a specific length of time) cannot wait.
- **Patients may be asked to share a car with others.** This may mean they cannot bring supporters and that they will need to wait at the end of their appointment.
- It is not usually possible for patients to be accompanied by **babies or children.** This will need prior discussion with service staff.
- Some of the costs of running the driving service are recovered by asking (and assisting) eligible patients to claim the **Ministry of Health National Travel Assistance (NTA).**
- **We do not drive patients who:**
 - Pose a **risk** to the driver or other patients in the same car (e.g. from aggression or infection).
 - Cannot use a **seatbelt** and do not have a Ministry of Transport exemption.
 - Are on continuous **oxygen.**
 - Live in a **residential care facility** (as the facility should provide transport).

REFERRAL AND SERVICE DELIVERY PROCESS

- When demand necessitates a driver bringing more than one patient in the same car, hospital staff may be asked to assist with **scheduling appointments** to make this workable.
- We ask that hospital staff **'flag'** patients using volunteer drivers and let the driving service staff know of any delays or changes that occur during appointments that will affect volunteer drivers or other driving service patients.
- **If patients are delayed at the hospital** during appointments and the volunteer driver is unable to wait until they are ready to go home, the driving service staff will try to find another driver. If another driver cannot be found they will tell the patient they can offer no further assistance and if necessary direct them to hospital staff.
- If driving service staff obtain **patient information** that concerns them they will pass this information on to hospital or Cancer Society nursing staff.