



Emergency Ambulance Transfers – Inter-facility (IFT)

The process for arranging an emergency ambulance transfer is changing. There are now two levels of emergency response:



IFT level 1 (IFT1)

For exceptional circumstances when you require immediate clinical assistance from the ambulance service, including a declared obstetric emergency, in addition to emergency transport. A response car or motorcycle paramedic may be dispatched in response to an IFT 1 request, to assist in direct patient care. A response will aim to be with you in within seven minutes.



IFT level 2 (IFT2)

Emergency transfer – lights and sirens response. The nearest available emergency ambulance will be dispatched immediately to your department to arrive within 18 minutes (this may mean it being diverted from another emergency call).

Emergency blue light transfers are prioritised on the basis of the treatment or intervention the patient requires or is highly likely to require when they arrive at their destination, not the patient’s diagnosis. Examples include, patient going directly to theatre for immediate neurosurgery, primary percutaneous coronary intervention, stroke thrombolysis, surgery for ruptured aortic aneurysm, emergency laparotomy, surgery for ectopic pregnancy, limb or sight saving surgery.

Level one and two interfacility (IFT) transfer requests have been introduced to improve the response that is provided by the ambulance service, and ensure it aligns with the priority given to similar patients who are not at a healthcare facility. However, the clinical staff responsible for the patient should, where possible, make this request; where delegation is unavoidable the individual making the request for support should be in a position to answer triage questions about the patient’s condition.



* Dial 0330 678 4159

Identify that you are requesting “An emergency interfacility transfer”. You will be asked a number of questions (have the answers ready). Wording may differ slightly between services.

Is this request for immediate life-saving clinical assistance from an ambulance service paramedic? If yes, additional questions will be asked to determine if a Level 1 response is necessary.

Is this an immediately life, limb or sight threatening situation? If yes, you must explain the reason in terms of the intervention(s) that the patient requires.

All other transfer requests are NOT emergencies, and the response time will depend on how your local ambulance service is commissioned, and how busy the service is at that time.



IFT level 3
 Within two hours (if commissioned)

IFT level 4
 Within four hours