Statement from the Intensive Care Society (ICS), Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FICM), Association of Anaesthetists and Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA) on staffing models for long-distance and inter-regional transfer services

Given the current unprecedented demand on critical care services as a result of COVID19, a much higher number of inter-hospital transfers of intensive care patients is occurring. Many of these transfers are being undertaken to support units under high pressure, some are taking place over long distances (more than two hours’ journey) and some across regional boundaries. Efforts are currently being coordinated by NHS England, and it is likely that similar schemes will operate in the devolved nations in order to provide equitable care to patients across the UK. The team members who are facilitating these transfers are supernumerary to hospital-based services.

These transfers should be undertaken by individuals who are experienced and competent in the transfer of critically ill patients. The ICS, FICM, Association and RCoA support the criteria below that outline the minimum skills, knowledge and experience required of the transfer team members who would conduct inter-regional or long-distance transfer of Level 3 (intensive care) patients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doctor</th>
<th>Second escort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills and knowledge</strong>*</td>
<td>Competent to undertake intensive care transfers as determined by a competency-based assessment, or evidence of prior experience of intensive care transfers. In most cases this would require a level of training and experience commensurate with ST5 or higher in anaesthesia or intensive care medicine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
<td>Intensive Care Medicine, Anaesthesia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-hospital transfer experience</td>
<td>Essential. Specific experience of air transfer for individuals undertaking these types of transfer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Supplementary information

- Skills and knowledge required include the ability to provide ongoing delivery of critical care and the management of deterioration and emergencies whilst in transit.
• Recent or ongoing critical care and inter-hospital transfer experience is as important as level of training (or equivalent) in ensuring patient safety.
• For doctors in training grades, senior (consultant level) support must be available (distant supervision)

**Examples of evidence for competency include:**

**FICM Curriculum:**

- [Part III](#), Transport: page 71
- [Part V](#), Transfer Medicine: page 48

**RCoA Curriculum:**

- Intermediate Level Training ([Annex C](#)), Transfer Medicine: page 44
- Higher Level Training ([Annex D](#)), Transfer Medicine: page 31