



Corby Clinical Commissioning Group



Nene Clinical Commissioning Group

Wheelchair eligibility criteria/operational policy

May 2014

Provision of wheelchairs and associated equipment

Overview

The Northamptonshire Wheelchair service is provided for patients who are registered with a General Practitioner within the areas covered by Nene CCG and Corby CCG. The Wheelchair Service provides equipment to meet assessed clinical needs. All persons referred to the service will only be assessed for a wheelchair where the following general criteria are met.

- The Service provides wheelchairs for Adults and Children with a long-term physical disability or illness that affects their mobility. The definition of long-term is for a period of more than six months. The definition of short-term is a period less than six months. The service is also provided to patients who have a short life expectancy.
- The Service does not provide wheelchairs for Adults and Children on a short-term loan basis; the exception is for hospital discharge, for those who are non-weight bearing and cannot use crutches, following operation or accident
- Equipment will be provided solely as an aid to mobility. Other sources of funding should be explored where elements of the wheelchairs' features are required to meet work education or sporting requirements

Provision of equipment is subject to the referred individual agreeing to the current conditions of the loan

Equipment will only be replaced if it ceases to meet the assessed clinical needs of the person or is beyond economical repair

The client or their carer must demonstrate safe use of the equipment in the intended environment
This will be established at assessment.

1.3 The wheelchair service comprises of the following key components:

- Referral
- Assessment
- Prescription
- Purchase/Provision of Equipment
- Equipment Delivery and Provision of Training
- Repair Service
- Re-Assessment
- Equipment Hand-back/Collection Arrangements

2. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY PRINCIPLES

2.1 Patients will be supplied with a wheelchair providing all the following criteria are met.

Long term provision

For all new patients i.e. those not known to the wheelchair service

- The patient has been referred to the service by their GP, Consultant, Registrar, House Officers, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist District Nurse or Health Visitor
- The patient has a long-term condition that restricts their mobility
- The patient is unable to mobilise within their own home

Patients who are known can self-refer for review or reassessment

Short-Term Provision

- The need for a wheelchair has been identified by their Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist as required for discharge from hospital,
- And the patient is non-weight bearing and cannot use crutches

2.2 Patients referred for Long-Term Provision of a wheelchair will be eligible for an assessment

2.3 All patients referred will be assessed against the criteria at each episode of care. This will be applied if the patient already has provision, is moving into the county or requests a replacement of current chair due to change in need

2.3 Patients who have a provision currently will only be provided with a chair if they meet the criteria at the time of assessment

2.4 Wheelchairs and equipment will be collected if Beyond Economic Repair or no longer meet clinical need

3. EXCLUSIONS

Clinical exceptions may be considered where appropriate

3.1 Wheelchairs/buggies will not be provided as a static chair.

3.2 Specialist chairs, such as for the purpose of sport, will not be funded within this Contract

3.3 Pressure cushions will only be provided for use in the wheelchair.

3.4 Power chairs required for outdoor use only are not included

3.5 The provision of mobility scooters is not included.

3.6 Attendant only powered chair

3.6 The provision of wheelchairs to Nursing and Residential Care Homes for the purpose of portering and transit is not included within this Contract. A wheelchair will be provided to a Nursing or Residential Care home resident if the wheelchair is for the sole purpose of that patient and if the individual can self-propel, has a need for moulded seating or requires a powered chair. A care home is defined as *“Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care”*. CQC Aug 2013

3.7 For people in residential, nursing or long stay hospitals within the county who are either permanently or temporarily registered with a GP within the CCG area the above applies unless they are continuing healthcare funded. For those who have CHC funding for assessment and provision of wheelchairs is the responsibility of the funding authority. Where appropriate the wheelchair service may carry out the assessment on behalf of the funding authority. For children placed by Northamptonshire or CHC funded patients placed by Northamptonshire the wheelchair service is responsible for the assessment and provision. . Where appropriate the wheelchair service where the person is placed may carry out the assessment on behalf of the funding authority.

3.8 This service will not provide wheelchairs for the purpose of restraint or safety owing to a behavioural or mental condition, if the patient has the ability to mobilise within their own home.

3.9 Add on power devices will not be provided but clients may purchase one and have one fitted to their wheelchair following advice from the wheelchair assessment team

3.10 Wheelchairs will not be provided as part of a programme of rehabilitation, whether in hospital or at a specialised rehabilitation centre as these should be provided by the hospital or rehabilitation centre as part of the on-going treatment process. Once the long term clinical need is known, and the environment in which the wheelchair will be used on discharge, the Provider will conduct an assessment as part of discharge planning with the hospital or rehabilitation centre.

3.11 As the service is not currently in a position to guarantee that any vehicle driven whilst in a powered wheelchair is appropriate they will not assess for this function distinct from other uses of wheelchair

3.12 Wheelchairs will not be provided for use solely in a work situation or solely in a school or other educational establishment.

3.13 The Wheelchair Services does not provide equipment to children under the age of 36 months. However, if commercially available buggies do not meet the child's clinical needs then a referral and assessment will be made. Special pushchairs and/or special seating can be issued to children over 36 months of age who have postural problems. Seating units will be issued after assessment, together with the child's therapist and carer. This should ideally be part of a 24 hour postural management programme.

3.14 Accessories i.e. rain covers and sunshades are not supplied by the Service, information regarding private purchase can be provided where applicable.

3.15 Lap straps harnesses and head supports are not supplied for transport use only.

3.16 Items required for transport purposes only will not be supplied

4. PROVISION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Following assessment, the patient will have a prescription to meet clinical need and be offered the provision of a wheelchair in one of the following ways. The patient may choose which option they prefer.

- Wheelchair supplied as per the prescription, fully funded by the service and fully maintained and repaired by the service
- Voucher supplied on a Partnership Option basis, for the amount of the prescribed wheelchair, allowing the patient/carer to top-up and purchase a wheelchair in line with their preferences from a limited menu of options which are additional to the assessed need. The wheelchair is owned, maintained and repaired by the service and will be purchased by the service.
- Voucher supplied on the Independent Option basis, for the amount of the prescribed wheelchair plus contribution toward repair and maintenance , allowing the patient/carer to top-up and purchase a wheelchair in line with their preferences which are additional to the assessed need. The wheelchair is owned, maintained and repaired by the patient. The wheelchair will be purchased by the patient/carer. The service will sign-post the patient to reputable wheelchair suppliers.

4.2 Any seating or equipment for privately owned wheelchairs will only be funded if the patient meets eligibility for that equipment and only to that cost

4.3 As the law (Road Traffic Act 1988)currently states that a powered wheelchair weighing over 150Kg cannot be used on a public footpath the service is unable to supply any chair which by itself or with accessories would exceed this weight limit .For more information please go to ;
<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/mobility-scooters-road-guidance/mobility-guidance.pdf>

5. PRODUCT RANGE

5.1 Supplied based on clinically assessed need and prescription:

- Standard Non-Powered Wheelchairs
- Non-Powered Buggies
- Tilt in Space Wheelchairs
- Electrically Powered Indoor Wheelchairs
- Electrically Powered Indoor/Outdoor Wheelchairs
- Bariatric Wheelchairs
- Postural Seating
- Pressure Relief Cushions

5.2 Wheelchair accessories are supplied where there is an assessed and identified clinical need as follows:

- Trays
- Head Supports
- Specialist Arm Supports
- Elevating Leg Rest Supports (ELR's)
- Harnesses will be supplied for clinical/postural need but not for transportation in a vehicle
- Lap Straps will be supplied for safety purposes but not for transportation in a vehicle
- Positioning Belts
- Footboards/Calf Pads will be supplied where there is a positioning and safe transit need
- Ankle Huggers and Foot Straps will be supplied where there is a positioning and safe transit need and where a suitable pelvic positioning belt is fitted

6. MEETING PATIENT NEEDS

6.1 Eligibility criteria for the provision of wheelchairs must be based on the clinical needs of the client and the ability to use the wheelchair safely. Exclusion on the grounds of age or prognoses alone is unacceptable and discriminatory.

CLINICAL NEEDS

6.2 The Clinicians decision in terms of which wheelchair to prescribe initially rests with the assessment in terms of whether or not the Patient has the ability to self-propel. This will determine whether or not a transit wheelchair, a self-propelling wheelchair or an electric wheelchair should be prescribed.

6.3 Patient's needs must be considered on an individual case by case basis

6.4 The seating and cushioning will be prescribed as per clinical need

6.5 Accessories must be added to the wheelchair in accordance with clinical needs

6.6 Special wheelchairs will be provided where patients have more complex clinical needs

6.7 The Clinician will consider the need to promote independence when determining the type of wheelchair to be provided. The wheelchair will aim to achieve optimum self-reliance and independence for the Patient.

6.8 It must be recognised that Patients needs may change and re-assessments must be conducted for patients that are likely to have a change in their condition

LIFESTYLE

6.9 The Patient's environment should be considered as part of the assessment to ensure that they have the ability to move around their accommodation. The wheelchair may also facilitate the Patient's needs in terms of being able to go to work

6.10 The Service will not issue special or lightweight wheelchairs for the purpose of sport

6.11 Folding and rigid lightweight wheelchairs will be considered for issue where there it can be demonstrated that this will enhance the patient's mobility and quality of life.

ABILITY TO USE WHEELCHAIR SAFELY

6.12 If the Patient is unable to self-propel, the Clinician must also determine, along with the Patient and Carer, whether or not the Patient has the mental capability to be able to safely use an electric powered wheelchair. If the Patient is unable to self-propel and is unable to safely use an electric powered wheelchair, a transit wheelchair may be the most appropriate option.

6.13 Electric powered wheelchairs will only be issued following a full assessment to children who are unable to walk or self-propel, but are capable of independently controlling a powered wheelchair safely. The Clinician may issue an electric powered wheelchair with dual controls for children who are too young to independently cross a road but otherwise can use powered chair

6.14 In the event a transit or EPIOC wheelchair is required, the requirements of the Carer should be considered, in terms of whether or not the Carer has the ability to push the wheelchair without compromising their safety. A lightweight wheelchair may be issued or add on power device may be bought by the client in cases where this is an identified need for the Carer.

6.15 The wheelchair supplied must be appropriate to the Patients environment, allowing the Patient to use, or operate, the wheelchair safely in their home. This must form part of the assessment.

6.16 The provision of an electric powered indoor and outdoor wheelchair (EPIOC) will depend on the ability to demonstrate the benefit to the Patient. Patients eligible for the provision of an EPIOC must have:

6.16.1 Adequate field and acuity of vision to be safe on public roads

6.16.2 The ability to comply with the DVLC requirements for motor vehicle drivers concerning epilepsy and other causes of loss of consciousness

7. Complaints against the eligibility criteria

Eligibility Complaints process

If an individual is considered to be outside of the Nene and Corby CCG eligibility criteria after initial screening, first assessment and second opinion assessment by the clinician they will be informed in writing by the provider using a standard letter. This letter will signpost them to other sources of wheelchairs and funding and inform them how to complain regarding eligibility

Complaints will be dealt with by GEM CSU. Please see the policy below

<http://www.neneccg.nhs.uk/resources/uploads/files/Integrated%20Complaints%20Handling%20Policy%20v6%20Published%20Feb%202014.pdf>

Telephone:	0800 5870 879
E-mail address:	gemcsu.southcomplaints@nhs.net
Postal Address:	GEM CSU Complaints Service
	Francis Crick House
	Summer House Road
	Moulton Park
	Northampton
	NN3 6BJ

The complainant or representative will have the result of the complaint sent to them within a specified time frame in writing by the CCG