NHS
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Children's Wheelchair Service Long Term Use Eligibility Criteria

Aim of the service

The aim of Cornwall Wheelchair Service (CWS) is to assess children who require a buggy or wheelchair with specialist postural support for longer than 6 months.

The child'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 child'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?

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

Children with postural requirements that cannot be met by the Children's Community Therapy Team with standard wheelchair provision.

The CCTT will assess and prescribe long-term standard manual wheelchairs or buggies for children meeting eligibility criteria. They also provide assessment with company reps for rehab wheelchairs to facilitate hospital discharge post operatively.

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What wheelchairs will be provided?

Specialist buggies and manual or powered wheelchairs, or wheelchairs with special custom made seating.

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 child 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 child 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 child'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) have replaced the old voucher scheme. There are 3 options available to service users that will allow top-ups and upgrades through private funding, funding from local authority, funding from charities, or an NHS contribution.

For children, the PWB is provided over a 3-year period. Children 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 child's clinical need.

PWB Exclusions include: -

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

Third party PWB 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.

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Standard Buggies & Wheelchairs (CCTT):

Standard wheelchairs and buggies are provided when:

- There is an additional mobility need relating to a long-term physical condition.
- A need for a buggy or wheelchair is required for at least 6 months.
- The wheelchair or buggy will be used for at least of 4 days per week.

A lightweight and standard buggy will be prescribed when a high street buggy no longer meets the child's needs. It will be registered with MHRA as a Class I Medical Device and will be provided if the child:

- Is the right age for a buggy rather than a wheelchair (usually up to 5 years).
- Has no additional or few postural support requirements

When the wheelchair/buggy no longer meets the child's needs, a reassessment will be required to consider next steps.

Standard Manual Wheelchairs:-

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

- Requires minimal postural support.
- Can safely and effectively use a self-propelling wheelchair.
- The wheelchair will improve the child's ability to function independently.

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

- Requires minimal postural support.
- Is unable to manage a self-propelling wheelchair.
- Has carer or other person available to support using the wheelchair.

Standard Accessories Available (if clinically needed)

- Spoke Guards
- Attendant Brakes
- Height adjustable push handles
- Residual leg support (stump board)
- Headrest
- Standard cushions
- Chest harnesses, pelvic belts and/or ankle huggers (if needed for postural support)

Specialist Buggies:

A buggy that provides more postural support than a standard buggy. These are usually larger and heavier. They are prescribed where:

- There is a requirement for more postural support than a standard buggy or wheelchair can provide.
- There is a permanent mobility difficulty relating to a physical condition.

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- Use of a buggy rather than a wheelchair is age appropriate (usually up to 5 years).

Non-Standard Wheelchairs (CWS):

An active-user wheelchair is more ergonomically designed than a standard manual wheelchair and will be prescribed if the child:

- 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 to use this type of chair
- Will improve the child's ability to function independently
- will need to use the wheelchair every day

A 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 child:

- 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 for at least 4 days per week (
- Has a carer or other person available to support using the wheelchair
-

Accessories:

Accessories including attendant hub brakes, height adjustable push handles, headrests, 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 child:

- Is unable or has limited ability to walk
- Is unable to use a manual self-propelling wheelchair
- Requires a wheelchair to enable 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 charger 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 child:

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- Is unable or has limited ability to walk
- Is unable to use a manual self-propelling wheelchair
- 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
- Is able to charge the power unit of the wheelchair
- The home environment is suitable to use the wheelchair

Please note that a wheelchair will be prescribed on the child's clinical presentation, incorporating their mobility, posture and pressure needs and not just to meet the dimensions of environment. In some cases, environmental adaptation through the local authority (or private) will be required.

Non-Standard Powered Wheelchair Accessories

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

- 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
- Has the is able to operate the controls

Attendant or Dual Controlled Power wheelchair

This will be considered if the child 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.
- 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. NB 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.

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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.

Specialist Seating Systems and Bespoke Equipment to Enable Postural Support

Where a child'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 cases

Clients will be prioritised based on risk harm on physical or mental health. This includes considering pain, pressure, and rapid deterioration of condition. CWS will triage all referrals and consider a child'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.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

The wheelchair user or parent/guardian will be responsible for the care and reporting of repairs/maintenance to the Wheelchair Provider, including:

- It is recommended that wheelchair equipment provided by the service should be insured parent/guardian.

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for the training and driving skills of children under 18 years old. Attendance at Wheelchair Skills Courses would be advised e.g. Whizz Kids, Go Kids Go.

- Parents/Guardians should be responsible for informing the school or other educational establishment if the wheelchair is likely to be used within their environment.

- Parents/Guardians will be responsible for checking with schools or other educational establishment that the user of the powered wheelchairs will be supported in the school/establishment.

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- If a child accesses a short break facility and takes their wheelchair with them, it is the responsibility of the short break provider to ensure all their staff are trained in the safe use of both manual and powered wheelchairs

Due care of all wheelchair equipment is expected and if unreasonable repair is required the costs may become the responsibility of parent/guardian.

If any misuse is identified the wheelchair may be withdrawn.

Exclusions from the service:

CWS does not provide any of the following: -

- Wheelchairs, buggies, or wheelchair accessories to help hospital discharge where there is a short-term need (up to 6 months)
- Wheelchairs, buggies, or accessories for a rehabilitation programme. CWS will review long-term wheelchair requirements for children 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
- Wheelchairs and wheelchair accessories to manage behavioural problems
- Double buggies for children, unless there are exceptional circumstances (ie where both children are disabled)
- Static seating
- 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)
- Seat risers – Is an option within Notional Plus PWB
- Sit to stand or lie to stand functions

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