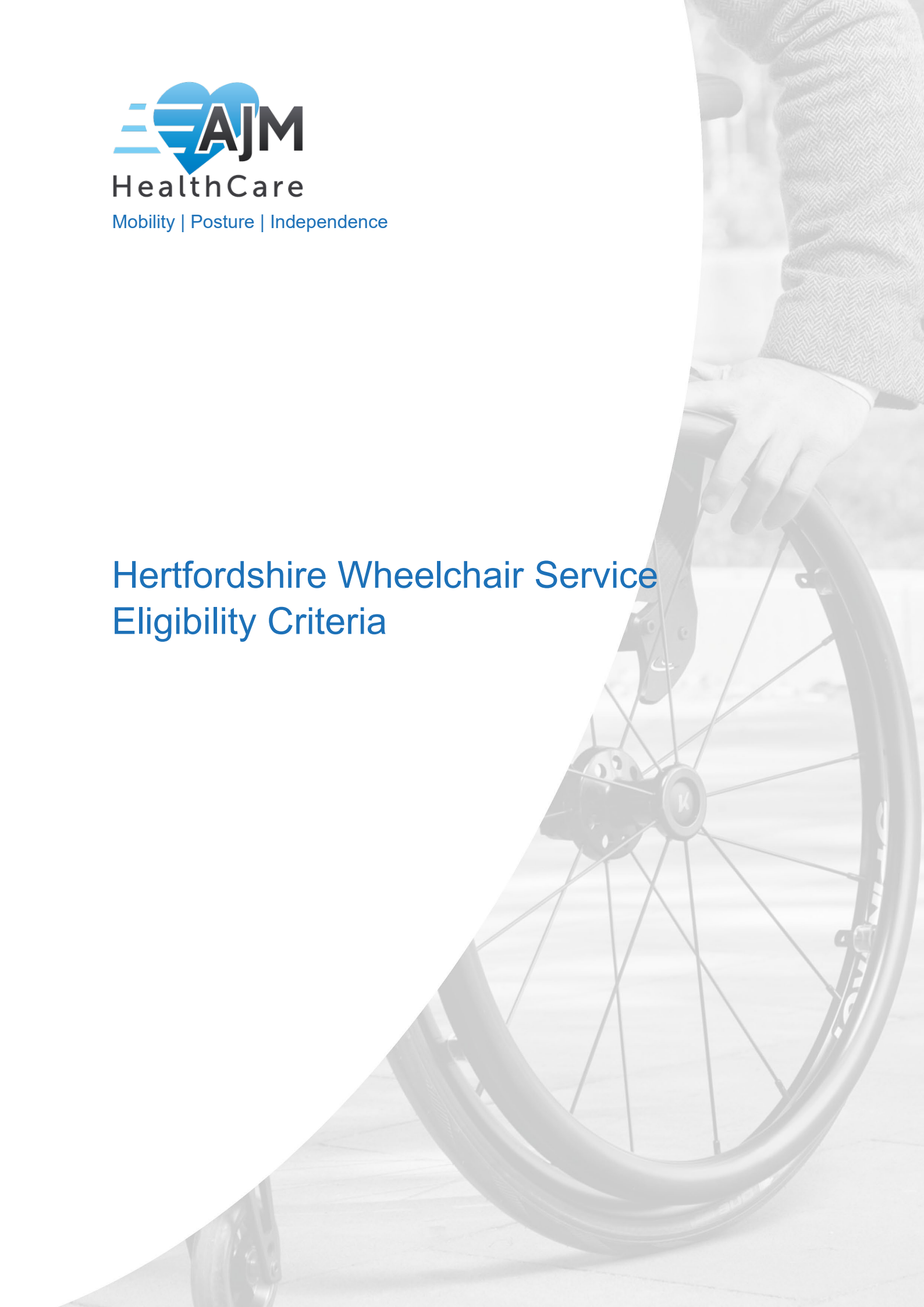




HealthCare

Mobility | Posture | Independence

# Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service Eligibility Criteria



The specific detail of the criteria and consideration for provision for different types of equipment is contained within this document, however the general criteria apply in all cases.

### **Access criteria**

Provision of equipment will be considered where the person:

- Has limited mobility – with a long-term restriction of walking ability (over 6 months)
- Has a permanent need for a wheelchair and will expect to use the equipment on a regular basis, at least 3 days a week for more than 1 hour.
- Is registered to a GP in the area covered by the Wheelchair and Special seating service.

There is no age restriction for provision, however equipment will not be provided for babies and very young children where posture of mobility needs can be met by commercially available buggies.

The Wheelchair Service does not issue chairs for:

- Short term periods; less than 6 months use

Patients not eligible for provision of a wheelchair by the NHS can contact the following organisations for short term loan/private purchase of a wheelchair:

**British Red Cross**

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/borrow-a-wheelchair>

**Herts Action on Disability -Wheelchair Hire Service**

Tel. 01707 324581

<http://www.hadnet.org.uk/contact/default.aspx>

- Short term terminal care; less than 6 months. Provision of this may be considered but only in exceptional circumstances
- When wheelchair provision has contra-indications to the client's medical condition or safety.

## Provision of wheelchairs and associated equipment

The Hertfordshire 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.

- Referred individual has a permanent impairment or medical condition that seriously impairs their ability to walk
- Referred individual is registered with a GP registered within East and North Hertfordshire or Herts Valleys CCGs (please note this excludes Royston GP practices which are covered by services commissioned by Cambridge and Peterborough CCG).
- Referred individual requires the use of a wheelchair for a period in excess of six months unless they require palliative care
- Referred individual intends to make regular use of a wheelchair
- The referral, prescription or assessment request is received by the Wheelchair Service on a dedicated and recognised form
- 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 loan
- Equipment will only be replaced if it ceases to meet the assessed clinical needs of the client 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.

### Criteria exclusions

- People living in a residential or nursing home – see section 3
- Referrals for people living in a residential or nursing home that are funded by a Health or Social Care Agency outside the geographical boundaries of the Primary Care Trust served by the Wheelchair Service will only be accepted for assessment once the funding has been agreed and confirmed by the funding Commissioner.
- Clients who are able to walk but for various reasons refuse to do.
- Short term periods; less than 6 months use

When wheelchair provision has contra-indications to the client's medical condition or safety.

### Equipment not provided

- Equipment for sole use within educational establishments, work environments and leisure facilities.
- Equipment for the sole use of accessing transport.
- Tricycles or bicycles.
- Scooters and electrically powered outdoor chairs (EPOC).

- Add on power packs, power assisted wheels and stair climbers. (In most cases these items are not allowed to be fitted to a chair provided by the service. See page 13 or contact local service for clarification)
- Trike attachment. Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service does not allow the attachment of a trike unit to any wheelchair issued by the service. Wheelchairs provided by the service are not routinely tested or approved for the fitting of commercially available power packs, power assisted wheels or stair climbing devices and therefore permission must be sought from the service before attempting to fit a privately purchased unit. Requests will be dealt with on an individual basis taking into account all potential risks for users, carers and the equipment provided by the service.
- Wheelchairs that enable a person to stand up or have facilities that enhance functional ability as opposed to mobility.
- Wheelchairs to be used in place of more appropriate static seating.
- Accessories and modifications over and above those that have been clinically prescribed which cannot be easily removed or operated independently from the wheelchair provided by the Wheelchair Service.
- Wheelchairs required only for occasional use less than 3 times a week.

Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service maintains an approved range of equipment list. This list gives details of all equipment which can be prescribed in the following categories.

- Attendant propelled manual wheelchair
- Self-propelling manual wheelchair
- Electrically powered indoor chair (EPIC)
- Electrically powered indoor/outdoor chair (EPIOC)
- Wheelchairs to be used with special seating systems
- Paediatric equipment
- Reclining back and/or tilt
- Pressure relieving cushions
- Accessories

## Specific criteria

Specific criteria for each of these categories are found on the following pages.

### Criteria for the supply of an attendant propelled manual wheelchair

- Referred individual complies with the general criteria and exclusions
- Referred individual has a carer who is able and willing to push the wheelchair
- The prescribed wheelchair is used as an aid to indoor and/or outdoor mobility and is not used in place of an armchair or static seating system.

### Criteria for the supply of a self-propelling manual wheelchair

- Referred individual complies with the general criteria and exclusions

- Referred individual is assessed as being medically fit to self-propel and self-propulsion is not detrimental to their medical condition. In some instances, the referred individual will be assessed as able to self-propel in an indoor environment only in order to give a limited increase in function and independence
- Where a carer is required to push the wheelchair outdoors, the referred individual has a carer who is able and willing to push the wheelchair outdoors
- In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to issuing a self-propelling manual wheelchair where the referred individual is unable to self-propel but the carer would gain benefit from the features a self-propelling wheelchair provides
- Consideration will be given to whether the referred individual needs an energy efficient self-propelling wheelchair based on whether they have an assessed medical condition that results in reduced strength and/or major excessive activity would result in deterioration of the medical condition. This referred individual would have to have been assessed as being a fulltime user whose level of functional independence would significantly increase with the issue of a lightweight or energy efficient wheelchair
- Consideration will be given to whether the referred individual needs a highly active wheelchair based on whether their level of functional independence would significantly increase with the issue and whose needs are not met through the issue of an energy efficient self-propelling wheelchair.

## Criteria for the supply of electrically powered indoor chairs (EPIC)

- Referred individual must either be unable to walk, or self-propel a manual wheelchair effectively within their home environment or have written confirmation from their GP that these activities are detrimental to their medical condition
- Through frequent and regular use of an EPIC the referred individual has the potential to benefit from increased mobility and independence in terms of activities of daily living
- Referred individual is medically fit to independently control a powered wheelchair indoors, free from conditions causing loss of consciousness or epileptic seizures in waking hours within the last year and free from any combination of medical conditions and/or treatments likely to make independent control of powered wheelchair unsafe
- Referred individual has a home environment which is compatible with the use of a powered chair and which includes a suitable storage area with a power supply for a battery charger
- Referred individual has demonstrated in a driving test and by other means that they have the insight, intellectual capacity and dexterity to operate an EPIC safely and responsibly on their own without physical assistance and verbal instruction. Provision of powered chairs is subject to periodic review of driving ability

- Referred individual must agree to members of the Wheelchair Service contacting other medical parties to obtain appropriate medical information which may affect the individual's ability to safely operate a powered wheelchair.

## Criteria for the supply of electrically powered indoor/outdoor chairs (EPIOC)

- Referred individual complies with the criteria for issue of an EPIC and has been safely using an EPIC for a period of 6 months. Wheelchair service therapists and technicians will reserve the right to upgrade EPICs to EPIOCs within a 3-month period or when deemed appropriate by the service.
- Referred individual has safe and easy access into and out of their home and can demonstrate that they can independently access the outside environment. They have a local outside environment which is compatible with the safe use of an EPIOC.

## Criteria for the supply of wheelchairs with special seating systems

- Referred individual uses a wheelchair for a significant part of the day and requires special seating as part of a postural management programme
- Referred individual is unable to maintain a safe sitting posture in a standard wheelchair even when issued with off the shelf posture corrective accessories
- Referred individual is unable to maintain a safe sitting posture in a non-standard wheelchair
- Referred individual has both a home environment able to accommodate the seating required and carers who are able to operate the system safely
- Special seating systems will be mounted onto the most appropriate wheelchair or buggy base that complies with current crash testing regulations
- Special seating is primarily supplied to meet the postural and mobility needs of the referred individual. Where possible consideration will be given to other demands placed on the seating system. It is not always possible to meet all the individual's specific needs especially in terms of education and feeding requirements
- Clients issued with custom made postural seating system will agree to be regularly reviewed
- Special seating will not be provided where it is assessed that the clinical needs and comfort of the referred individual would be better served by the provision of a posture supportive commercially available armchair or where the provision of such equipment is mainly required in order to overcome moving and handling/hoisting issues.

## Criteria for the supply of paediatric equipment

- The service will assess and provide equipment for children from any of the types of equipment mentioned provided that the general and individual criteria

for prescription are complied with. The minimum age for referral is usually 30 months. Younger children will be assessed where it has been clinically demonstrated that there are complex postural needs

- Children will be assessed for provision of a wheelchair or buggy depending on their assessed clinical need and age appropriateness
- Double buggies will only be supplied where both children meet the criteria for provision
- The Wheelchair Service is unable to meet the needs of children who require provision for behavioural issues or those without degenerative disease who solely require the wheelchair for occasional long distance outdoor mobility. However, clinical reasoning will be applied on a case-by-case basis in exceptional circumstances as part of the assessment process.
- The Wheelchair Service is unable to meet the needs of children without degenerative disease who require a wheelchair or buggy for occasional longer term outdoor mobility.

### Criteria for the supply of a reclining back and/or tilt

- Referred individual is a full-time user with a clinical diagnosis for which a wheelchair with recline and/or tilt is appropriate
- Carers can operate the system safely, access transport and detach/reattach component parts for the safety of the client
- Following assessment by a wheelchair therapist, the referred individual would benefit from provision of a mobile system as opposed to a static seating system
- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service is unable to provide wheelchairs with a recline and/or tilt facility where the provision of a posture supportive commercially available armchair would meet the referred individuals clinical need or if the equipment is solely required in order to overcome moving and handling/hoisting issues
- Recline and/or tilt may not be supplied where the referred individual is an inpatient within a hospital or rehabilitation unit and is continuing to show improvement in their posture and mobility.

### Criteria for the supply of pressure relieving cushions

- Cushions are only supplied for use within a wheelchair and are provided to achieve comfort, satisfactory posture, increased stability and as an aid to pressure ulcer prevention and management
- No wheelchair should be supplied without at least a vinyl covered foam comfort cushion of a 2" or 3" depth, as many will require a more advanced solution based on clinical indicators.
- Alternative cushions will be issued to users following assessment by either a therapist or technician working within the Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service or by an approved prescriber (using cushions from a product list as agreed with the Wheelchair Service)
- Where the cushion provided has a removable cover only one cover will be provided. Referred individuals with specific ongoing continence issues may be referred on to the continence service

- Following assessment, postural and pressure relieving cushions can be issued for use in wheelchairs that have been purchased by an individual privately or through the NHS Voucher Scheme. Cushions provided will be from the standard range as offered
- Pressure relieving cushions are not issued for use within a basic transit wheelchair or where provision of a cushion is mainly required in order to overcome moving and handling/hoisting issues.

## Criteria for the supply of accessories and modifications

- Accessories will only be provided following an assessment of clinical need, risk assessment and at the discretion of the Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service
- Modifications will only be undertaken following a risk and clinical assessment and only in accordance with manufacturers guidance and C.E. marking legislation
- Modifications deemed as affecting a manufacturer's warranty will not be considered where the wheelchair has either been privately purchased or purchased using the NHS Voucher Scheme i.e Personal Wheelchair Budget.
- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service is unable to supply accessories such as crutch holders, rain covers and sunshades.

## Criteria for the fitting of add on power packs, power assist wheels and stair climbers

- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service recognises that wheelchair users may wish to take advantage of the benefits offered by a power pack, power assist wheels or a stair climber by fitting a privately purchased unit to a wheelchair issued by the service.
- Wheelchairs provided by the service are not routinely tested or approved for the fitting of commercially available power packs, power assisted wheels or stair climbing devices and therefore permission must be sought from the service before attempting to fit a privately purchased unit. Requests will be dealt with on an individual basis taking into account all potential risks for users, carers and the equipment provided by the service.
- Individuals who wish to fit this equipment should ensure that they obtain advice from the supplier with regard to the suitability of fitting the unit to their wheelchair. They should supply the Wheelchair Service with full brochure and technical details of what they are requesting to fit to their wheelchair.
- Before fitting this equipment, the client must obtain written agreement from the Wheelchair Service. Any additional costs incurred in fitting this equipment will not be met by the Wheelchair Service.
- Where it has been noted that extraordinary costs have been incurred due to the use of the equipment the Wheelchair Service reserves the right to withdraw prescribed equipment from issue or consider charging the individual for repair costs. Upon its return to the service, the cost of converting the chair back to the manufacturer's specification may be charged to the user.



## Criteria for the supply of multiple wheelchairs

- Consideration will be given where a wheelchair is required for both upstairs and downstairs use. The wheelchair provided for upstairs use will be provided with a standard cushion and may not be the same make or model as the primary chair
- Where a powered wheelchair has been issued, an attendant propelled manual wheelchair will be issued in case of breakdown or power failure preventing use of the issued powered chair
- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service is currently unable to supply second wheelchairs for use within educational establishments, to satisfy work related requirements or to be used solely for leisure or transportation purposes.

## Criteria for the supply of wheelchairs to residents within nursing and residential homes

- Residents within residential and nursing care homes are entitled to be assessed in the same way that referred individuals residing in their own homes are. However, Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service is unable to provide residents with attendant controlled transit wheelchairs in which they will be pushed from room to room. Provision of these portering purpose wheelchairs is the responsibility of the individual care home.
- Consideration will be given to individuals within residential and nursing care homes who have relatives, carers or friends who are committed to visiting and taking the referred individual on regular outings. The referral in this instance, should be completed by the relative, carer or friend who will be able to comply with the conditions of the loan.
- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service does not condone the use of wheelchairs in place of static seating (armchairs) therefore a wheelchair will not be provided where the provision of a posture supportive commercially available armchair would meet the referred individual's clinical need
- Hertfordshire Wheelchair Service will not provide equipment where provision of such equipment is mainly required in order to overcome moving and handling/hoisting issues or is requested in order to assist in overcoming behavioural issues

## Annex – National Definitions of Low, Medium, High and Specialist need

Source Document: Guidance for using Wheelchair Currency

Author: NHS England

Publication Date: 22 March 2017

Categorisation and Definition			
Unit	Activity	Definition	Examples
Per of Care Episode	Low Need - Assessment	Limited need allocation of clinical time. Majority of the activity was expected to fall in this category	<p>Occasional users of wheelchair with relatively simple needs that can be readily met.</p> <p>Do not have postural or special seating needs. Physical condition is stable, or not expected to change significantly.</p> <p>Assessment does not typically require specialist staff (generally self-assessment or telephone triage supported by health / social</p>

		<p>care professional or technician).</p> <p>Limited (or no) requirement for continued follow up / review.</p>
Medium Need - Assessment	Higher allocation of clinical time including the use of more specialist time	<p>Daily users of wheelchair, or use for significant periods most days.</p> <p>Have some postural or seating needs.</p> <p>Physical condition may be expected to change (e.g. weight gain / loss; some degenerative conditions)</p> <p>Comprehensive, holistic assessment by skilled assessor required.</p> <p>Regular follow up / review.</p>
High Need - Manual - Assessment	This currency involves a higher allocation of clinical time than the	Permanent users who are fully dependent on their wheelchair for

		medium currency. This also includes the use of a higher and more specialist skillset of staff.	<p>all mobility needs.</p> <p>Physical condition may be expected to change / degenerate over time.</p> <p>Very active users, requiring ultra-lightweight equipment to maintain high level of independence.</p> <p>Initial assessment for all children.</p> <p>Comprehensive, holistic assessment by skilled assessor required.</p> <p>Regular follow up / review with frequent adjustment required / expected.</p>
	High Need - Powered - Assessment		
<b>Categorisation and Definition</b>			
<b>Unit</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>

Per Chair Issued	Low Need - Equipment	A basic wheelchair package which includes a standard cushion and one accessory and modification	Equipment Requirements - Basic wheelchair (self or attendant- propelled) / standard cushion / up to 1x accessory / up to 1x modification.
	Medium Need – Equipment	A higher allocation of equipment and modifications	Equipment requirements - Configurable, lightweight or modular wheelchair (self-or attendant propelled) / low to medium pressure relieving cushions / basic buggies / up to 2x accessories / up to 2x modifications.
	High Need - Manual – Equipment	More Complex and customised	Equipment requirements - Complex manual or powered equipment, including tilt in space chairs, fixed frame chairs, Seating systems on different chassis / high pressure relieving cushions / specialist buggies / multiple accessories / multiple and / or complex modifications / needs are met by customised equipment.
	High Need - Powered – Equipment		