

Your first wheelchair and cushion



Information for patients

Therapy Services



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



Your first manual wheelchair and cushion

The physiotherapy department has loaned you your initial equipment. Now that you are out of bed and moving around, we will start the process of requesting your own wheelchair and cushion.

Where will my own wheelchair and cushion come from?

We will take your measurements for a wheelchair and apply to your local Wheelchair Service Centre (WSC) for a suitable wheelchair and cushion ready for your discharge from hospital.

The equipment you receive and the length of time you wait will vary greatly, depending on how your local WSC work. We will request a temporary wheelchair and then your local WSC may arrange to assess you after discharge for your longer term needs.

How will my wheelchair get to Sheffield?

Ideally we need to see you sitting in your own wheelchair before discharge in order to ensure it fits correctly and make any minor adjustments. Few WSCs are able to deliver equipment to Sheffield, so we generally rely on relatives and friends to take delivery and collect on your behalf at home and then to transport the equipment to Sheffield.

What are the different options for obtaining a wheelchair?

Options available	Explanation
NHS wheelchair	This will be a wheelchair provided by your local WSC. The wheelchair will not cost you anything and the maintenance of the wheelchair is the responsibility of the WSC.
Voucher scheme (Personal Wheelchair Budget)	This will enable you to apply for a voucher to contribute towards a more expensive wheelchair. You will need to maintain the wheelchair yourself. Please note a voucher is not always available for powered wheelchairs.
Private Purchase	Generally the quickest way of obtaining a wheelchair. Second hand wheelchairs are not recommended as they may not be the correct size or type of wheelchair to suit your needs and there may be no guarantees with second hand wheelchairs if something goes wrong.
Red cross	It is possible to be loaned a basic wheelchair from your local Red Cross for a small cost.
Charities or schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to work • Aspire • Motability (choose between a car or wheelchair) • Whizz Kids (under 18) <p>Ask your physiotherapist for more information.</p>

Options available	Explanation
Family and friends may decide to fund-raise	Events, sponsored walks or bike rides etc.
Pursuing a claim	<p>Your solicitor or case manager may have funds available to purchase a wheelchair and cushion. Please let us know if this is your intention.</p> <p>Please ask any company to liaise with the physiotherapy department as indemnity policies must be signed.</p>

Is there any support available to help make a decision?

We are here to help guide you through the process. If you have any questions about the process please ask your physiotherapist who will be happy to try and find out more about your specific WSC's procedure. There are patient education talks that you can attend about different wheelchairs.

When choosing a chair it is important to consider the following factors:

- Medical and physical needs
- Posture and pressure relief
- Lifestyle and personal choice
- Domestic, work, leisure and transportation
- Changes over time
- Who will maintain the wheelchair

We have a limited loan stock of some lighter weight chairs for you to try for up to a 1 week period.

In addition wheelchair demonstrations will be arranged with various wheelchair providers for you to learn more about what is available on the market.

As the weeks progress, you will come to understand what you need from your wheelchair in order to achieve a good, functional sitting position. Which is both safe and comfortable.

We recommend that for your first wheelchair you choose a design that is adjustable, as your posture and wheelchair skills are likely to improve over the next 2 years

What if I need a powered wheelchair?

You may be assessed as eligible for an electrically powered wheelchair if you are unable to propel yourself indoors in a self-propelled NHS (manual) wheelchair. These can be driven with either your chin, head or hand depending on your level of function. The physiotherapy Department has Powered Wheelchairs for you to test whilst you are in hospital. We can assess your needs and you can gain confidence in driving.

Your local WSC will normally want to assess you and your home environment before providing a Powered Wheelchair. Therefore you will be discharged with a manual wheelchair with your WSC being informed of your needs and progress. They will send you an appointment for Powered wheelchair assessment after your discharge.

Who should I contact if I have any questions or concerns?

If you have any queries please get in touch with us as follows:

- Physiotherapy Department
Princess Royal Spinal Injury Centre
Northern General Hospital Trust
Herries Road
Sheffield S5 7AU
- **0114 271 5673**



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