

# Introduction

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## 1.1 NHS travel plans in London

A travel plan is a package of measures aimed at addressing transport and travel issues associated with a Trust's activities.

A Trust's travel plan may address some or all of the following:

- staff travel to and from work
- staff travel in the course of work
- patient and visitor travel to Trust site(s)
- use of fleet vehicles
- deliveries and contractors

A travel plan is a dynamic process that develops over time according to the changing circumstances of the Trust site and the environment in which it operates. Effective plans involve staff, patients and visitors in finding new ways to reduce the traffic impact of health facilities and for improving transport options to the site. They depend on enthusiastic promotion of new ideas and initiatives.

### 1.2 Why develop a travel plan?

For Trusts located in **outer** London, problems with car parking and congestion on or around a site can be a key motivation for developing a travel plan. In such instances a travel plan seeks to encourage travel by alternatives to driving alone, in order to reduce the number of cars coming on to the site.

For sites located in **central** London where parking is generally limited, the motivator is more likely to be a need to improve people's ability to access the site by public transport,

walking or cycling and/or a need to reduce car travel between Trust sites.

Important benefits of introducing a London-based Trust travel plan include:

- Bringing all transport and travel initiatives and Trust transport policies together into one co-ordinated package. This in itself helps staff, patients and visitors identify the full set of transport options available to them for their journey to the site.
- Helping to mitigate the increased cost of driving in central London as a result of the Congestion Charge, for instance, by introducing alternative fuelled vehicles into a Trust's vehicle fleet which are exempt from the charge, and by rationalising delivery regimes.
- Improved travel to hospitals for staff, patients and visitors, helping with staff recruitment and retention, an ongoing problem in the NHS.
- Reduced costs of:
  - Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services provided by the Trust, by helping patients travel by other means where possible.
  - Staff travel undertaken in the course of work, by encouraging travel by alternatives to single occupancy car use.
- Encouraging more sustainable travel, thereby meeting important objectives of a Trust's environmental policy to minimise harmful impacts on the local environment.

- Helping to secure planning approval for redevelopment or relocation projects. A good travel plan is generally an essential requirement as a condition of planning permission.

Further information about the benefits of developing a travel plan can be found in sections 1.6 and 2.2.3 of *A Travel Plan Resources Pack for Employers*.

### 1.3 National and local policy supporting travel plan development

Travel plans are an important management activity in all busy locations. Government introduced the travel plan concept a few years ago in order to focus attention on

the need for better travel arrangements to large workplaces and to other major traffic generators such as hospitals, universities, and schools. Without concerted action to ensure that people have the opportunity to use alternatives to the car to get to and from these locations, the growing accessibility, congestion and parking problems in such places will get worse.

The Department of Health recognised that travel plans are not only important for the smooth running of hospitals and other health sector sites, but also fit well with encouraging healthier living. The Department has supported the introduction of travel plans in several national policy directions.<sup>1</sup> The Department for Transport has also taken steps to promote the concept in local transport policy and in planning guidance.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Department of Health and NHS travel plan policy.** The health sector is a key travel generator; it has been estimated that 5% of all traffic is generated by the NHS. This traffic impacts on health, causes air pollution and contributes to congestion, road accidents and community severance. As a way of reducing these impacts the NHS is required to develop travel plans. This is specified in:

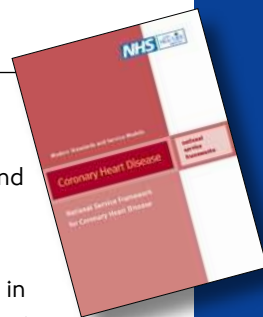
- The Department of Health's Controls Assurance Standards—the 2003–2004 standards were published in October 2003 (see [www.info.doh.gov.uk](http://www.info.doh.gov.uk))
- The Environmental Strategy for the NHS (April 2002) (see [www.nhsestates.gov.uk](http://www.nhsestates.gov.uk))
- The National Service Framework for Coronary Heart Disease (March 2002) (see [www.doh.gov.uk](http://www.doh.gov.uk))



Travel plans also contribute towards the Improving Working Lives initiative by increasing travel options for staff and promoting more flexible working.

Actively involving patients and visitors in the development and implementation of travel plans also helps to achieve the remit of the Commission of Patient and Public Involvement of 'ensuring that the public is involved in decision making about health and provision of health services.' (see: [www.cppih.org](http://www.cppih.org))

The Department of Health White Paper 'Our Healthier Nation' set out policy options and targets for improving health by 2010. The report stated that 'transport has been identified as a major factor [in health development] for the following reasons: air quality, lack of exercise and fitness (links to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, strokes and osteoporosis), equity of access to goods and services...' (see: [www.ohn.gov.uk](http://www.ohn.gov.uk))



## 1.4 Travel plan policy in London

The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets the agenda for fundamental change in the approach to transport planning in London. This sets out a vision for a sustainable world city which is:

- prosperous
- people friendly
- accessible
- fair
- green

The Strategy identifies the significant negative effects of traffic congestion and pollution, and the need to tackle these through a variety of strategies and schemes. Changing travel behaviour is seen to be an important tool to be developed in partnership with key players, and travel plans are recognised as one initiative that can be employed to promote sustainable travel.

The Strategy sees the London boroughs, in conjunction with Transport for London and key partners including business, health authorities and educational establishments, developing programmes to encourage individuals and organisations to adopt more sustainable modes of transport. These will include:

- **Travel awareness campaigns:** the London boroughs will develop programmes to make people aware of the benefits of sustainable travel.
- **Workplace travel plans:** the London boroughs, in partnership with Transport for London, are developing a programme to provide travel advice. Employers will be encouraged to establish travel plans and these will be an integral part of development applications.

The Strategy also intends that transport initiatives and plans should contribute to improving the health of all Londoners by:

- Promoting healthier methods of transport.

### <sup>2</sup> **Department for Transport travel plan policy.**

The Transport White Paper *A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone* (1998) stated: 'We are particularly keen that hospitals are seen to be taking the lead in changing travel habits. By the very nature of their work, hospitals should be sending the right message to their communities on acting responsibly on health issues. We would like to see all hospitals producing green transport plans'. Other sections within the White Paper established links between transport, sustainability and health. (see [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk))

Wherever a healthcare provider is considering changes to their facilities which will require planning permission, it is likely that a travel plan will be necessary to move the project forward. Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) emphasises the Government's desire to encourage adoption of travel plans through the planning process:


'..hospitals are major generators of travel and should be located so as to maximise their accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. Similarly, proposals to develop, expand or redevelop existing sites should improve access by public transport, walking and cycling.' (see [www.opdm.gov.uk](http://www.opdm.gov.uk))

- Encouraging organisations to review their own transport policies and practices and associated locational decisions from a health promotion perspective.
- Improving the environment in which Londoners live and work.
- Improving transport safety, especially reducing road traffic accidents and fatalities.
- Providing access to key health services and facilities.
- Taking account of inequalities in health and environmental quality across London in deciding which transport improvements have priority. (see [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk))

The **London Health Strategy**, developed by the London Health Commission, has identified transport as one of four priority areas for action. The strategy acknowledges that ‘the health sector has a substantial transport ‘footprint’ in London because of the concentration of NHS hospitals, primary care facilities and research institutions in the capital... Access to workplaces and other facilities can also be influenced, both directly through transport provision and indirectly through integrated transport and land use planning measures. (see [www.londonhealth.gov.uk](http://www.londonhealth.gov.uk))

**Further information about policies and initiatives relevant to the evolution of travel plans can be found in section 1.7.2 and Appendix 1A of *A Travel Plan Resources Pack for Employers*.**

## 1.5 Transport and health

Obesity, coronary heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure are on the increase in Britain. One of the key reasons for this is a lack of physical activity. From a health perspective, a travel plan that incorporates and promotes increased walking and cycling is a sensible and easy way to introduce exercise into the normal working day, helping to reverse these trends and to bring about health benefits and improved well-being. As a provider of health care services, the NHS should be leading by example and encouraging travel by healthier, sustainable modes. Some facts and figures to underline the importance of promoting healthier lifestyles with regard to diet and exercise are provided in Appendix 1A ).

## 1.6 The organisation of transport in London

### The Greater London Authority

The structure of transport administration in London has been simplified in recent years, but it is still fairly complex. The **Mayor** is responsible for the oversight of transport in London and as well as a number of specific duties, has the power to do anything that will promote economic and social development, and environmental improvement. The Mayor produces a series of plans and policies covering transport; planning and development; economic development and regeneration; culture; and a range of environmental issues including noise, waste and air quality. **The London Assembly**, comprising 25 members who were all elected at the same time as the Mayor, is able to examine the Mayor’s activities and question him about his decisions. The Mayor and the Assembly, together with around 600

support staff, make up the **Greater London Authority**, a unique form of strategic city-wide government for London. (see [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk))

The Mayor published a Transport Strategy for London in July 2001. The Strategy gives a long term view of how London's transport will develop and covers all modes of transport. It is an invaluable resource because it sets out the Mayor's priorities and also provides background information about transport in London.

### Transport for London

Transport for London is the body tasked with delivering the Mayor's transport policies and is responsible for:

- **The Transport for London Road Network**—the major roads in London (other than Motorways). These include A40, the North and South Circulars, A1, A23 etc. The Network makes up only 5% of London's roads, but these roads carry 25% of London's traffic. The borough councils look after the rest of the road network. Transport for London is also responsible for other road issues such as the Congestion Charge, and strategies for walking and cycling.
  - **London's Buses**
  - **London Underground**
  - **Docklands Light Railway**
  - **Croydon Tramlink**
  - **River Services**
- **Specialist services**—these include specialist services for old people or those with disabilities such as Dial a Ride and Taxicard.

Further information about Transport for London's role in delivering public transport across London is provided in section 5.