NHS
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Adult Wheelchair Service Long Term Use Eligibility Criteria

Aim of the service

The aim of Cornwall Wheelchair Service (CWS) is to assess adults who require a wheelchair for longer than 6 months.

The person's mobility needs will affect their ability to participate in everyday activities, and the provision of a wheelchair will help support their independence (Based on the World Health Authority International Classification of Functioning).

The wheelchair provision may include any appropriate supporting equipment such as cushions, postural accessories, or special seating systems.

All equipment is provided on a long-term loan basis for as long as the person's clinical need requires it and continues to meet the criteria. Equipment will be returned to the service if it needs replacing or is no longer needed.

Who is the service provided for?

- Adults who are registered with a GP in Cornwall or the Isles of Scilly
- Adults with a long term physical condition that restricts mobility and therefore require a wheelchair for a minimum of 6 months

  Adults under end of life care, where a where a wheelchair may be required for less than a 6 month period, where exceptional circumstances mean the patient's clinical needs cannot be met by the short term loan service. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

The short-term loan service provides a range of wheelchairs for people to facilitate hospital discharge and rehabilitation in hospital or the community for less than 9 months. GPs and other healthcare professionals can refer to the short-term loan service.

What wheelchairs will be provided?

Wheelchairs can include manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs, or wheelchairs with special custom made seating.

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How many chairs can be provided?

The wheelchair service will provide one chair and one cushion. The cushion may be a pressure-relieving cushion if needed..

In the case of special seating two sets of washable covers will be provided with one wipeable harness if needed.

If the person uses a standard Electric Powered Indoor or Indoor/Outdoor Chair, we will also provide a standard manual chair for use as a back-up chair. The backup chair will only include accessories for posture or pressure relief, in exceptional circumstances.

If the person has specialist seating on a powered base, an alternative manual base can be issued as a backup, as long as this meets essential safety and/or postural needs

Personal Wheelchair Budgets (PWB)

In most instances the wheelchair that is offered free by the NHS will meet a person's needs, However, there may be additional features that a person would like or would help other health and wellbeing needs.

Personal Wheelchair Budgets (PWB) are replacing the old voucher scheme. There are 3 options available to service users that will allow top-ups and upgrades through private funding, funding from the local authority, funding from charities or an NHS contribution..

For adults, the PWB is provided 5 year period. People will not be able to apply for a new PWB within this time unless there has been a significant change and the wheelchair no longer meets the person's clinical need.

PWB exclusions include

- Rapidly deteriorating conditions likely to change within 12 months. This will require regular specialist review
- Custom seats
- NHS will only provide 'class 2 invalid carriages'

Third party PWN upgrades and modifications

If a person upgrades or modifies their wheelchair beyond that of their prescription, the this is done at the patient's own risk. This includes where a person upgrades to a class 3 invalid carriage from a class 2 under a PWB. The person must ensure that they, and the wheelchair, meet all of the regulations with respect to use of the chair on or off public roads. The NHS would have no liability in cases where a person upgrades beyond the prescription.

Standard Manual Wheelchairs

Self-propelling (a wheelchair with large rear wheels and outer rim pushed by the occupant) will be prescribed if:

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- The person can safely and effectively use a self-propelling wheelchair
- The wheelchair will improve the person's ability to function independently
- The wheelchair will be used for at least 4 days per week

Transit/attendant controlled (a wheelchair with smaller rear wheels pushed by somebody else) will be prescribed if:

- The person is unable to manage a self-propelling wheelchair
- Has a carer or other person available to support using the wheelchair
- The wheelchair will be used for at least 4 days per week

Non-Standard Manual Wheelchairs

Active user (a self-propelled wheelchair with large rear wheels and outer rim pushed by the wheelchair user, that is less stable but more manoeuvrable than a standard wheelchair) will be prescribed if the person:

- Does not have the ability to self-propel a standard manual wheelchair due to their clinical condition
- Has the required postural trunk control to manoeuvre the wheelchair
- Is able to manage the instability of this type of chair
- Has the stamina and strength for to use this type of chair
- will improve the person's ability to function independently
- Will need to use the wheelchair every day

Manual tilt-in-space, self-propelling, or transit (a wheelchair with a seat that can be tilted up to 25° backwards and a recline of up to 30°) will be prescribed if the person:

- Has significant postural needs not met by a standard wheelchair
- Is unable to independently adjust posture
- Is unable to manage pressure care
- Is dependent on the use of a wheelchair for all mobility needs
- Will use the wheelchair at least 4 days per week
- Has an carer or other person available to support using the wheelchair

Accessories

Accessories including attendant hub brakes, height adjustable push handles, headrests, or spoke guards will be provided only where clinically necessary.

Other accessories can be funded through the Notional Plus PWB.

Standard Powered Wheelchairs

Electric Powered Indoor Chair (EPIC) will be prescribed if the person:

- Is unable or has limited ability to walk
- Is unable to use a manual self-propelling wheelchair

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- Requires a wheelchair to move independently within their home every day
- Is medically fit to control a powered wheelchair indoors safely and independently.(The assessors may, with the consent of the user, seek further medical advice about individual users from their GP, Consultant, or other Healthcare Professional)
- Can show that they can use the wheelchair safely
- can charge the power unit of the wheelchair
- The home environment is suitable to use the wheelchair

Electric Powered Indoor/Outdoor Chair (EPIOC) will be prescribed if the person:

- Is unable or has limited ability to walk
- Is unable to use a manual self-propelling wheelchair for safe indoor mobility
- Requires a wheelchair to move independently within their home every day
- Is medically fit to control a powered wheelchair indoors safely and independently
- Can show that they can use the wheelchair safely
- Is medically fit to safely and independently control a powered wheelchair indoors and outdoors taking into account safety of others, pedestrians and road users in line with DVLA requirements for motor vehicle drivers. (The assessors may, with the consent of the user, seek further medical advice about individual users from their GP, Consultant, or other healthcare professional)
- Is able to access their property safely
- Has successfully completed an assessment in using the chair outdoors
- can charge the power unit of the wheelchair
- The home environment is suitable to use the wheelchair

Please note the wheelchair prescribed will be based on your clinical presentation, incorporating your mobility, posture and pressure needs and not just on the dimensions of the environment In some cases, environmental adaptation through the local authority (or private) will be required prior to being provided with the wheelchair.

Non-Standard Powered Wheelchair Accessories

Powered adjustments can be included for seating angle or position if the person:

- Has significant postural needs not met by a standard wheelchair
- Is unable to independently adjust their posture
- Is dependent on the use of a wheelchair for mobility
- Has prolonged periods of time spent in the wheelchair each day
- Has a need for pressure relief
- is able to operate the controls

Attendant or Dual Controlled Power wheelchair

This will be considered if the wheelchair user is unable to self-propel a manual wheelchair and meets the criteria for an EPIC or EPIOC. An attendant or dual controlled powered wheelchair can be manoeuvred by the attendant from a rear sited control and will be prescribed if:

- The wheelchair user is unable to operate a powered chair independently for part of the time due to their medical condition

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- The primary carer, following a clinic assessment and environmental practical test, can operate all aspects of the chair. This will include steering, braking, charging, engaging/disengaging the 'drive' mode and their sight is adequate to safely control the wheelchair.

Or

- The primary carer has a health problem that means they have trouble pushing the user so would be unable to push a manual wheelchair. We will need to get written confirmation of this from their GP or consultant. This is not the case for paid/professional carers. In this instance the agency providing the care would be expected to provide carers with the capability to care for the wheelchair user.
- The primary carer, following a clinic assessment and environmental practical test, can operate all aspects of the chair. This will include steering, braking, charging, engaging/disengaging the 'drive' mode and their sight is adequate to safely control the wheelchair.

Nursing homes, residential homes, or any other residential unit will not be eligible, as it is the unit's responsibility to provide the necessary equipment and/or staff capable of pushing a user.

Specialist Seating Systems and Bespoke Equipment to Enable Postural Support

Where a person's needs are so complex that they cannot be accommodated with standard seats they will be referred to the Special Seating Pathway for assessment

Pressure Relieving Equipment

Pressure Relieving equipment will be prescribed for:

- Management and prevention of pressure ulcers
- Optimum posture and stability

Other Criteria Information:

Priority

Clients will be prioritised based on risk of harm on physical or mental health. This includes considering pain, pressure, and rapid deterioration of condition. CWS will triage all referrals and consider a person's support network and other equipment available. End of life patients will be prioritised when their needs cannot be met through provision of a short-term loan and specialist assessment is needed.

Approved Prescribers

Referrals received from approved prescribers outside of the CWS team, must include an attached prescription, and will be processed at triage. This may be to help discharge someone from hospital following amputation, spinal injury, or neurological injury, as well as to support people with deteriorating conditions in the community.

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Appropriate health and social care professionals in hospital and community settings will be encouraged to complete their prescriber training every 2 years for their skills and equipment knowledge to remain up to date.

When an approved prescriber is unavailable to complete a prescription in hospital and there is a long-term need, they will be signposted to the short-term loan service to facilitate discharge and added to the CWS waiting list to be followed up when home.

Wheelchair User Responsibilities

The wheelchair user will be responsible for the care and reporting of repairs or maintenance to the wheelchair provider.

It is recommended that powered wheelchairs and wheelchair equipment provided by the service is insured by the wheelchair user.

Due care of all wheelchair equipment is expected and if unreasonable repair or maintenance is required the costs may become the responsibility of the user .

If any misuse is identified the wheelchair may be withdrawn.

Exclusions from the service

CWS does not provide any of the following:

- Wheelchairs or wheelchair accessories to help hospital discharge where there is a short-term need (up to 6 months)
- Wheelchairs or wheelchair accessories for a rehabilitation programme. CWS will assess for long-term wheelchair requirements for people who have reached the end of their rehabilitation programme and next steps are known
- Any wheelchair where the primary purpose is other than for mobility e.g. for use as an armchair
- Wheelchairs for sole use in a place of education, work, or respite
- Standard transit wheelchairs used for moving people within a care home as these should be supplied by the home as part of the care provided (A Standard transit wheelchair is 17-20 inches wide and 17-18 inches deep. Transit wheelchairs outside of this size range are more individualised and can be provided by the Wheelchair Service)
- Wheelchairs and wheelchair accessories to manage behavioural problems
- Wheelchairs and wheelchair accessories to meet environmental needs. However, wider health and wellbeing needs will be considered with a Personal Wheelchair Budget
- Mobility Scooters
- Pressure cushions for seating other than wheelchairs
- Outdoor only powered chairs
- Power packs
- Rain covers, hoods and parasols
- Powered add-ons (e.g. E-motion wheels)

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- Seat risers – is an option within Notional Plus PWB
- Sit to stand or lie to stand functions

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