

NATIONAL RETRIEVAL GROUP

July 2017

Delays to Retrieval due to Flights

Background

Recently, there have been several incidents reported regarding delays to retrieval due to flights being arranged (see Appendix One for a list of incidents).

The NORS Standards currently state:

The retrieval centre is responsible for making cost effective and timely transport arrangements for their NORS team.

When possible, NORS teams will travel by road. However, if this is not possible (eg for Northern Ireland), or if estimated road travel time is 3 hours or more than the estimated travel time by air, or if organ viability might be compromised by any delay, then air transport may be used.

However, due to the lead in time taken to source planes and pilots, flying is not always quicker than driving by road.

Proposal

The proposal is that the SNODs and the Duty Office to be able to prevent delays where necessary by asking the NORS teams to travel by the fastest method.

The NORS Standards could be worded as follows:

NORS teams will travel by road as standard. However, air transport may be used if:

- *Road travel is not possible (eg for Northern Ireland).*
- *If estimated road travel time is more than the estimated travel time by air (including time taken to arrange flights)*
- *if organ viability might be compromised by any delay.*

Summary

NRG is asked to

- Support this proposal
- Advise on appropriate wording for the NORS Standards

Emma Billingham
Senior Commissioning Manager, ODT
July 2017

Appendix One List of Incidents re Flights:

INC Number	Details of Road Journey	Detail of Incident
INC-2406 (open)	Birmingham CT to Plymouth 3 hours 20 minutes	<p>This incident is related to the delay in Birmingham NORS team mobilising to a DBD Donor retrieval on the night/early morning of the 23rd/24th March 2017.</p> <p>At 23:18 on 23/03/17 I contacted the recipient coordinator at Birmingham to request NORS Team to arrive as soon as possible.</p> <p>At 00:05 the Recipient Coord from Birmingham contacted me to give me an ETA for B'ham NORS team of 06:00. When asked why so late as I was expecting them to arrive around 03:30-04:00 she stated that the team could not travel by road as it was a road journey of greater than 3 hours. They would have to fly down. Because Exeter airport did not open until 05:00, they could not arrive until 06:00. I then spoke with Duty Office who told me they were given similar reasons by Birmingham for there late arrival i.e. unable to travel by road for greater than 3 hrs, therefore a flight was required.</p> <p>At approx. 00:30 the Birmingham Recipient Coordinator rang me back to say she was given incorrect information from transport company and that Exeter Airport infact was only opening at 06:00; therefore a new ETA of 07:10 was given.</p> <p>Due to traffic in the Derriford area, the CT NORS team arrived at 07:45.</p>
2464 (closed)	Glasgow to Liverpool 3 hours 45 minutes	<p>08:15 Glasgow Golden Jubilee Hospital, RCPoC makes initial request to mobilise team to Walton Neuro Centre in Liverpool via a flight.</p> <p>08:18 Amvale request flight agents commence searching for flight. There were then numerous other phone-calls surrounding other charters that were running and on each call flight agent advised they were still searching for Glasgow.</p> <p>08:58 Flight agent advise Amvale of an available aircraft however best time on ground in Glasgow would be 15:00</p>

		<p>and they were still negotiating on price.</p> <p>09:16 Flight agent calls Amvale back with price on the above aircraft</p> <p>09:20 Amvale Control Team Leader reviews option offered and instructs flight agents to continue searching. Glasgow RCPoC was advised of difficulty sourcing a flight and continuous calls were made to flight agent for progress</p> <p>10:40 Flight agent advise Amvale of additional quote however the operator would have to reconfigure interior of aircraft to facilitate 4 passengers. On ground at Glasgow would be 14:00.</p> <p>10:53 Glasgow RCPoC notified of options however due to time and cost, however by then they had decided they would travel by road.</p> <p>There were also further delays on the road due to traffic so the CT NORS team sought permission to be blue-lighted, arriving some 5 hours after leaving their base.</p> <p>Amvale did their best in the circumstances with the flight agents to try and source appropriate flights but the knock on effect due to all the activity was that there were no flight crews available either due to flying or enforced rest periods.</p> <p>Incident and findings shared with ODT Senior Commissioning Manager for oversight.</p>
2473 (open)	<p>Birmingham to Plymouth</p> <p>3 hours 20 minutes</p>	<p>SNOD rang ODT at approx 21:28 to ask for allocation of abdominal and cardiothoracic NORS teams. SNOD was allocated Birmingham Abdo and CT NORS teams. But from the time of asking ODT to mobilise NORS SNOD waited 10 minutes and did not hear anything so spoke to ODT to ask if there was a protocol regarding how long we should expect to wait to hear from a NORS team following ODT asking them to call us. ODT at approx 22:10 said they would recommend leaving it an hour from the time of asking ODT to mobilise the teams before being concerned that we had not yet heard from the RCPOC. Both RCPOCS contacted me by 22:30 so both RCPOCS agreed to leave at 23:30 with the planned arrival time of 03:00 on the 05/05/2017.</p> <p>There was then a further delay as the Cardiothoracic RCPOC tried to organise a flight for her team as the travel time was 3.5 hours and they are able to fly if the travel time is over 3 hours. All planes were in use and the RCPOC was unable to get approval for a plane from Europe from ODT so the team then travelled by road. Due to trying to organise a plan the RCPOC did not mobilise her team on time so they left an hour later than agreed, arriving an hour after the abdo team.</p>
2536	<p>Weston-Super-Mare to Wythenshawe (return journey)</p>	<p>On Monday 12th June 2017 the Wythenshawe NORS Team (Manchester) deployed to the Weston General Hospital (Weston-Super-Mare) via flight to Bristol Airport. After the Retrieval they decided to take a meal break that involved going from the WGH to Nando's at BS1 5NT in</p>

	3 hours 35 minutes	<p>Bristol (apparently someone knew of this place and recommended it). This incurred a 1hr 5 mins delay whilst they took this break, whilst the aircraft that was waiting to return them to Manchester remained on the holding pan at Bristol Airport (accruing flying time). Not only did this keep the aircraft waiting but it also involved re-routing up past the airport then back down again. They had no organs on board.</p> <p>Normal Journey: WGH to Airport – 14.9 miles (approx 45 mins travel time) Journey Taken: WGH to Airport (Via Nando's) - 44.6 miles (approx 1hr 40 mins travel time) Meal Break time: 1hr 5 mins Total Additional Miles: 29.7 (chargeable) Total Additional Waiting: 1 hr 5 mins (chargeable) Total delay in journey: 29.7 miles and 2 hours</p>
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