



## NIAS Bypass Protocol

Version 1.2

### Causeway Hospital

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Version 1.2	For use by:
06/02/2024	Advanced Practitioners
	Paramedics
	Registered Nurses (CSD)
	Emergency Medical Technicians



**Contents:**

Introduction.....	4
Catchment area and hours of operation .....	5
Inclusion Criteria.....	5
Exclusion Criteria.....	6-7
Further information	
Transfer of patients from Causeway Hospital to Antrim Area Hospital or Altnagelvin.....	8
Antenatal/Obstetric transfers from Causeway Hospital .....	8
Transport not required/patient making their own way .....	9
Requests from Health Care Professionals (HCPs) .....	9
Flowchart: NIAS Guidance for Causeway Hospital Bypass .....	10
References .....	11

Bypass Protocol for Causeway HospitalIntroduction

Following review of available services inclusion and exclusion criteria have been established for patients attending the Causeway Hospital. Patients who do **NOT** meet the relevant criteria or present with a condition listed in the exclusion criteria should be brought instead to the nearest alternative Emergency Department/Obstetric Department. i.e., Antrim Area Hospital or Altnagelvin Hospital.

NIAS may still receive calls to collect patients from the ED for discharge or transfer to other hospitals, or to transfer patients to or from wards within Causeway and will undertake these transfers as normal.

These changes are in addition to protocols previously issued relating to the most appropriate destination for patients with major and significant trauma as well as those previously issued NIAS destination protocols for acute STEMI, acute stroke etc.

The following is intended as a reference for responding crews to help identify the most appropriate destination for specific groups of patients.

The Emergency Department at Causeway Hospital will continue to operate as normal for the assessment of patients with a range of conditions.

A daytime maternity clinic will continue to operate on the Causeway site for routine outpatient assessment of antenatal patients, but inpatient services including labour wards have been withdrawn.

This protocol is aimed at ensuring that:

- Patients with time-sensitive conditions receive definitive care in the shortest possible time at the most appropriate site.
- The impact of these changes on NIAS resources is minimised and the ability to maintain a 999-ambulance response to the community of the Northern area is preserved as far as possible.

**Catchment area and hours of operation**

Patients not requiring an alternative destination within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust catchment area may be brought to Causeway Hospital on a 24/7 basis. It is advised that if in any doubt regarding the appropriateness of bringing a specific patient to Causeway Hospital, NIAS crews should contact Causeway ED to discuss the case directly with clinical staff via the usual standby number [REDACTED]

**Inclusion Criteria:**

- Call locations should be within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust catchment area (i.e., the normal catchment area for Causeway Hospital).
- If ambulance clinicians are unsure if the presentation is suitable, they should still consider a clinical conversation with the Causeway ED clinician- Causeway ED welcomes calls to discuss cases on an individual basis.
- Normal protocols will remain in place for calls arising within the catchment area of Causeway Hospital and for all other medical and other specialty conditions.

**Exclusion Criteria:**

Patients presenting with **ANY** of the following conditions **MUST NOT** be transported to Causeway Hospital:

Trauma:

All trauma patients should be managed in line with the Northern Ireland Major Trauma Network (NIMTN) Major Trauma Triage Tool.



<https://jrcalcplusweb.co.uk/pathways/recn6aJj4AT6Mhfsn>

Neurological:

All Stroke patients should be managed in line with the NIAS Acute Stroke Pathway.



<https://jrcalcplusweb.co.uk/pathways/recJvHVfpIFciBWBF>

Cardiovascular:

ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) patients should be managed in line with the STEMI Pathway (JRCALC Plus)



<https://jrcalcplusweb.co.uk/pathways/reclDczlsBRIHWaca>

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Any patient presenting with a Maternity/Obstetric emergency as outlined below should **NOT** be transported to Causeway Hospital.

- Onset of normal labour
- Primary obstetric and antenatal emergencies (From 20 weeks gestation onwards- Support continues to be provided in Causeway up to 20 weeks gestation).
- Recent delivery requiring hospital assessment of either mother or child.
- Post partum complications (e.g., postpartum haemorrhage)

Patients in the traditional Causeway Hospital Area with acute obstetric presentations (as outlined above) should not be brought to the Causeway Hospital unless requiring immediate resuscitation (e.g., cardiac arrest or the inability to successfully manage airway / uncontrolled external haemorrhage / ongoing eclamptic seizures).

Instead, patients should be brought to the nearest appropriate maternity unit (Antrim Area Hospital or Altnagelvin Hospital).

- If the patient has severely ***abnormal*** physiological parameters or evidence of significant haemorrhage, then they should be transported directly to the ***nearest*** unit with consultant cover and a pre-alert call must be placed.
- If the patient has ***normal*** physiological parameters and has no sign of significant haemorrhage, then they should be transported directly to their ***"booked"*** delivery hospital.

### Further Information

#### **Transfer of patients from Causeway Hospital to Antrim Area Hospital (AAH) or Altnagelvin Hospital**

Emergency transfer requests should be made via the normal process for requesting Interfacility Transfers (NIAS IFT protocol introduced in October 2020) with appropriate triage to identify the level of response based on whether the condition is identified as “Immediately life threatening”, “Serious but not immediately life threatening”, “Urgent” or “Routine”. It is essential that such patients are triaged purely on clinical need in order to avoid disadvantaging patients (community and hospital) with a more time-sensitive condition.

#### **Antenatal / obstetric transfers from Causeway Hospital.**

Crews may still receive calls to transfer patients from the maternity clinic in Causeway to other sites (including direct to the delivery suites or neonatal units). Some of these transfers may be undertaken by the regional NISTAR team, but the majority will be handled via the normal NIAS protocol for emergency interfacility transfers (IFT). During normal working hours, such patients should be accompanied by a midwife from Causeway Hospital. If a call is received to transfer a mother and baby together, crews will facilitate this request as far as practically possible within the confines of carrying extra equipment or personnel on board the ambulance. However, it is not always possible to return hospital personnel to their base hospital and they should be advised of this prior to transfer to enable the Northern Trust to make alternative arrangements.

**Transport not required / patient making own way.**

It is recognised there will be times when it is wholly appropriate for ambulance clinicians to convey a patient to a destination/ care facility as part of the referring process.

Where patients do not require immediate conveyance and there is no requirement for on-going treatment or assessment from the referring clinician, then Paramedics are authorised to, and should, explore alternative transport options to release emergency response resources. This may include self/ family transport, requesting ICV/PCS to convey within an agreed time frame, contracted taxi providers. When arranging alternative transport, the ability of such to facilitate conveyance within the appropriate timeframe must be considered. This may involve discussing expected response times with EAC when requesting ICV transport or ensuring family with access to transport are nearby, for example. It is the responsibility of the NIAS paramedic to ensure any alternative transport is appropriate and adequate safety-net advice is provided/ left with the patient.

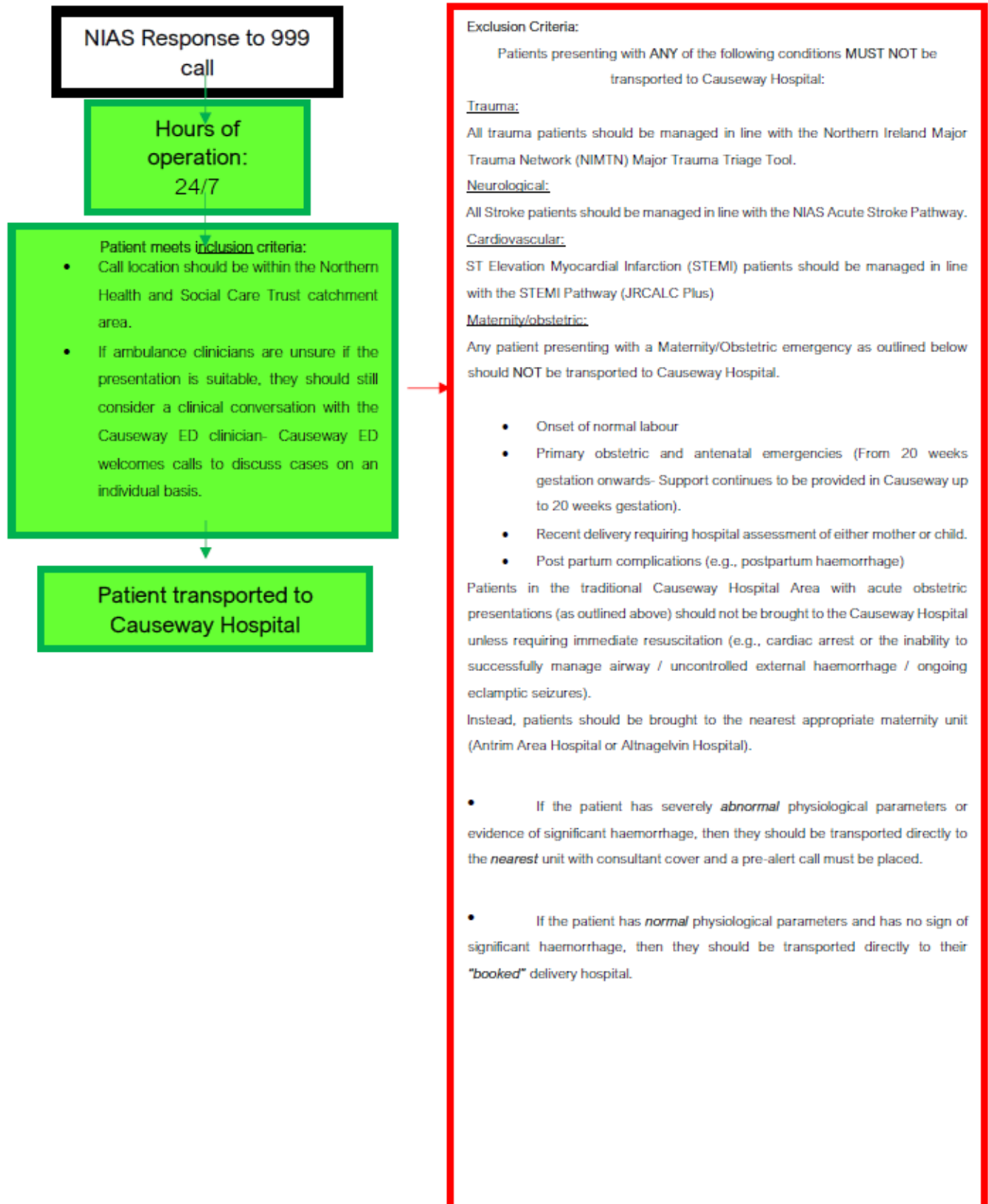
If advising patients who present with any of the exclusion criteria above to self-transport to hospital, NIAS clinical support desk staff will recommend that they proceed directly to Altnagelvin Hospital or Antrim Area Hospital rather than attend the Causeway Hospital. The same approach will be taken by the Northern Trust for patients who contact their "phone first" service.

**Requests from Health Care Professionals**

Health Care Professionals (HCPs) working in the community e.g., General Practitioners will be advised of the destination criteria by the Northern HSC Trust. NIAS will continue to follow guidance previously issued by the Chief Medical Officer affording HCPs the primacy in determining the most appropriate destination facility for their patients.

**Flowchart: NIAS Bypass Protocol Causeway Hospital**

To be used in conjunction with NIAS Bypass Protocol Causeway Hospital



**References:**

Northern Ireland Major Trauma Triage Tool v2.5 (June 2023)

NIAS Ambulance Response Framework for Health Care Professionals (2021)

NIAS Ambulance Response Framework for Interfacility Transfers (2021)