

Guidelines for funding travel/accommodation for potential live kidney donors not resident in New Zealand (NZ).

This guideline is designed to support decision making around funding travel and accommodation for non-NZ residents who wish to donate a kidney to NZ eligible individuals in NZ.

Individual DHBs have the discretion to fund return travel and other costs to support individuals to travel to NZ for the purposes of directed live kidney donation. This may enable kidney transplantation for an individual who is domiciled in NZ and eligible for NZ funded healthcare who might otherwise not have a live donor.

Funding decision to support travel to NZ is separate from support for travel within NZ, which is covered under the National Travel Assistance Scheme

Funding of travel to and from NZ is the responsibility, and solely at the discretion, of the DHB of domicile of the recipient.

The National Travel Assistance (NTA) scheme provides for travel and accommodation **within** NZ. Donors who are normal resident elsewhere but travel to NZ are eligible for NTA support once they are in NZ. All live kidney donors who travel to NZ to donate a kidney should be registered for NTA. NTA funding for donors is the responsibility of the DHB of domicile of the recipient.

Why and when DHBs support travel to and from NZ for the purposes of kidney donation

The DHB of domicile of the recipient should choose to support the international travel of a potential donor where it is **very likely** that a transplant will occur as a result, because this is likely to improve the outcomes for the recipient, and to reduce overall health expenditure substantially (due to elimination of dialysis requirement and reductions in other health related costs).

Overseas based donors must be assessed to the same standards as NZ-based donors and part of the assessment must take place in NZ.

All live kidney donors who donate kidneys in NZ should have the same standard of assessment irrespective of where they normally live. If potential donors live overseas, their assessment should be completed as much as is possible in their home country. The assessment should then be transferred to the relevant transplant centre for review by a transplant nephrologist.

To ensure appropriate use of health resources, NZ- based kidney transplant specialists must review all available information about a potential donor to confirm

there is a *very high likelihood of proceeding to transplant* before recommending a DHB commit funding for travel and accommodation for a potential donor.

The costs of travel within NZ and accommodation for assessment, donation and recuperation are covered under NTA, because the donor is eligible for support once they are in NZ. Paid accommodation time during assessment will be minimised by efficient scheduling of assessments. Typically, assessments can be completed within 2-3 weeks if they are arranged in advance of travel to NZ. Precise time commitment will vary, and will be estimated prior to travel.

It may be clinically appropriate that elements of the assessment are completed or repeated after the potential donor arrives in NZ (for example, review by a transplant nephrologist).

Travel to NZ to complete assessment and then undergo donation may be appropriate but will necessitate a longer period of accommodation. It may be more cost efficient to have the donor travel to NZ twice (once for assessment, and then a second time for donation).

In summary, travel to and from NZ should only be funded if:

- 1) An assessment has been undertaken in the country of residence of the donor, as far as it may reasonably be done
- 2) A transplant nephrologist has completed the attached form after review of the local assessment documentation, indicating it is *very likely* that a transplant will occur if the potential donor travels to NZ
- 3) The potential recipient has completed assessment and has been accepted for live kidney donor transplantation (pending availability of a suitable donor) at the relevant transplant centre
- 4) The GM Planning and Funding of the DHB of domicile of the recipient agrees to meet the costs

Transplant Nephrologist Recommendation for travel/accommodation for potential live kidney donors not resident in New Zealand (NZ).

This form must be completed prior to any arrangement of travel being arranged to NZ and should be submitted as early in the process as possible to the GM planning and funding at the DHB of Domicile of the recipient (or their delegate) through the agreed local DHB process and including the local National Travel Assistance (NTA) coordinator/coordination arrangements. In order to ensure timely clinical decision making and discussion with potential donors a decision regarding the level of support should be ideally made within seven days.

Potential donor name:

Potential donor NHI (if available):

Potential donor Date of Birth:

Recipient Name:

Recipient NHI:

Recipient Date of Birth:

Recipient postcode:

Recipient DHB of domicile:

I, _____ (Transplant Nephrologist) affirm that I expect a transplant is **very likely to occur as a result of this individual travelling to NZ** and therefore recommend that the DHB of domicile of the recipient fund this travel. I also confirm that:

- 1) the recipient has been accepted as a candidate for live donor transplantation:
 - 2) the recipient is aware and accepting of the offer of this donor:
 - 3) as much as possible of the live donor work-up has been performed and is satisfactory and supports travel to NZ for
 - a) final assessment and confirmation of suitability for live donation
- AND/OR
- b) for the purposes of kidney donation
- 4) baseline renal function had been checked and is satisfactory

- 5) basic screening questions have been answered satisfactorily:
- 6) additional tests required in NZ are **available and arranged** in a clinically appropriate but timely fashion to minimize accommodation costs

I estimate that the donor will need to be in NZ from _____ for _____ days

Name

Signature

Date