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| Stretcher requirements – 2021 amendments |
| Non emergency patient transport |
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# References

Non-Emergency Patient Transport Regulations 2016 Part 9, Regulation 50-51

Non-Emergency Patient Transport Regulations 2016 Division 3, Regulation 11-13

# Introduction

Changes have been made to the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Regulations 2016 with reference to stretcher requirements of vehicles. These changes have been developed to provide a safer working environment for NEPT providers and to promote patient safety through enhanced clinical monitoring.

# Number of patients per vehicle

* **Low acuity patient** – if a stretcher vehicle is utilised the vehicle must have a maximum of two patients in the stretcher vehicle patient compartment, provided minimum distance requirements between stretchers are met.
* **Medium acuity patient** – must be transported in a stretcher vehicle in a patient compartment and must have a maximum of one patient in the vehicle
* **High acuity patient** – must be transported in a stretcher vehicle in a patient compartment and must have a maximum of one patient in the vehicle
* Note that the limits on patient numbers apply only where a patient is transported in a stretcher vehicle and do not apply to clinic cars or hoist vehicles.

# Double Stretcher vehicles

It is mandated in the 2021 regulations that double stretcher vehicles are only to be used for the transport of low acuity patients.

* If this configuration is used there is a new mandated separation distance of 350 mm between the stretchers within the patient compartment
* Power lift stretchers are required in this category of vehicle.
* These requirements will be immediate for any vehicle brought into service after November 30th 2021
* For any vehicle already in service prior to 30th November 2021 there is a period of transition
  + 30th November 2026 all double stretcher vehicles must adhere to the 350mm between stretchers

# Power lift stretchers and lifting cushions

Changes in the 2021 regulations mandate that all stretchers carried in vehicles are power lift stretchers. It is further mandated that any stretcher carrying vehicle now be provided with a lifting cushion.

* For any new vehicle brought into service by a licence holder after the 30th of November this requirement will be immediate.
* For any vehicle already in service prior to the 30th of November 2021 there is a period of transition
  + 30th November 2022 all stretcher vehicles must have a lifting cushion available.
  + 30th November 2024 all stretcher vehicles must have a power lift stretcher installed.

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