

East Sussex Wheelchair Service

Eligibility Criteria

The Wheelchair and Seating Service is available to people of all ages including those under 36 months:

- With a long-term mobility, impairment, lasting at least 6 months, requiring the use of a wheelchair except in the case of palliative care.
- Where the service user is receiving end of life and/or palliative care.
- Where the service user will use the wheelchair on a regular basis for a minimum of 4 days a week.
- Where the user has a mobility impairment which affects their ability to walk or have a medical condition that means that walking could adversely affect their health.
- Who are registered with a general practitioner (GP) within East Sussex.
- Who reside out of area but are funded by East Sussex Continuing Health Care.
- With the ability to use the equipment safely or have a carer who is able to use the equipment safely.
- The service user agrees to and complies with the terms and conditions detailed in the loan agreements, as supplied by the Wheelchair Service on behalf of the NHS.

Criteria Specific Information (click to navigate)

- [Mid Range Wheelchair](#)
- [Active User Wheelchair](#)
- [Tilt-in-Space Wheelchair](#)
- [Powered Wheelchair](#)

A person will not be eligible:

- If they require a short-term use wheelchair (less than 6 months).
- If they live out of area or have an out of area GP and are not funded by East Sussex Continuing Healthcare.
- If they are unable to use the equipment safely.
- If the wheelchair is required in care homes for general portering use only, please see [Nursing and Residential Care Homes Guidance](#)
- For electrically powered wheelchair for outdoor use only.
- Wheelchairs for the purpose of restraint, owing to a behavioral or mental health condition.
- The provision of embellishments that do not add to the functionality of the wheelchair.
- If the wheelchair is required:
 - For work use only (funding for this can be sourced from [Access to Work](#)).
 - For rehabilitation purposes only – on wards or in the community.
 - For sporting activities only.
 - In place of suitable static seating.
 - For transportation purposes only.
- Further exclusions include: ○ Hub brakes ○ Spare batteries ○ Power packs ○ Headrests for transportation ○ Mobility scooters ○ Power assist wheels

Mid-Range Wheelchair Modifiable (Self-Propelling or Transit)

Mid- range wheelchairs have additional options on the wheelchair that can be set up to meet specific changing clinical needs the service user may have. This range of wheelchairs is issued when the service user meets the following criteria:

- The service user has a progressive medical condition and is likely to need modification and reconfiguration to the wheelchair.
- The service user is able to demonstrate an ability to self-propel without detriment to their medical condition.
- The service user is unable to maintain independent mobility in a standard provision manual wheelchair and can also demonstrate an increase in their level of independence through this higher level of provision.

High Performance Manual Wheelchair

This range includes both ridged and folding frames that are more lightweight and can be configured to enhance the performance and maneuverability of the wheelchair. This range of wheelchairs is issued when the service user meets the following:

- The service user is able to self-propel without detriment to their medical condition.
- The user is unable to walk stand and needs to use a wheelchair for independent mobility.
- The user drives their own vehicle and needs to lift the wheelchair themselves to store in the passenger seat, so requires lighter weight provision. Assessment is undertaken by the clinical team.
- This type of wheelchair will not be provided to powered wheelchair users.
- The user must have the postural trunk control required to manoeuvre the wheelchair.

Tilt in Space Wheelchairs

Are issued when a service user meets the following criteria:

- The service user has identified postural limitations that require gravity assisted positioning to improve balance, access to the environment, postural alignment and function. The home environment has been assessed as being compatible with the use of a tilt in space wheelchair, this includes adequate space and access throughout the home.
- There is a clinical need for wheeled mobility in addition to postural support
- The service user will spend a significant time using the variable tilt function on the chair.
- The service user will gain significant improvements in their posture and mobility by having a tilt-in-space wheelchair
- At the time of issue the user is residing in their own private residence.

Please Note

Assessment for a tilt-in-space wheelchair will not be carried out while progress is being made and posture and/or mobility is still improving. Hospitals or Rehabilitation Units should supply tilt in space wheelchairs for service users to access during their rehabilitation.

Electrically Powered Wheelchairs Provision

Electrically Powered Wheelchairs are issued when the service user meets the following criteria:

- Are unable to walk around their home environment.
- Are a full-time wheelchair user with a need to use the wheelchair on a daily basis to be mobile mobility and independent indoors?
- Are unable to, or have a limited ability to self-propel a manual wheelchair indoors, and/or the ability to self-propel due to contraindications for their medical condition.
- The home environment has been assessed to be compatible with using a powered wheelchair; this includes adequate space and access throughout, and the ability to store and charge the equipment. An environmental Assessment would be conducted by the wheelchair clinical staff.
- Are medically fit and able to adequately maintain/charge a powered wheelchair (or have a carer who will take on this role).
- Are able to demonstrate proficiency and a level of skill to manoeuvre the wheelchair around the home environment, adhering fully to the safe use of equipment. A driving assessment will be conducted by a qualified member of the wheelchair clinical team.
- Are able to demonstrate the insight, capacity, competency and dexterity to be able to operate a powered wheelchair responsibly and independently.

NHS PROVISION OF WHEELCHAIRS AND SPECIALIST SEATING FOR RESIDENTS OF NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES IN EAST SUSSEX

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE

The East Sussex Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service provides NHS wheelchairs and specialist postural seating for individual need, where someone has a long-term condition that permanently and significantly affects their mobility and independence.

There can be a range of mobility and postural needs for people in a care home setting, from independent mobility and postural needs to being taken between rooms in the care home. Some of these needs can be met by the Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service; however, other requirements are outside the remit of this service.

The following information is provided to ensure there is clarity about what the NHS will provide via the Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service for those living in care homes.

WHAT WILL THE NHS WHEELCHAIR AND SPECIALIST SEATING SERVICE PROVIDE?

1. **Self-Propelled Wheelchairs:** If a resident has the physical and cognitive ability to be able to self-propel safely they can be referred to the service for assessment.
2. **Powered Wheelchairs:** In order for a resident to be eligible for a powered wheelchair they must fulfil our full criteria:
 - Cognitive ability to drive a wheelchair
 - The individual does not have a medical condition that could be detrimental whilst driving a powered wheelchair e.g. epilepsy
 - Be a fulltime wheelchair users
 - Have full access inside the home
 - Satisfactory completion of a driving assessment

3. **Attendant Propelled Wheelchairs/Specialist Seating:** Where a resident meets the following criteria, they can be referred to the service for assessment.
- The resident has no, or very little, postural control and requires individualised postural support to maintain sitting balance and/or alignment, or to support fixed contractures
 - The resident is dependent upon full hoisting for transfers in and out of the chair and is unable to transfer using an aid to stand.

WHAT SHOULD THE CARE HOMES PROVIDE?

1. A range of appropriate armchairs and dining room chairs for use by residents with no specific postural needs.
2. Portering/Transit chairs: the care home should provide attendant pushed wheelchairs for general use in the care home setting by a number of individuals.
3. Where a resident does not have the postural needs outlined above or the ability to self-propel or operate a powered wheelchair it is the responsibility of the care home to provide a wheelchair for the resident. NB. There may be some circumstances where a resident does not meet the NHS criteria for wheelchair provision but may be eligible for their seating needs to be considered under the Care Act. In these circumstances, the wheelchair service will liaise with Adult Social Care.
4. The care home should also supply wheelchairs to take a resident out on occasional outings, either by the care home or by members of the person's family.

WHERE CAN A TRANSIT/PORTERING CHAIR BE PURCHASED FROM?

Portering/transit wheelchairs can be purchased from reputable mobility suppliers. It is recommended that all wheelchairs purchased are CE marked. The Wheelchair Service can advise you on the type of wheelchair required.

SPECIALIST REHABILITATION UNITS

The Unit should provide 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.

WHO TO CONTACT IF A WHEELCHAIR IS REQUIRED FOR SHORT TERM USE ONLY?

If a wheelchair is required for short-term use, you can hire from mobility shops or services such as the Red Cross.

WHO CAN MAKE A REFERRAL TO THE WHEELCHAIR AND SPECIALIST SEATING SERVICE FOR A RESIDENT IN A CARE HOME?

The Wheelchair service has an open referral system including self-referrals for wheelchair assessment and provision. If the referral is specifically for assessment of a person's static seating needs an initial referral should be made to community services for assessment via Health and Social Care Direct on **0345 60 80 191**

WHAT IF THE PERSON ALREADY HAD A TRANSIT OR ATTENDANT PUSHED WHEELCHAIR BEFORE THEY BECAME RESIDENT IN A CARE HOME?

It is understood that moving to a care home can be a very stressful and difficult time for the individual and their family. The Wheelchair Service will not ask for the return of 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 they may be eligible for review of their seating needs then this can be assessed and considered, as with any other person using this service.

WHO DO WE CONTACT IF A WHEELCHAIR OR SPECIALIST SEATING EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE SERVICE NO LONGER MEETS A RESIDENT'S NEEDS?

If one of your resident's postural or tissue viability needs have changed, they can be referred to the service for reassessment.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE RESIDENT NO LONGER REQUIRES THE WHEELCHAIR OR SPECIALIST SEATING EQUIPMENT?

Please notify the Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service so collection of the wheelchair, cushion and all accessories can be arranged. The wheelchair remains the property of the Wheelchair Service and should NOT under any circumstances be used for another resident.

WHO OWNS WHEELCHAIRS AND SPECIALIST SEATING EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE WHEELCHAIR AND SPECIALIST SEATING SERVICE?

The equipment remains the property of the Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service and is on loan to the individual resident of the care home and not to the care home itself.

WHO TO CONTACT TO MAKE A REFERRAL AND /OR FOR ADDITIONAL ADVICE REGARDING WHEELCHAIRS OR A RESIDENT'S POSTURE IN A WHEELCHAIR?

Contact the East Sussex Wheelchair and Specialist Seating Service at:

Address: Units 8 & 9, Alder Close, Eastbourne BN23 6QF

Phone: 0333 003 5619 option 1

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Email: EastSussexWheelchairService@RossCare.co.uk

PROVISION OF COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT: for additional information regarding the provision of community equipment to Care homes, please read the guidance on **ICES provision in Care Homes**