



3rd October 12

Dear all,

Transport arrangements following the closure of the BIH service on 1st November

LINK received the following on 28/9 from Amanda Fisk, Director of Commissioning at Cornwall and IOS Primary Care Trust:

'I am pleased to be able to report that, through some excellent partnership working, we have been able to find a solution for transporting patients to the mainland for medical appointments following the announcement that British International Helicopters would cease flights to and from the Isles of Scilly.

We are preparing a leaflet for distribution locally but in the meantime I thought you would want to know more about the detail so that you can spread the news among your networks.

The Isles of Scilly Steamship Company, which runs the fixed wing aircraft, Skybus, and the Scillonian III passenger ferry is proposing to enable its aircraft to:

- *Transport patients needing a stretcher, for non-emergency elective cases only. Can be mobilised within an hour but booking ahead expected. Patients who normally use a wheelchair or otherwise could not enter the aircraft unassisted will need to be transported by stretcher.*
- *Carry women who are over 36 weeks pregnant – either by stretcher or in a seat if they can enter unassisted – with a letter from a clinician and an escort if required.*
- *Carry samples and medicines if ISSCo can get a licence; Scillonian or Gry Maritha (cargo ship) to carry meanwhile.*
- *Carry blood for use in transfusions.*

ISSCo will purchase another aircraft which will mean it can double the number of flights currently offered. The company has also pledged to increase flights during the first two weeks of October during the temporary planned stoppage of services by BIH.

I am really pleased that we have been able to reach a pragmatic solution to this problem that we know caused a great deal of concern for islanders.'

I understand that an application for a licence to carry bio-hazard goods by air is underway, however this will take some months.

We recognise and appreciate that the ISSCo are doing everything possible within operational and logistical constraints. We will continue to address ongoing concerns about medical travel, including accessibility of sea/aircraft, through our established Medical Travel-IOS joint working group. We will continue to support the Council, FRIST, and all agencies involved in trying to secure a longer term sustainable solution to the transport issues Scilly faces.

Regards, Carol