

HSU ban on loading multiple patients unless both are ambulant

The HSU has received a number of complaints from members regarding the multiple loading of patients coming from or going to separate places, meaning the crew must leave one of the patients alone in the vehicle. Note, loading more than one ambulant patient should be okay because one PTO can stay behind with one of the patients while the other patient is being assisted. Clearly this cannot occur for non-ambulant patients who require two or more PTOs to assist due to mobility issues (which will lead to one of the patients being left unattended).

The HSU is firmly against the practice of leaving some of society's most vulnerable people alone in the back of a vehicle for an indefinite amount of time whilst the crew complete the handover of another patient. Furthermore, we are concerned as to whom is responsible for the care of the patient who has been left in the vehicle whilst the crew are not present.

Asking a nurse or other health worker to look after a patient while you are gone is not appropriate either – what happens if they get called away to support one of their own patients?

Multiple loading of patients under the abovementioned circumstances is irresponsible, dangerous and not in keeping with the crew's duty of care to their patients. Furthermore, it is not in keeping with Healthshare's duty of care to their staff. As a result, the HSU calls upon our members to refuse these jobs if they are allocated to you.

It is not up to management to interpret this ban; that is, as an HSU member, follow it to the letter. If HealthShare has a problem with it, they can take us to the IRC, rather than arguing with individual union members.

If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the Ambulance Division Organiser Peter Morris on 0419 693 358.

Stuart Hatter
Divisional Manager Ambulance