



**Northumbria Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Wheelchair services

Issued by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

## Introduction

Welcome to wheelchair services. This leaflet aims to answer some of the common questions people ask when they have been referred to our team.

## What is the wheelchair service?

Wheelchair Services are community-based services, serving the residents of North Tyneside and Northumberland. Our teams provide equipment to support wheelchair users, their families and carers. We aim to improve the quality of life and independence of our service users, through the provision of the right wheelchair and associated equipment.

We assess prescribe and loan wheelchairs, cushions and specialist seating for people who need equipment for six months or more.

**Please note:** short term loans of less than six months are available from other providers – see the end of this leaflet for further information.

## Who works in wheelchair services?

The team is made up of Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Technical Instructors, Drivers / Store managers and Administrative staff.

## How can the service be accessed?

People are initially referred to us by a Healthcare Professional e.g. General Practitioner (GP), Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist etc. Once people have been registered and received intervention from the service, you can then subsequently contact us directly.

## Who can access wheelchair services?

The team provides services to adults and children aged 36 months and over, who are registered with a GP in either North Tyneside or Northumberland.

Wheelchairs are provided on the basis of clinical need, which is set against a regionally-agreed criteria.

Provision of equipment is primarily for people with a permanent long-term condition, who need a wheelchair as part of their mobility within their own home, and have either significantly reduced, or no walking ability.

Wheelchair provision will normally be made from a regionally agreed range of chairs.

## What to expect

Once we have received your referral and confirmed it is appropriate, it will be screened on the basis of need and the type of wheelchair required.

If you require a standard wheelchair this can often be prescribed direct from the information contained within the referral form, meaning you will receive your wheelchair sooner.

If you require a non-standard wheelchair or a powered wheelchair you will need a clinical assessment.

Should you require a clinical assessment you will be contacted by letter and / or telephone to offer you an appointment. During this appointment you will be assessed by one of our wheelchair therapists to determine the type of chair, and or accessory that will best meet your clinical needs.

Assessments will predominantly take place in an outpatient clinic setting. Home assessment visits are available for those patients with specific clinical needs or special circumstances.

Powered and specialist seating clinics are often run in conjunction with external specialist staff e.g. rehabilitation engineers.

You are welcome to bring a carer or friend with you to your appointment.

## What happens next?

Following your assessment, we will either issue a chair from stock, or order one from an approved supplier.

Chairs from stock can be new or reconditioned models. All chairs are loaned free of charge for as long as they are needed, but remain the property of the NHS.

When your chair is available we will arrange a handover appointment with you with a wheelchair therapist or technical instructor. This appointment is to check the chair is the correct size, and to make any necessary adjustments to ensure the chair is right for you.

Wherever possible the handover appointment will be arranged to coincide close to the time your chair is delivered.

**Please note:** for your safety it is essential that you DO NOT use the chair until the handover visit has taken place.

## What happens if there is problem with my chair?

If your chair requires a repair please contact the regional repair service as detailed below:

Name -

Contact Number –

If you feel your chair is no longer suitable for your needs, please contact Wheelchair Services:

North Tyneside Wheelchair Service on \_\_\_\_\_

Northumberland Wheelchair Service on \_\_\_\_\_

## What happens when I no longer need my chair?

If you, or a person you support, no longer needs their wheelchair please call Wheelchair Services to arrange for it to be collected. If the chair is a powered model please call our approved regional repair service, and they will arrange collection.

## How do I change my appointment?

If you need to re-arrange or cancel your appointment please let us know at least 48 hours beforehand. This allows us to offer the appointment to someone else.

If you don't attend two appointments without telling us in advance, then this will result in Wheelchair Services making your clinical file inactive. You will then require a referral from a healthcare professional to re-access the service.

## What if I am not satisfied?

If at any time, you have concerns or queries please speak to the wheelchair therapist or member of staff involved in your care. If you feel that your concerns have still not been addressed please ask to speak to the clinical lead.

## Other sources of information

### **British Red Cross – Mobility aids**

The British Red Cross provide a short-term chargeable loan service for standard wheelchairs for up to 20 weeks. This service is provided independent of Northumbria Healthcare Wheelchair Service.

Croft House  
Western Avenue  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE4 8SR

Telephone: 0191 2737961





## Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118.

## Other sources of information

### NHS 111

### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx)

### NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Text: 07815 500015

Email: [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk)

### Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries 03 44 811 8111

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)

PIN 933/V1

Review date: September 2023

© This material is the copyright of the Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.