

# EAST SUSSEX WHEELCHAIR SERVICE

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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### WELCOME

A very warm welcome to our first quarterly newsletter! Thanks for looking in. We hope you will find some useful information about the service, updates, events and other news. We want this to be interesting and informative so please, please share your suggestions and feedback for future issues. We would love to hear from you!

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### Missed Appointments

As anyone currently waiting for an appointment will no doubt tell you, there is a very high demand for our service. We understand this demand and are working hard to bring down waiting times, but we need your help.

Last month, there were **13 hours** of clinical appointments that were not able to be delivered due to on-the-day cancellations or because the individual did not attend without informing us. We understand that at times cancelling appointments is unavoidable; however, we ask that you give us as much notice as possible so that we are able to offer an appointment to someone else who, like you, may have been waiting a long time.

Along with missed clinic appointments, we had **6 hours** wasted when our field service engineers were in the community attempting to fix an individual's wheelchair, or deliver a wheelchair, and the individual was not at home as arranged.

We simply urge you to ensure you are able to attend for your appointment and notify us of any transport needs. If you are not able to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can give your appointment to someone else who, like you, may have been waiting a long time.

## Have Your Say

**East Sussex Wheelchair Services Collaborative** is the service user forum working with Millbrook Healthcare to provide a voice for wheelchair service users. We liaise with Millbrook and the commissioners of the service to ensure clear communication is maintained between staff and service users. We aim to support improvements that will benefit service users. We are very keen to hear from children and adults who use the wheelchair service about their experiences, as well as their parents or carers. All are welcome at group meetings that take place **every 2 months, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 11.00am** at the Millbrook Healthcare depot in Eastbourne. Transport costs are paid in full. To join the emailing list for the **Wheelchair User Service Group East Sussex**, please email [wusges@gmail.com](mailto:wusges@gmail.com) or phone Sam Affonso, Service Manager on 0333 003 5619.

**The next meeting is the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017**



### Cake and Coffee

Here at the wheelchair service, we are holding a coffee and cake day to raise funds for Macmillan.

We welcome you to join us on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017 between 12pm and 2pm.

### **DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE EMERGENCY REPAIR SERVICE?**

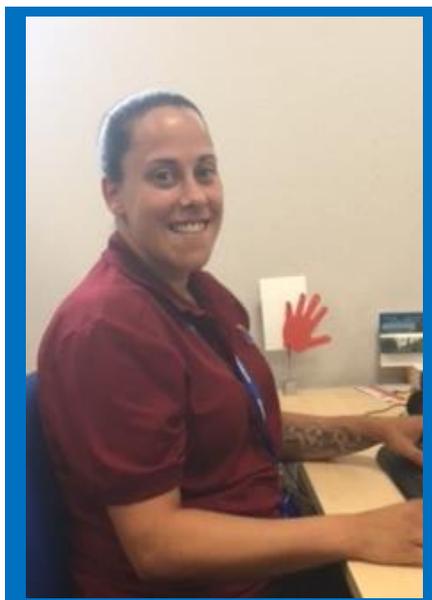
Our qualified field service engineers are on standby to deal with any urgent repair needs you may have outside normal working hours. To request a repair, please call **0333 003 5619**

**Q: What days and times can I call?**

A: The service operates 365 days a year 24 hours a day.

**Q: When should I call?**

A: You should call us if your wheelchair is unsafe, or has a power failure and you do not have access to an emergency backup chair.



**Congratulations** to Sarah, our occupational therapy assistant. She is off to university next month to commence her degree to become an occupational therapist.

# Your Wheelchair Service Frequently Asked Questions

We have tried to cover some of the more frequently asked questions that you will hopefully find useful if you are both new to the service or an existing customer.

**Q. Where will my assessment take place?**

A. Most assessments are carried out in one of our purpose-built clinics. Depending on your circumstances, an assessment can sometimes be carried out at home.

**Q. Will my home be suitable for a wheelchair?**

A. Where appropriate, we will come out to your home to assess your property to ensure that you are provided the equipment that best meets your needs.

**Q. What happens after my assessment?**

A. If you have been assessed as needing a wheelchair, we will supply and set up the equipment, including any accessories you may need. If you already have a wheelchair and you are finding that it is no longer comfortable, you can call our customer service team to arrange for another assessment.

**Q. How do I arrange for my wheelchair to be serviced?**

A. If you have a powered wheelchair, we will contact you each year to arrange for your chair to be serviced. If you have a non-powered chair, you should contact the customer service team who will be able to arrange for any necessary repairs.

**Q. What if I no longer need my wheelchair?**

A. You can arrange collection of your wheelchair by calling our customer service team.

**Q. Can I sell my wheelchair or give it to someone else who needs it?**

A. No. Your wheelchair has been provided to you by the NHS and has been provided to specifically meet your needs. If you no longer require a wheelchair, you must contact the service to arrange for it to be collected.

**Q. Can I make modifications to my wheelchair?**

A. No. It is not permitted for you or a friend or family member to make modifications to your wheelchair as this may invalidate any manufacturer guarantee or make the wheelchair unsafe. If you feel that your wheelchair needs adjusting, please contact the customer service team.

**Q. Are all surfaces suitable for my wheelchair?**

A. No. Certain surfaces such as sand are not suitable for a wheelchair due to the loss of traction that can occur. Care should be taken to avoid damage to wheelchair bearings and/or motors.

**Q. How long should I charge my batteries for the best performance on my powered wheelchair?**

A. Minimum charging time for the ultimate life of the battery is 8 hours non-stop.