

Better Wheelchair Services



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Additional credit 'Illustrations by Paul Mudie, FAIR'



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ISBN: 978-0-7559-5988-4

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House

Edinburgh

EHI 3DG

Produced for the Scottish Government by RR Donnelley B59340 04/09

Published by the Scottish Government, April 2009

Further copies are available from

Blackwell's Bookshop

53 South Bridge

Edinburgh

EHI 1YS

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Scotland's wheelchair and seating services are changing. These services are very important because they can help people get more out of life.

This is a plan for what will happen by 2010.

The changes will affect all five of our wheelchair and seating centres. These centres are in:

- Inverness
- Aberdeen
- Dundee
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow

Your centre may be outside your local NHS board area.

Why This Is Happening

The changes are happening because the NHS in Scotland is modernising all health services.

They want you to be involved in making your services better.

If you need a wheelchair you should be able to get the right chair at the right time.

Get Involved

We cannot do this without you.

The Scottish Government has told every NHS board that they must talk to wheelchair users and their carers. Boards must also find ways of talking to people who do not come to groups.

What Happens Next

Each NHS board must set up a wheelchair user group or network by June 2009.

If you want to know more contact your local NHS board.

Wheelchair and Seating Services – Main Changes

Working Together



Some people need care for a long time. Their needs will change as they get older. Some people need more than one care service at the same time. All of these people should have a care plan. If people need a wheelchair it should be included in their care plan.

What Happens Next

Wheelchair centres will be working with local health, education and social care services to make sure everyone involved in a care plan works together by June 2010.

Information



People should be able to get good information about how to get the best out of their wheelchair. They also need to be able to get good, up-to-date information about their local wheelchair centre and about the repairs service.

What Happens Next

Information will be ready by December 2009.

How You Get A Wheelchair



At the moment your doctor, community nurse, occupational therapist or physiotherapist can ask the wheelchair centre to supply you with a wheelchair if you need one. There could be more people who could tell the wheelchair centre what you need. It should be clear who does what. A plan might be needed if you have more than one care service helping you.

What Happens Next

Everyone will be assessed in the same way by January 2010.

We will try out new ways of getting standard wheelchairs to people who need them by March 2010.

Waiting Times

Most people get the wheelchair they need in less than 2 weeks. Some people need different wheelchairs, or a special seat for their wheelchair, and these can sometimes take longer to get. It should not take more than 18 weeks to get a wheelchair to someone who needs it.

What Happens Next

All the wheelchair centres will be able to get a wheelchair to someone who needs it within 18 weeks by March 2011.

Paying For A Wheelchair

If you need a wheelchair you should be able to get one from the NHS that you do not have to pay for.

You may decide to buy a wheelchair yourself because you want one that is different to what the NHS can give you. If you do this you should be told when you buy your chair that you also need to pay for care and repair yourself. You will need to think about how you are going to pay for this.

Repairs



The NHS repair service should be the same from each of the five wheelchair centres. Some wheelchairs should get an annual service and there needs to be a plan for this.

What Happens Next

Plans to make sure that all wheelchairs that need an annual check will get it, will be ready by December 2009. Repair services will have longer opening hours by December 2009.

Wheelchairs For Nursing And Care Homes

If a nursing or care home gets a wheelchair for their residents to share, they will have to pay for care and repair of the chair. The wheelchair centre can provide this service, but will charge the home.

Wheelchair and Seating Centres – Main Changes

Staff



People who work in wheelchair centres have a lot of skills in choosing and adapting wheelchairs for people. They need to make sure that they share what they know with staff who look after people that use wheelchairs. They should also share what they know with staff who work with other kinds of equipment.

Staff who work in the centres should be able to learn from each other and their patients to keep on improving services.

What Happens Next

Staff training will be improved.

Local Access



Some people cannot get to their local wheelchair centre because it is too far or too difficult. The centres should find places where they could have local clinics. They should also make sure that people who don't have their own transport can get help to get to the centres and clinics when they need to.

What Happens Next

Local clinics will be set up by January 2010.

How to get to local clinics will be looked at by December 2009.

Equipment



Wheelchair centres need to find better ways to make sure that they are not reusing old-fashioned equipment even though it works. They need to keep looking at different ways of making more modern equipment available.

What Happens Next

Wheelchair centres will start to use more up-to-date equipment from March 2009.

Keeping Our Information Up To Date



Wheelchair centres need to have good information about their patients and their service. They will need to improve information and computer systems so that they have good information to help run their services and plan them for the future.

What Happens Next

Work on new information systems started in January 2009.

Keeping Up To Date

People who work in the wheelchair services need to keep themselves up to date about the work that they do. They also need to keep looking for ways to make things better for the people they see. Health boards need to help them do this.

What Happens Next

NHS boards will have plans to make sure that the wheelchair services can keep on getting better.

Where To Find Out More

You can find the minutes of meetings and newsletters about the national wheelchair project on the project website:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/health/wheelchair

You can find a copy of the full Wheelchair and Seating Services Modernisation Action Plan at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/02/19121135



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Edinburgh
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ISBN 978-0-7559-5988-4



9 780755 959884