

Eligibility Criteria

1. Standard, Attendant Pushed Wheelchairs

Following assessment, attendant pushed wheelchairs will be issued under the following criteria:

1. The user has no, or significantly reduced, walking ability.
2. Demonstrates suitability through height, weight and posture for such a provision
3. The user has a **permanent** or long-term medical condition which affects their ability to walk.
4. The usage will be regular and provide significant improvement to quality of life.
5. There is sufficient evidence that the carer has the physical and cognitive ability for safe usage of equipment.

Please Note

Transit chairs are intended to aid mobility – they must not be used as a substitute for an armchair.

2. Standard, Self-propelling chairs

Following assessment, self-propelling chairs will be issued under the following criteria:

1. The user has no, or significantly reduced, walking ability.
2. Demonstrates suitability through height, weight and posture for such a provision
3. The recommendation for a self-propelling chair has been made by a Doctor or Therapist. Medical approval may be requested following the clinical assessment.
4. The user can demonstrate they are physically able to self propel the wheelchair and it is not contra indicated by their medical condition
5. The user demonstrates cognitive ability to self propel
6. There is sufficient evidence that the carer has the physical and cognitive ability to operate the equipment safely
7. The intended home environment for use is both 'safe' and 'suitable' for the supply.

3. Non Standard Wheelchairs

The user must meet the basic criteria as outlined in 'Attendant or Self-Propelling Chairs'.

Non Standard chairs will be assessed for on an individual basis for users and carers, based on clinical need. Assessment will be undertaken by Wheelchair Service assessor and supply would normally be made from a regionally agreed range of chairs to fulfil the user's clinical needs.

Outside this range the user may consider the wheelchair voucher scheme or purchase their own equipment.

Additionally

1. Assessment and past history show that the standard range of chairs does not adequately address the user's needs.
2. A non standard chair will enhance or maintain a level of independence where a 'standard' chair will not.

4. Tilt in Space Wheelchairs

The user has met the basic criteria as outlined in 'Attendant Pushed Chairs' and in 'Self-Propelling Chairs'.

Additionally

Tilt in space wheelchairs will be issued to facilitate multi-positional caring for dependent wheelchair users:

1. The user has significant clinical needs, which cannot be met in any other wheelchair.
2. Demonstrates suitability through height, weight and posture for such a provision
3. The user will spend a significant time using the variable tilt function on the chair

Please Note

A user is not eligible for provision of this wheelchair as a substitute for provision of an appropriate supportive armchair.

The needs of the main carer will be considered as far as possible but the clinical requirements of the user are the main priority for provision of this equipment

5. Seating Systems

The user has already met the criteria as outlined for wheelchair provision to meet their mobility needs

Additionally

1. The user is a permanent wheelchair user.
2. The user has a clinical, postural requirement which can not be achieved through provision of standard equipment
3. The environment of intended use will be considered as far as possible but the requirements of the user are the main priority for provision of a seating system and chassis.

Please Note

- Please read in conjunction with 'Criteria for Issue – Cushions'.

- 24-hour Postural Management is essential and the wheelchair complete with seating system is an integral part of this. It is advisable to include the identified community therapists at the point of assessment.
- The system provided is intended only for use with wheelchair / base and **not** to be used as a car seat.
- It is not possible to provide a special seating system for use in a privately purchased wheelchair due to issues relating to responsibility and liability

6. Pressure Relieving and Back Cushions

The user has already met the criteria as outlined for wheelchair provision to meet their mobility needs

Additionally

1. Pressure relieving seat and back cushions are only supplied for permanent wheelchair users registered with the service following appropriate assessment by wheelchair service assessor
(Includes chairs supplied through the voucher scheme).
2. Cushions for postural support will be supplied to users who have difficulty in maintaining symmetrical positioning. These will be issued following appropriate assessment by wheelchair service assessor

User preference will be considered but identified clinical need will take priority

Please note

- Alternating air pressure cushions (dynamic pressure cushions) are **not** supplied by the Wheelchair Service.
- Pressure cushions are not supplied from the Wheelchair Service to people for use in armchairs or in cars – this can be accessed by other Health Care Professionals through appropriate Equipment Loans Service
- They are not for use in privately purchased wheelchairs.

Please read in conjunction with 'Criteria for Issue – Seating Systems' (see page 9)

7. Second Manual Wheelchairs

The user has met the criteria as outlined for wheelchair provision to meet their mobility needs

Additionally

1. The user is wheelchair dependent and requires access and mobility on upper floor of their home and have no appropriate means of transporting their existing chair to the upper floor.
2. The second manual chair would be a basic model deemed suitable to meet the users individual/environmental needs

8. Miscellaneous Items

The following listed items are only supplied in accordance with assessment for clinical need to use with the wheelchair issued by the Wheelchair Service.

All accessories must be used in accordance with manufacturers and /or MHRA guidelines, in absences of either advice should be sought via RREMS

Trays

- Will only be supplied as part of the seating system to enhance posture. and communication
- Will be supplied to enhance independence, it is not advisable to transport hot liquids and food in open containers.
- Trays will not be supplied solely to replace desks in schools, dining tables in NH etc.

Headrests

- Will be supplied as part of a seating system for postural control.
- A suitable headrest will be provided for transport where the transport vehicle provides headrests as an integral part of the standard seating for other users in the vehicle. (MDA 2001(3) Guidance on the Safe Transportation of Wheelchairs)

Elevating Leg Rest Supports (ELRS)

- Will be supplied if there is an identified clinical need for leg(s) to be raised up to a maximum of 180° Stability test may be required

Harnesses / Posture belts

- Will only be supplied for postural needs following assessment
- They will **not be provided** for transportation only
- They will **not be provided** for restraint.

Lap Belts

- Will be **supplied** with all wheelchairs.
- They are not to be used for transportation only; separate, appropriate tie down/seat belts should be available within the transport.
- Manufacturers' guidelines for use must be followed.

Oxygen cylinder carriers

- May be fitted on to wheelchairs provided from the service to accommodate portable cylinders subject to clinical need and recommendations by a Rehabilitation Engineer.

Foot Straps

- Will only be supplied to meet an identified clinical need.
- Will **not be supplied** as a means of restrained or behaviour control

Footboards

- May be supplied when the user has difficulty positioning feet on standard foot plates
- The user's feet are extensively unsupported by standard footplates

Stump boards

- Will be provided according to specific clinical need

Spoke Guards

- Will be provided if there is an identified risk of injury, catching fingers in rear wheel spokes

Please note:

Power Packs or alternative power assisted devices are **not** supplied by the Wheelchair Service but may be fitted to chair accessed via independent voucher scheme

9. Wheelchairs for Users resident in a Residential or Nursing Care Home.

1. The Wheelchair Service will issue a wheelchair to users who are resident within a Nursing Home or Care Home if this enables the user to achieve **independence** and they meet the criteria as specified in 'Self-propelling Chairs' and 'Electric Indoor Powered Wheelchairs'.
2. Attendant pushed wheelchairs may be issued if the resident fulfils the basic criteria (taken out by friend or relative at least 3 days per week).

Please note

- Residential and Nursing Home guidelines suggest that the home will provide their own pool of wheelchairs for general purposes, which includes transit within the home and for day trips. (The Provision of Equipment into Care Homes 2004 - *Reference: HSC 2003/006: LAC(2003)7*)
- In conjunction with this section please read Criteria for issue – Attendant pushed Wheelchairs.
- Chairs **will not be issued**
 - As a substitute for the provision of an armchair
 - A means of controlling behaviour
 - As a 'portering' wheelchair.

Existing Manual Wheelchair Users

Wheelchair users moving into Nursing or Residential Care will be able to transfer their wheelchair on issue to them into the care setting.

Existing Powered Wheelchair Users

Wheelchair users moving into Nursing or Residential Care will be able to transfer their powered wheelchair on issue to them into the care setting providing they continue to meet the eligibility criteria including the suitability of the environment.

Powered Wheelchair Referrals

A referral guarantees assessment but not provision of powered equipment. See criteria from pages 19 - 23

N.B. AOCs are not provided solely for the use of paid carers.

10. Wheelchair Provision for Children

Following an assessment an appropriate wheelchair or buggy will be prescribed for the child on the recommendation of the wheelchair therapist or accredited prescribers (from an agreed range of equipment)

The child will meet the general criteria of issue for a standard wheelchair

Additionally

1. Buggies will be provided for children under 30 months old where there is a specific postural need that cannot be addressed by a standard available buggy.

Please Note

- Normally only one wheelchair will be provided per child to be used in all environments e.g. school or home. This does not include powered wheelchair provision where a manual wheelchair or buggy is also provided.
- Rain covers, parasols, cosy toes and shopping trays are not **routinely** supplied for buggies or special pushchairs, as they are not necessary for mobility. However they may be provided in special cases for specific clinical need identified by Wheelchair Service assessor
- Where there is more than one child with mobility difficulties, or another child who is within the acceptable age range for normal transportation within a buggy, the children may be provided with a double buggy following assessment by Wheelchair Service assessor. Clinical need of identified 'main user' must take priority
- Educational seating needs should be addressed by the Local Education Department.
- Communication aids may be fitted with prior agreement by RREMS (accessed via wheelchair service). The service must be informed when communication aids are to be replaced to ensure compatibility as at first time of issue.

- A buggy or wheelchair will not be provided as a means of restraint
However equipment may be provided if Health & Safety issues are identified following a full risk assessment
- Parents / carers can purchase accessories privately from the supplying company or other retail outlets, e.g. Mothercare, Argos – universal rain covers suits most buggies.
- **22kg minimum weight for transportation in Wheelchairs and buggies**
- Wheelchairs and buggies are provided to meet your child's clinical needs for mobility purposes only. While a holistic assessment is undertaken and lifestyle is considered this is the prime remit of provision of equipment.
- It has been identified by manufacturers, that mobility equipment has been transport approved only for occupants weighing over 22kg (3 st 7lbs) only. Wheelchair services advise that the equipment issued to your child is transport approved only if your child weight more than this identified weight
- Wheelchair Services advise that your child transfer into an appropriate car seat for transportation as identified in manufacturers guidelines. If this is impracticable then the transport provider, and /or paediatric therapist as appropriate, have the responsibility to complete a risk assessment, to meet appropriate seating requirements and minimise risk.

11. POWERED WHEELCHAIRS

Occupant controlled powered wheelchairs are **not** supplied solely for independent use for outdoors. The Wheelchair Service has not been funded to provide this equipment.

Scooters are **not** issued via Wheelchair Service.

For the models which are available the user must meet the following criteria:

Electrically Powered Indoor Wheelchair (EIC)

EIC's will be issued if the user meets the criteria of issue of a wheelchair, and:

1. Be unable to walk within their home environment effectively.
2. Be unable to self-propel a manual wheelchair effectively indoors.

3. Have a long term need for indoor powered mobility, using the chair on a daily basis in order to increase mobility and independence around their home, leading to an improved quality of life.
4. The user must demonstrate the potential ability to use an EIC safely and independently within their property, based on an agreed assessment procedure.
5. The user must have a suitable home environment. An assessment for this will be completed and endorsed by a Rehabilitation Engineer or Technician. The environment should include: -
 - Adequate space for the movement of the wheelchair including footplates within their homes.
 - A suitable space, with a power supply for charging the batteries overnight.
6. The user must be able to charge the EIC as recommended, or have support to do so.
7. The user must meet the weight limits stated in the manufacturer's specifications for the chair.
8. Epilepsy risk assessment tools must be completed for individual users who have been identified as suffering from epilepsy in order to minimise risk of personal injury.

Please Note

It is not intended for outdoor use but may be used within the confines of the garden if the outcome of the environmental assessment identifies that it safe to do so. It is emphasised however that eligibility must be based on providing independence within the home environment.

Electrically Powered Indoor/ Outdoor Wheelchairs (EPIOCs)

An EPIOC may be provided which can be used by the occupant both indoors and outdoors to enable greater independence, but the **main priority being for indoor use.**

- The user must be eligible for the supply of a powered indoor wheelchair, before consideration of an EPIOC.

The following additional criteria may also apply: -

1. The user must have adequate field and acuity of vision (120 degrees in a horizontal plane and 20 degrees above and below this plane, at least 6/18 i.e. approximately equivalent to being able to read a number plate at 20.5 metres) to be safe in a public environment.
2. The user should be medically fit to independently control a powered wheelchair indoors and outdoors i.e.: -
 - Free from conditions causing loss of consciousness and epileptic seizures in waking hours within the past year. Using DVLA ' At a glance guide to the current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive Feb 2011. as best practice guidelines
www.dft.gov.uk/dvla.medical/ata glance.aspx

Provision/consideration will be carried out following completion of a risk assessment -see appendix 5.

Following provision, in the event of a seizure/loss of consciousness being declared, limitations to use of the wheelchair will normally be imposed until further clarification is sought from GP/Consultant. A further risk assessment may also be completed.

- Free from any combination of medical conditions and treatments likely to make independent powered wheelchair control unsafe for themselves, pedestrians or other road users.
3. The user should have demonstrated by means of an assessment that they have the insight, intellectual capacity and dexterity to operate an EPIOC safely and responsibly on their own without assistance. Users should also demonstrate the capacity to compensate for any sensory or physical impairment.
 4. The user should not require accessories; modifications or special seating outside of the range supplied by the powered chair manufacturers, or are not approved for use with the chair, by the powered chair manufacturer, unless agreed and authorised by RREMS following full assessment with Wheelchair Service prescriber
 5. The user and any bespoke equipment fitted must not exceed the weight limit stated in the manufacturers' specifications for the chair to be supplied.
 6. The user must have a suitable home environment which is compatible with the use of an EPIOC, an assessment for this will be completed and endorsed by a Rehabilitation Engineer or Technician. The environment should include: -
 - A suitable area for storage of the wheelchair with a power supply for charging the batteries.
 - Adequate space for movement of the wheelchair (including the footrests) within the home.
 - Safe and appropriate access to the outdoors.
 - Local outside environment which is independently accessible and which is suitable for a powered indoor/ outdoor wheelchair.
 7. The user should have the capacity to derive significant improvement in their independence and quality of life through the use of an EPIOC.
 8. Users will be reviewed/ re-assessed at agreed intervals, identified at assessment, to ensure that there is continuing eligibility.

Attendant Outdoor Powered (AOC) Wheelchair

AOC's are available for outdoor use to assist carers who are unable to use a manual chair effectively in the local environment.

1. The user must be confined to a wheelchair for all forms of outdoor mobility.
2. The **attendant** must be experiencing difficulty in pushing the user for one of the following reasons: -

- A health or mobility problem: Health may suffer as a result of pushing a manual chair – GP approval may be sought.
 - The weight of the user is excessive in relation to the weight and size of the regular attendant.
Guideline - the combined weight of the patient and manual chair should be over 18st (115KG) and the attendant has a body weight at least 6st (38kg) less than the combined weight.
3. The attendant meets criteria for control of powered chair
 - There is sufficient evidence that the carer has the physical and cognitive ability for safe usage of equipment.
 - Prior to agreement to provide an AOC, if the attendant is known to have epileptic seizures or blackouts, a full risk assessment will be completed.
 4. The user is able to derive significant improvement in quality of life, with an expected minimum use of once per week

**Dual Control Powered (DCC) Wheelchair
(Occupant Control Indoors and Attendant Control Outdoors).**

Dual control powered wheelchairs have been introduced where a user meets the criteria for an occupant control electric indoor chair only and their regular carer meets the supply criteria for an attendant control electric outdoor chair.

An example of correct provision may be where a user has restricted vision but is safe using an electric indoor chair (EIC) within their home environment, to which they are familiar, but not outdoors. Their regular carer has heart problems and is unable to manage a manual chair – GP may be contacted for agreement of provision

The user must meet with the eligibility criteria for the provision of an electric indoor chair (EIC).

1. The attendant must meet with the eligibility criteria for the provision of an attendant operated chair (AOC).
2. The provision of a dual control chair (DCC) is the most efficient way of meeting the clinical needs of both the user and carer.

Please note

Transport of Powered Wheelchairs

- All powered chairs are not easily transported due to moving and handling issues (Lifting weight of individual chair)
- Inability to fold compactly.
- They may fit into an estate car using ramps (which are not provided by the Wheelchair Service)
- Appropriate tie down systems must be used in taxis, ambulances etc if the user travels in the wheelchair, as stated in the manufacturers handbook provided at handover.

