

the national neonatal transport programme



an information leaflet for parents

What is the National Neonatal Transport Programme?

The National Neonatal Transport Programme (NNTP) is a retrieval service for premature/sick infants aged up to six weeks (after their due date), who require transfer between hospitals for intensive care. The NNTP provides stabilisation advice and intensive care at the referring hospital, prior to, as well throughout the transport process.

While the majority of the infants are forward transfers to Dublin Hospitals, the NNTP also transfers neonates to regional neonatal intensive care units nationally and internationally as appropriate. So too, infants who still require intensive care management are returned to their original hospital by the NNTP.

The NNTP Transport Teams

Under the leadership of a **Neonatal Transport Consultant**, the transport team consists of:

- A **Neonatal Medical Registrar**
- A **Neonatal Transport Nurse**
- An **Ambulance Driver/EMT** (road transports)
- **Air Crew/Paramedic** (air transports)



The clinical teams are comprised of skilled and experienced medical and nursing staff from the three Dublin maternity hospitals together with staff from the National Ambulance Service (NAS) and/or the Irish Air Corps (IAC). Each hospital is on call every third week on a rotational basis.

How does the NNTP operate?

The programme operates **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** and the transport team is ready to mobilise within **45 minutes** of receiving a call. The team travels in ambulances which have been designed and equipped specifically for the transfer of premature/sick infants.

Occasionally, the NNTP will travel in IAC aircraft which have also been specially adapted and equipped for the needs of our vulnerable population (for example overseas transports, bad road conditions or where there is an urgent transport over a long distance).



Information for parents

- The NNTP encourages parents to be present when the team arrive in order to discuss the transfer. The team will speak with parents informing them of the reasons for and what is involved in the transport of their son or daughter. They will then be asked to acknowledge that they have understood and agree with this information by signing an NNTP Consent to Transfer and Treatment Form. If parents are unavailable at the hospital, then the team will contact them by phone and obtain a witnessed verbal consent prior to transfer.

- If the mother is still an in-patient she may request a transfer to the same hospital as her infant.
- Parents are encouraged to take photographs of their infant prior to departure or request that photographs be taken of their infant.
- Parents may touch or hold their infant (if medically permissible).
- Parents are free to arrange a religious or cultural rite (where circumstances permit).
- Parents are provided with a liaison contact name and telephone number at the receiving hospital who will update them on their infant's condition at the earliest possible time after the transfer.
- The NNTP will also contact the parents on arrival at the receiving hospital with an update on how their infant travelled.
- Parents are provided with the GPS coordinates for the receiving hospital.
- For health and safety reasons it is preferable that parents do not follow the ambulance.



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