How can community transport systems be improved?

There is currently a pilot for Integrated Transport work, in the Lochaber area, which commences in May to look at solutions around a more flexible and coordinated approach to the use of transport in the area. To include NHS Highland transport/Highland Council transport/Scottish Ambulance Transport.

It is recognised across the Operational Unit that we do need to have a more strategic approach to community transport and the impact which the lack of transport has on people’s lives, particularly in remote and rural areas.

There is a real demand for community transport in remote and rural areas – Scottish Ambulance Service Patient Transport has been reported as unreliable at times and regularly cancel pre booked arrangements. (eg taking patients to hospitals for out patient appointments). It is not always clinically necessary for transport to be provided by SAS but in some areas there is little or no alternative.

Access to non-emergency patient transport is normally through Scottish Ambulance Patient Transport Service and the Red Cross. Within the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross district they have a separate service level agreement with Red Cross to provide hospital to home/home to hospital and patient transport to community clinics, funded through local NHS budgets.

NHS Highland
North & West Operational Unit
29 April 2013