



Provision of Domiciliary Oxygen for Travel in WA Guideline

1. Guiding Principles

The Western Australian Department of Health funds the provision of clinically appropriate domiciliary oxygen therapy to West Australians who have chronic hypoxaemia.

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) supports flexibility in the supply of oxygen therapy for patients when travelling for prolonged periods away from their usual place of permanent residence.

Patients' travel destination is unrestricted within WA and suppliers of domiciliary oxygen must ensure that instructions are provided in the Safe Handling and Transport of Medical Gases.

2. Guideline

This guideline is to ensure the flexible supply of domiciliary oxygen to Western Australians who meet the clinical indications for therapeutic benefit from the provision of domiciliary oxygen.

In the event that a patient travels away from their usual place of permanent residence, whether metropolitan or rural, they will be provided with a travel pack for their journey by their usual provider of oxygen and the cost of this is met by their usual provider.

In addition, the patient should be advised to take relevant clinical information from their doctor regarding their oxygen needs to assist other health service providers.

WA Health provides Domiciliary Oxygen information via the [WA Health Respiratory Health Network](#) internet page. The Western Australian [Domiciliary Oxygen Referral Form](#) is used. The form includes a referral form; information sheet covering indications, contraindications for domiciliary oxygen therapy; and a sample proforma letter for residential aged care facilities. A WACHS [Domiciliary Oxygen Referral Contacts Sheet](#) for regional contacts responsible for supplying oxygen in is also available.

2.1 Country Patients Travelling to the Metropolitan Area

While at their temporary location, if the oxygen supply the patient has on hand is inadequate for their stay or return journey, the patient is able to seek assistance from the nearest hospital or Silver Chain location in the metropolitan area.

Where practical, patients are encouraged to take their oxygen concentrators with them when they travel away from home. Alternatively, and where economical, the nearest hospital to where the patient is temporarily residing may arrange for the loan of an oxygen concentrator.

The nearest hospital / Silver Chain location in the metropolitan area will assess the situation and where possible, will exchange cylinder(s) on the basis of one full C size cylinder for each empty C size cylinder returned. Where the hospital / Silver Chain in

the metropolitan area is unable to exchange cylinders due to lack of stock, it will endeavour to source the required oxygen from its usual supplier for the patient.

The cost of the oxygen exchange shall be borne by Silver Chain in the metropolitan area.

[Silver Chain](#) Phone: (08) 9242 9247 Country Callers: 1300 650 803

Country Patients may use their BOC account number to exchange cylinders, like for like, at any BOC outlet that holds medical gas, anywhere in WA. This will get charged to the hospital that holds their account.

2.2 Metropolitan Patients Travelling to the Country

While at their temporary location, if the oxygen supply the patient has on hand is inadequate for their stay or return journey, the patient is able to seek assistance from the nearest hospital/ health service.

Where practical, patients are encouraged to take their oxygen concentrators with them when they travel away from home. Alternatively, and where economical, the nearest hospital/ health service to where the patient is temporarily residing may arrange for the loan of an oxygen concentrator. A current script on the Domiciliary Oxygen referral Form will be required by that hospital and making contact a few weeks ahead of the planned trip is advisable.

The nearest hospital or health service will assess the situation and where possible will exchange cylinder(s) on the basis of one full C size cylinder for each empty C size cylinder returned. Where the hospital/ health service is unable to exchange cylinders due to lack of stock it is to endeavour to source the required oxygen from its usual supplier for the patient.

The cost of the oxygen exchange shall be borne by the WA Country Health Service hospital or health service.

Patients' travel destination is unrestricted within WA and suppliers of domiciliary oxygen must ensure that instructions are provided in the Safe Handling and Transport of Medical Gases.

2.3 Patients Travelling by Air

Patients travelling by air are encouraged to obtain a 'Fitness to Fly' form from their carrier to be completed by their general practitioner. This will provide them with the appropriate documentation to undertake air travel with oxygen cylinders.

- [Qantas Information – Medical Travel Clearance Guidelines](#)
- [Virgin Australia](#) (Go to Travel information/specific travel/specific needs and assistance/medical conditions/oxygen. This page has the medical clearance guidelines and form)
- [Air North](#) (Go to "Flying with Us", then "Medical Clearance", or phone 8920 4001)
- [Regional Express](#) (Go to "plan and book/purchase options/special requirements then "[oxygen and breathing aids](#)")
- [Jetstar](#) (Go to Help/Specific Assistance/Travel Oxygen)
- [Alliance](#) (Go to Flying with Us/Travel Clearance/Medical Clearance Form)

3. Definitions

Silver Chain	The Silver Chain Nursing Association is an organisation that, in the metropolitan areas, also manages supply of domiciliary oxygen and/or equipment.
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) clerks who are arranging travel for eligible patients are to have access to this guideline.

General practitioners who have patients that are travelling to the metropolitan area or intra-state have access to this guideline.

WACHS medical and nursing staff are to be familiar with this guideline.

Patients who are receiving domiciliary oxygen are to be familiar with this guideline.

5. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

6. Records Management

All WACHS corporate records must be stored in the approved Electronic Documents and Records Management System as per the WACHS [Records Management Policy](#).

All WACHS clinical records must be managed in accordance with [Health Record Management Policy](#).

7. Evaluation

This guideline is to be reviewed every five (5) years or sooner, if required.

8. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Care Standards](#) – 1.27

9. Legislation

Nil

10. References

[Silver Chain](#)
[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

11. Related Forms

[Domiciliary Oxygen Referral Form](#) (WA Respiratory Health Network)

12. Related Policy Documents

Nil

13. Related WA Health Resources

[Respiratory Health Network](#)

WACHS [Domiciliary Oxygen referrals contact sheet](#)

14. Policy Framework

[Clinical Governance, Safety and Quality Policy Framework](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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