


CONSIDERATIONS FOR HOSPITAL TRAVEL PLANS

Hospitals are active 24 hours a day with the coming and going of ambulances, patients, visitors, staff, suppliers and contractors. A travel plan can be an effective transport management tool for a hospital and can deliver a range of benefits. These include:

- reduced congestion on and around the site and precinct
- improved transport options for staff, patients and visitors
- better access for emergency vehicles
- improved reliability of deliveries
- reduced demand for parking
- a demonstrated commitment to environmental sustainability.

While most hospital travel plans primarily focus on staff travel, patients can also benefit by improved access to the site, better ability to keep appointments and a reduction in unnecessary journeys.

| Liverpool Hospital | Mid-Essex Hospital - UK | Go Well – Hawkes Bay DHB |
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| <p>The NSW Liverpool Hospital Sustainability Taskforce was established in 2011 in response to state-wide sustainability targets and the interest of hospital staff in reducing the hospital's carbon footprint.</p> <p>The travel plan was developed in response to increasing transport pressures. But it was also identified as a positive opportunity to improve staff health by increasing physically active commuting like walking, cycling and public transport.</p> <p><i>Liverpool Hospital Travel Plan Annual Report, 2013</i></p> | <p>Essex County Council predicts a further 7% increase in the Chelmsford area alone by 2025. If the Trust does not continue to invest in reducing the amount of road traffic it will be negatively contributing to increased pollution, parking pressures, congestion affecting the health and wellbeing of the community and environment. Associated costs will also rise.</p> <p>The objectives of this travel plan are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To decrease the use of single occupancy vehicles where appropriate. 2. To encourage, promote and facilitate the use of more sustainable modes of transport. 3. To improve the choice of alternative transport available to staff. 4. To optimise use of staff and patient parking facilities. 5. To assess and improve accessibility to the Trust sites for additional sustainable transport modes. 6. To support technological advances in reducing the need to travel whilst maintaining quality care to patients, visitors and staff (care closer to home, video conferencing). <p>The travel plan sits alongside the Trust's Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP), working towards the NHS Carbon Reduction target of a 34% reduction by 2020, and 80% by 2050 (based on a 2007 baseline).</p> <p> <i>Mid-Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust Travel Plan 2018-2022</i></p> | <p>In 2015 Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB) adopted a travel plan called Go Well.</p> <p>Members of the community were asked about travel preferences and travel improvements that they would like to see happening at Hawke's Bay Hospital. Patients and staff had little choice except to drive to health services.</p> <p>21% staff were interested in coming to work differently and expressed an interest in public transport, carpooling/ride-sharing and cycling.</p> <p>15% patients were interested in public transport and carpooling/ride-sharing.</p> <p>The Go Well travel team has been working hard to implement the scheme, as well as alternative travel options for our staff and outpatients/visitors.</p> <p> http://www.ourhealthhb.nz/hospital-services/getting-here-go-well/go-well-travel-plan/</p> |

Developing a travel plan for a hospital will need to take into account a range of issues.

| Issue | Description |
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| Community impact | Because of the size of hospitals and the often-constrained on-site parking, vehicle parking often spills over on to adjacent streets which can negatively impact the local community. A travel plan can reduce local congestion and build relationships with the community. Consider working with the Dunedin City Council to address concerns. |
| Community transport vehicles | If these operate from the hospital, it will be important to determine the role they may play and if they have specific access requirements. Community transport vehicles should be included in the site audit/survey. |
| Cross-site travel | Depending on the size of the hospital or precinct, efforts could be made to ensure a higher proportion of cross-site trips are made on foot or by active travel modes or a shuttle service. As part of some travel plans, hospital precincts have provided staff with access to electric shuttle buses, electric bicycles or free bicycles to move around the precinct. |
| Delivery and supply vehicles | Delivery vehicle movements will need to be considered. There may be opportunities to consolidate deliveries, but changes to deliveries will need to be agreed in collaboration with hospital management and customers. A separate audit of these movements may be required. |
| Emergency vehicle access | Using the travel plan to minimise local area congestion and ensure emergency vehicle access is not compromised could be a key benefit. It is important to understand emergency vehicle access requirements using a site audit. |
| Governance | Senior management and DHB support and a good decision-making/governance framework is critical for a successful travel plan. Establishing good governance is especially important where the approval processes of multiple organisations must be considered. |
| Many staff are not desk-based | Travel surveys, activities and engagement need to suit staff working a variety of shifts and job requirements. For example, if staff do not regularly access emails, consider distributing travel surveys with payslips, via personal devices, on staff noticeboards or in break rooms. |
| Multi-organisational precincts | Some sites have more than one organisation or health facility within the precinct. Ideally, a travel plan would be prepared in partnership with all precinct organisations so that activities complement and support each other. Consistent application of parking requirements within a single precinct is important. Operating as a precinct increases the ability to influence public transport and road controlling authorities to improve services to the precinct. It can also be more economic to collectively invest in improved facilities like end of trip facilities, bus waiting area, shuttle buses, carpooling systems and real-time transport information, that benefit the visitors of all users of the precinct. |
| Parking and travel requirements for the mobility impaired | The needs of mobility-impaired travellers should be considered and sufficient access for these travellers maintained. Data collected, including site audits and travel surveys, should ensure requirements are understood. If cycling in the precinct is significant, consider separating (physically or via clear signage) cycle lanes from walking corridors to improve safety. |

| Issue | Description |
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| Patient travel to/from site | <p>The hospital will need to consider whether to include patient/visitor travel in the travel plan either as background information or as travel that can be modified over time. If it is to be included, a survey or analysis of patient and visitor travel will be required. Activities will need to consider the medical/accessibility needs of patients and visitors. Patients may have impaired mobility and need short term drop-off facilities and mobility parking spots. Safe, accessible walking infrastructure should be designed to suit the visually impaired.</p> <p>In the longer term, patient models-of-care are changing to short, frequent visits rather than overnight stays. This will increase transport demand. Hospital operating policies can be used to shift timing of appointments out of peak periods where possible and to reduce the number of unnecessary journeys. This could be carried out by working with local GPs, residential aged care facilities and community centres and adopting telehealth initiatives to deliver health care at a distance. For example, this could be achieved using tools such as web-based videoconferencing, remote telemonitoring of patients in their home, and use of wearable technologies and apps on personal devices.</p> |
| Parking considerations | If parking rules are used to incentivise behavioural change, resources must be allocated towards enforcement to maximise impact of these rules. Automated traffic counts at car parks/hospital entrances can provide valuable data on vehicle usage. |
| Policies and guidelines | As public sector institutions, hospitals must abide by Government policies, directives and requirements. |
| Staff churn | With many part-time and casual staff, there can be a significant churn in employees. This means that travel plan messages need to be communicated repeatedly and often and should be added to induction materials for new staff. |
| Staff demographics | A significant percentage of hospital staff are female. This can elevate the importance of safety and lighting for public walk-ways and cycle ways in the precinct. Some staff members may have family commitments and need to pick up/drop off children or others on the way to/from work which may prevent active travel. |
| Staff working shifts | Many hospital staff work shifts which can create challenges and opportunities, as well as a number of travel surges throughout the day and night which may need to be considered. If reducing congestion is a key goal of the travel plan, its scope and activities can focus on the morning and afternoon peak transport periods, with midday, evening and night time frames a lesser priority. Timing of staff shifts, and patient appointments can be considered so they do not coincide with peak rush hour times when possible. Flexible work policies and practices can be considered, primarily for office-based staff. |
| 24/7 operation of the site | Travel plan activities will always need to ensure transport options and access to the transport options are safe and secure, including at night. |
| Visitors to the site | The scale of visitor travel, and how they travel, could be an important influence on local traffic conditions. Charging for visitor parking spaces has been introduced in many locations. Private hospital buses have also been introduced by some hospitals. |