

A guide for patients about providing wheelchairs in care home settings (nursing and residential)

What is the purpose of the Wheelchair Service?

The purpose of the Wheelchair Service is to meet the needs of individuals with a permanent physical disability and requirement for a wheelchair from the NHS. Our overall aim is to help people to become more independent and to allow them to carry out daily activities.

How does the Wheelchair Service know what it can provide for?

The Wheelchair Service has strict guidelines to determine who it can provide equipment for. Unfortunately, it cannot provide wheelchairs for everyone. Its resources are targeted at those who need wheelchairs to help with independence and daily living activities. The Wheelchair Service is supported by eligibility criteria. This sets out the areas of need we are able to support and those that we cannot.

What does the eligibility criteria say about wheelchair provision for individuals in care home settings?

The Wheelchair Service is there to provide wheelchairs for individual need, where the individual has a long-term condition that permanently and significantly affects their mobility and independence. The wheelchair needs to be used for three days a week or more.

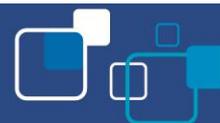
There can be a range of mobility needs for people in a care home setting, from independent mobility needs to being taken between rooms in the care home. Some of these needs can be met by the Wheelchair Service; however, other requirements are outside the remit of this service. The following information is provided to ensure there is clarity about what the Wheelchair Service can and cannot provide for those living in care homes.

What circumstances can the Wheelchair Service provide a wheelchair for?

- If the person has a long-term condition that significantly affects their mobility. Following an assessment, wheelchair equipment can be provided to enable a person to achieve independent mobility. This can either be a self-propelling manual wheelchair or operating a powered wheelchair, so independence means the individual can independently operate the wheelchair.
- If the person needs significant postural support to minimise postural deterioration and to maximise function. In some instances, it is more suitable for those requiring significant postural support, to be provided with a suitable static seating system rather than a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are not intended to be sat in for prolonged periods of time. In such cases, it is not the responsibility of the Wheelchair Service to provide static seating.

When is the Wheelchair Service unable to offer to support?

- Providing attendant pushed wheelchairs for general use in the care home setting by a number of individuals.
- Wheelchairs for portering purposes; for example transferring residents from room to room in the care home.
- Providing pressure relieving cushions for use in armchairs.
- Providing a wheelchair to be used instead of appropriate armchairs or dining room chairs (static seating).
- Providing wheelchairs to take a client out on occasional outings, either by the care home or by members of the person's family.
- Providing wheelchairs to support a rehabilitation or recovery programme; for example, where the



person's condition is likely to change and so the wheelchair may not be suitable for the person's needs when they return to where they usually live.

- Providing equipment where the client is unable to be seated safely in a wheelchair to support their function and independence. This will be discussed on an individual basis following an assessment.

Who can make a referral to the Wheelchair Service for a resident in a care home?

If the individual already has a wheelchair to support their independence then they, their next of kin, the care home or their GP can contact the Wheelchair Service and ask for a further assessment if needs have changed.

If the individual is not previously known to the Wheelchair Service and they meet the eligibility criteria as discussed in this leaflet, then a referral can be made by their GP, community nurse or allied healthcare professional. The referral form can be found on our website: www.kentcht.nhs.uk/wheelchairservice

What will happen next?

The information provided on the referral form will be reviewed. If the individual is not eligible for a provision from the Wheelchair Service, the referrer will be advised.

If, from the information provided by the referrer, the individual has a need that meets the criteria as described above, they will be invited to a duty assessment. At this clinic appointment, their needs will be reviewed and a plan put into place to enable the identified needs to be met through the provision of wheelchair equipment and training, where necessary.

What if the person already had a transit or attendant pushed wheelchair before they became resident in a care home?

We understand when moving to a care home there are many decisions to be made, meaning it can be a very stressful and difficult time for the individual and their family. The Wheelchair Service will not ask you to return the wheelchair immediately, but when it reaches the end of its useful life or the person's size changes, for example, we will be unable to replace it. If the client no longer needs their wheelchair, we expect it to be returned to the service. However, if the individual's needs change and there is a consideration for a wheelchair to support independent mobility, then this can be assessed and considered, as with any other person using this service.

Contact the Wheelchair Service

Address: Wheelchair Service, Central Administration Office,
Norman House, Beaver Business Park,
Beaver Road, Ashford,
Kent TN23 7SH

Phone: 0300 7900128
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
During busy periods your call may be diverted to an answer machine.

Fax: 0300 7900129

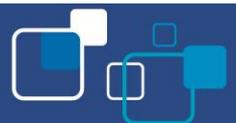
Email: kcht.wheelchairservice-kent@nhs.net

Website: www.kentcht.nhs.uk/wheelchairservice

Wheelchair Approved Repairer Service and Delivery Team

AJM Healthcare

Unit 17A, CT3 Business Park
Cooting Road
Aylesham
Nr Canterbury
Kent CT3 3EP



Email: wheelchairs@ajmhealthcare.org
Phone: 01304 842321
Fax: 08715 288266

Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm.

An out-of-hours service operates for emergency repairs between 7am and 11pm.

This information sheet has been prepared with direct references from the Wheelchair Service Eligibility Criteria 2012.

Customer Care Team

If you have a query about our health services, or would like to comment, compliment or complain about Kent Community Health NHS Trust, you can contact the **Customer Care Team**.

Phone: 0300 123 1807, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Calls will be charged at the local rate

Text: 07943 091958 **Email:** kcht.cct@nhs.net

Address: Customer Care Team, Kent Community Health NHS Trust, Trinity House, 110-120 Upper Pemberton, Eureka Park, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4AZ **Web:** www.kentcht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read or large print, please ask a member of staff.

You will be asked for your agreement to treatment and, if necessary, your permission to share your personal information.

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