

Appendix 2

# ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service provides wheelchairs for child, young person and adult clients with a long-term physical disability that affects their mobility necessitating a wheelchair and/or specialist postural seating that optimises mobility, comfort and safety in meeting their overall aim of achieving independence and optimal function related to activities of daily living.
- 1.2 The service is provided for patients who are registered with a General Practitioner (GP) within the catchment area of the eight Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's).
- 1.3 The definition of long-term is a period of more than six months. The service is also provided to client's who are terminally ill with a short life expectancy.
- 1.4 The Wheelchair Service comprises of the following key components:
  - Referral;
  - Assessment;
  - Prescription;
  - Purchase/provision of equipment;
  - Equipment delivery and collection;
  - Repair service;
  - Re-assessment;
  - and;
  - Service user training on equipment provided where indicated.

## **2. General Eligibility Principles**

- 2.1 Clients will be supplied with a wheelchair providing the following criteria are met:
    - The Client has been referred to the service by their GP, registered Community Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or other allied health or social care professional;
    - The Client has a long-term physical condition that significantly restricts their mobility;
    - The Client has a long-term illness that restricts their mobility;  
And/or;
    - The Client is terminally ill and requires a wheelchair to aid their mobility
    - Long-term is defined as a period of more than six months.
    - If a CHC or neurorehab patient assessment identifies the need for a wheelchair, the CCG CHC team will contact service to make them aware.
    - If the assessment meets the usual service eligibility criteria then a wheelchair will be provided.
    - If the assessment falls outside of the usual eligibility criteria the service will then provide a cost estimate for the chair and maintenance and agree this with the CCG CHC team. If agreed, an invoice will be sent to the CCG and the wheelchair will be provided.
    - This process will be reviewed annually to ascertain its success.
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### 3. Purpose of the Eligibility Criteria

3.1 The eligibility criteria has been developed to:

- provide transparency and clarity for Clients and their parents/carers requesting or currently receiving a service from the Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service;
  - Support the Service Provider to deliver a person centred service for individuals who have long term impairment to their ability to walk. This will be realised through a holistic multi-disciplinary/multi-agency assessment of their needs (where this is appropriate);
  - Support the prioritisation of provision of wheelchairs, specialist seating and associated equipment to Clients with the greatest clinical needs within available resources;
  - Support equity of provision to the population of Kent and Medway;
  - Ensure that when demand exceeds supply, waiting lists are addressed in a fair and transparent manner, according to clinical need and other risks;
  - Promote multi-agency commissioning of wheelchairs and specialist seating systems through using funding streams from within the NHS and other agencies where appropriate;
  - Promote the participation of the Clients in choice of wheelchairs and specialist seating linked to their assessed needs;
- And;
- Signpost referrers to alternative sources of provision where appropriate.

#### Person centred approach

The Wheelchair Service, when carrying out a holistic assessment of the Client's and carer's needs in partnership with other agencies, will prioritise the clinical needs of the Client, whilst also taking into consideration the needs of the parent/carer. Where there is a conflict between the assessed needs of the Client and those of the parent/carer a creative solution will be developed. However, the primary Client for the Wheelchair Service remains the wheelchair user.

### 5. Categories of different levels of need and types of wheelchair user

Grade	Description of User	Equipment Needs	Funding Responsibility
1 (CAT4)	<b>PART TIME USER SHORT TERM</b> – Temporary requirement less than 6 months). Normally independently mobile. Immobile due to accident of operation (may include terminal care)	Pushed or self-propelling standard. Special chair may be required e.g. recliner for full leg plaster or hip spica	For hospital discharge = Acute service.  Self-care (self-funded, 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector etc.).
2 (CAT3)	<b>PART TIME USER LONG TERM</b> – Ability to walk short distances. Requires wheelchair on <b>regular basis (minimum 3 days per week) for outdoor use</b> or to enhance quality of life for user/carer	Pushed standard or lighter-weight Self-propelling standard Buggies for patient's	If less than 3 days Client will be advised to access third sector services or private purchase.

3 (CAT2)	<b>PART TIME USER LONG TERM</b> – Variable indoor walking ability due to <b>fluctuating condition</b> . High degree of independent life-style but requires wheelchair to maintain level of independence and quality of life	Self-propelling standard or lighter-weight	NHS
4 (CAT1c)	<b>FULL TIME USER LOW ACTIVITY – Limited or lack of ability to self-propel.</b> Dependent for many daily living needs	Pushed or self-propelling standard or buggy. Specialist chassis for custom-made seat	NHS
5 (CAT1b)	<b>FULL TIME USER ACTIVE –</b> Unable to self-propel. <b>Independent mobility with powered wheelchair.</b> Degree of independence in daily living activities	EPIC & EPIOC depending on availability/environment + motivation	NHS
6 (CAT1a)	<b>FULL TIME USER ACTIVE – Independent mobility and lifestyle</b> Appropriate equipment reduces dependence on others and improves quality of life	Self-propelling standard or active	NHS

### 5a. Plus size (mediatrics/bariatrics) Wheelchairs

For the purposes of this document the definition used for clients with bariatric needs is that the wheelchair is designed and constructed to carry Clients who weigh 25 stone (159 kg) or more.

The Client will:

- Exceed the manufacturer's weight limit for a standard wheelchair;
- Have their weight accurately measured and recently recorded (within one month of assessment);  
and;
- Where the wheelchair is to be used within the home environment this will be assessed by a suitable representative from the Wheelchair Service to ensure safe accessibility and manoeuvrability within the dwelling and have adequate storage for the wheelchair.

Whilst the lead agency for funding all forms of equipment as defined in Table 1 above is the NHS. There is an underlying principle that on a case by case basis there may be a need to jointly commission a piece of equipment to maximise the Clients and their parents/carers independence and quality of life. There may also be occasions where the lead agency is a school or college or a local authority to fund a piece of equipment but it is prescribed and procured via the Wheelchair Service.

### 6. Options for wheelchair provision

There are four options for the provision of wheelchairs for Clients and their parents/carer:

a) **NHS Provision:**

With reference to Table 1 above, to accept an assessment and prescription by an appropriately qualified professional followed by loan of an NHS wheelchair, maintained and repaired by a provider commissioned through NHS Kent and Medway.

b) **Part NHS provision via a Voucher Scheme (the voucher scheme may shortly be replaced by Personal Wheelchair Budgets by NHS England):**

Independent Voucher: Following assessment and prescription by an appropriately qualified professional, the Client and their parent/carer has the option to contribute to/top up the cost of a more expensive wheelchair of their choice from an approved supplier. The Client will own the wheelchair and be responsible for its maintenance and repair, however the Wheelchair Service will sign-post the Client to reputable wheelchair suppliers on the NHS voucher scheme suppliers.

Partnership Voucher: Following the assessment and prescription by an appropriately qualified professional, the Client and their parent/carer has the option to contribute to/top up the cost of a more expensive wheelchair from an approved supplier (the choice of wheelchair is more limited with this option as it needs to be from within the range maintained by the Approved Repairer). The NHS will purchase and own the wheelchair and be responsible for its maintenance and repair. In addition, the Client or their parent/carer must agree in writing to the conditions of the loan.

The vouchers are expected to last 5 years for the Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service.

The expectation is that the Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service will take into consideration changes in the assessed clinical needs of the Client and their parent/carer and that the demand on the wheelchair will vary from user to user. Where the independent voucher option has been chosen and a replacement is requested within the 5 year period due to being beyond repair, the Client or their parent/carer will be expected to provide evidence of previous maintenance records.

c) **Charity involvement**

If a Client or their parent/carer wished to approach a registered charity for a wheelchair and or specialist seating system, it would be expected that the equipment's maintenance would form part of the purchasing agreement. The Wheelchair Service will not have a responsibility to maintain a wheelchair purchased through a charity.

d) **Private Purchase**

If a Client or their parent/carer wished to purchase a wheelchair and/or specialist seating system solely through private funds, the responsibility for maintaining the wheelchair and/or specialist seating system will remain with them.

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## **7. Criteria for assessment**

The assessment process will have identified that the Client has a long-term significant impairment to their ability to walk and requires the use of a wheelchair and/or specialist seating system to promote their independence and quality of life.

## **8. Right equipment at the right time and place**

It is essential that wheelchairs and specialist seating systems are designed to meet the specific needs of the Client, whilst also taking into account the assessed needs of their parent/carer.

It is essential that a flexible and age appropriate range of wheelchairs, buggies and specialist seating systems are available that promote age appropriate independence and quality of life, rather than learned helplessness and dependency.

As part of an agreed care plan, a multi-agency approach to commissioning wheelchairs, buggies and specialist seating systems could be considered as part of a creative approach to meeting the assessed needs of the Client and their parent/carer.

It is essential that the Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service is able to respond promptly and effectively to the potentially rapid deterioration of a Client's condition, this will also include those Clients who are at the end of their life, or who may be prevented from requiring hospital admission through their interventions.

## **9. Exclusions**

Wheelchairs and associated equipment are NOT provided by the Wheelchair Service under the following circumstances:

- For short term need (CAT 4 in Table 1 e.g. leg fracture, rehabilitation or operations which lead to a short term requirement for a wheelchair). Short-term needs will be supplied by a short-term loan provider. Best endeavours will be made by the Wheelchair Service to meet the needs of existing service users who require provision in these instances;
  - For part-time (less than 3 days per week) transit use only (CAT 3 in Table 1);
  - In a care home setting when required for transit only (i.e. NOT enabling independent access around the home or to support access to the community);
  - Where a wheelchair has already been provided (except in a case of the provision of a standard manual chair to act as an emergency back up where an Electrically Powered Indoor/Outdoor chair is issued);
  - Electrically Powered Outdoor Chairs – Clients requiring outdoor only provision would only be assessed for a manual wheelchair;
  - Wheelchairs/buggies will not be provided as a static chair;
  - Pressure relieving cushions will not be provided for use in static seating/arm chairs in either a client's home or in a care home situation.
  - The provision of mobility scooters is not included;
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- The service will not provide wheelchairs for the purpose of restraint owing to a behavioural or mental condition if the patient has the ability to walk;
- Additional batteries will not be supplied for EPIC's and EPIOC's. The Client/carer is responsible for ensuring their wheelchair battery is placed on charge;
- Wheelchairs will not be provided as part of a programme of rehabilitation, whether in hospital or at a specialist rehabilitation centre, as these should be provided by the hospital or rehabilitation centre as part of the ongoing treatment process. Once the long-term clinical need of the Client 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;
- Wheelchairs will not be provided for use solely in a work environment or solely in a school or other educational establishment, however the service will work with 'Access to Work' and/or educational establishments to specify and facilitate provision through alternative funding streams;
- The Wheelchair Service does not normally provide equipment to children under the age of 36 months as it is expected that in most cases a normal commercial buggy will be suitable. However, if the child has complex postural or medical needs (as identified through the assessment process) consideration to provide a specialist buggy will be directed to the relevant CCG for consideration to fund on an individual basis. In all cases, the buggy will be age appropriate for the child;
- Rain covers and sunshades are not supplied by the service, information regarding private purchase can be provided where applicable;
- Lap straps, harnesses and head supports are not supplied for transport use only;  
and;
- In those instances where the Client is unable to be seated in a wheelchair. This will be discussed with the Client and their carer at assessment.

#### **10. Provision of Wheelchairs to Clients residing in Nursing/Residential Homes/ Placements/Rehab Centres**

The Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service provides on loan, wheelchairs for individual use for Client's who meet the following criteria:

- The Client requires a wheelchair to be independently mobile e.g. by self-propelling or foot propelling.  
N.B: Independence means that the Client can independently operate the wheelchair;  
and/or;
- The Client requires significant postural support to minimise postural deterioration and to maximise function. In some instances it is more suitable for those residents requiring significant postural support to be provided with a suitable static seating system rather than a wheelchair. Therefore the nursing/residential home/rehab centre will be responsible for provision.



## Additional notes

- It may not always be possible for severely disabled residents to be able to be appropriately seated in a wheelchair in which case a wheelchair would not be appropriate to meet their needs.
- It is not desirable for residents to sit immobile in a wheelchair for long periods.
- It is at the discretion of the assessing therapist whether a wheelchair will be provided following referral, even if the Client appears to meet the above criteria. If there are concerns about Tissue Viability and/or posture in the wheelchair and it is felt that the Client would be more comfortable in an armchair/bed then this recommendation will be made.

## 11. Definitions of equipment and additional notes

**NB** With reference to Table 1, if the assessed needs of the Client and their parent/carer require a higher specification of wheelchair or specialist seat than would be provided through the Kent & Medway Wheelchair Service, then on a case by case basis a joint commissioned approach could be considered.

<b>Standard wheelchairs</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
A pushed or self-propelling standard wheelchair.	The service does not supply standard transit wheelchairs for residents in Nursing/Residential Homes.
<b>Supply of a second manual chair</b> A basic second backup wheelchair will be provided for emergency use, where an electric powered wheelchair has been issued.  The Kent & Medway Wheelchair Service will not issue two electric chairs. Back-up wheelchairs will not have specialist seating which is to the same specification as the primary powered wheelchair. Back-up wheelchairs will have a basic postural support.	
<b>Lighter-weight wheelchairs</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>

<p>A lighter-weight wheelchair is defined as a chair weighing 15kg or less by the manufacturer, when the wheelchair is fitted with all removable parts e.g. arm rests and foot hangers.</p>	<p>A lighter-weight wheelchair will be considered as an alternative to a standard wheelchair where;</p> <p>The client is unable to walk and requires the wheelchair for indoor mobility and is unable to self-propel a standard wheelchair.</p> <p>The referral is for outdoor occasional use but the client has a deteriorating condition which may lead to full time use.</p> <p>The regular carer/relative is unable to lift/push a standard wheelchair as they have a recognised medical condition. This should be evidenced by a supporting statement from their GP. This statement should take into account whether the carer is medically fit to be lifting weights/be pushing a wheelchair taking into account the weight of the client as well as the chair.</p> <p>The client must meet the weight limits stated in the manufacturer's specifications for a lighter-weight chair.</p>
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<p><b>Active self-propelling wheelchairs</b></p>	
<p>An active performance wheelchair is available for all Clients who need a wheelchair for <b>all</b> their mobility needs (e.g. the client is unable to walk via any other means).</p>	
<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p><b>Additional notes</b></p>
<p>An active wheelchair is intended for everyday use by an active user. It has a range of features which allows the wheelchair to be configured to suit the Client's needs.</p>	<p>Active wheelchairs will be considered on a case by case basis.</p>

<p><b>Electrically Powered Indoor Wheelchair (EPIC)</b></p>	
<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p><b>Additional notes</b></p>
<p>An electrically powered wheelchair to be used within the user's home environment, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.</p>	<p>The client is not able to effectively walk or effectively self-propel in a manual wheelchair within their home environment.</p> <p>The Client must demonstrate the ability to use an EPIC safely and independently within their property.</p> <p>The Client must have a suitable home environment including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate space for the movement of the wheelchair including footplates within their homes.</li> <li>• A suitable space with a power supply for</li> </ul>

	<p>charging the batteries overnight.</p> <p>The Client must be able to charge the EPIC as recommended, or have support to do so.</p> <p>The Client must meet the weight limits stated in the manufacturer's specification for the chair.</p>
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<b>Electrically Powered Indoor/Outdoor Wheelchair (EPIOC)</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p>An EPIOC is a powered wheelchair which can be used indoors and outdoors in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions</p>	<p>The Client should be medically fit to control a powered wheelchair indoors and outdoors independently, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free from conditions causing loss of consciousness and epileptic seizures in waking hours within the past year in line with the DVLA requirements for motor vehicle drivers.</li> <li>• Free from any combination of medical conditions and/or treatments likely to make independent powered wheelchair control unsafe for themselves, pedestrians, or other road users.</li> </ul> <p>The Client should be aware of safety in the environment in which they will be using the wheelchair and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have demonstrated in a wheelchair driving test and by other means that they have the insight, intellectual capacity and dexterity to operate an indoor/outdoor powered wheelchair safely and responsibly on their own and without assistance. This will include the Client being able to demonstrate that they are able to negotiate the access to their property safely and appropriately.</li> <li>• Have demonstrated appropriate visual and other sensory capabilities to manage the risks associated with driving an EPIOC.</li> </ul> <p>The Client must demonstrate the capacity to compensate adequately for any sensory and/or physical impairment.</p> <p>Long term users of powered wheelchairs do not need to retake a driving test upon reassessment for a new powered chair as long as they meet the safety criteria detailed above. However, therapists of the Wheelchair Service reserve the right to request for any wheelchair user to retake the driving assessment.</p> <p>The Client must meet the weight limits stated in the manufacturer's specification for the chair to be supplied.</p> <p>The Client should have a suitable home environment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate space for storage of the wheelchair with a power supply for a battery charger.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate space for movement of the wheelchair including footplates within the home.</li> <li>• Suitable access to the outdoors from the clients own home (ingress/egress for the client when using the wheelchair).</li> <li>• A local outside environment which is suitable for a powered wheelchair.</li> </ul> <p>The assessor may, with the consent of the Client and their parent/carer, seek further medical advice about the user from their GP or Consultant.</p> <p>The chair will remain on loan subject to regular review on the understanding that the Client continues to meet the above criteria.</p> <p>If subsequently the Client fails to meet any of these criteria the wheelchair may be withdrawn.</p> <p>The scheme excludes the provision of user controlled outdoor powered wheelchairs and scooters for outdoor use only.</p> <p>The NHS <b>ONLY</b> supplies or provides specialist vouchers for pavement driven wheelchairs with a maximum speed of <b>4 mph</b> (reference Highway Code for Class 2 vehicles – Law UICHR 1988 reg 4).</p> <p>For Clients with complex seating needs a temporary loan wheelchair may be available in case of emergencies, whilst the EPIOC is being repaired, at the Therapist’s discretion. Please note this may be a standard manual wheelchair.</p>
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<b>Powered Wheelchair with Tilt/Recline Facilities</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p>Tilt-ability to adjust the angle of the seat whilst maintaining the seat to back angle</p> <p>Recline – adjustment of the back support so as to change the seat to back angle</p>	<p>Criteria for provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Client must be able to control the equipment independently and manoeuvre the wheelchair safely. Please refer to EPIOC criteria.</li> <li>• The Client must have a clinical diagnosis for which tilt or recline is assessed as being clinically appropriate.</li> <li>• Moving to an alternative static chair is not possible because of disability and the Client must be mobile to meet lifestyle needs.</li> <li>• The Client needs frequent changes of position to be able to remain in wheelchair, e.g. for pressure relief/comfort.</li> <li>• The Client is unable to tolerate angle of fixed tilt or recline for long periods.</li> <li>• Custom-made special seating does not aid pressure relief and comfort sufficiently.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Client needs to alter position independently to relieve pressure and maximise function/posture.</li> <li>• The Client must have awareness and understanding of any adverse effects of tilt and recline on posture e.g. spasms, pelvic tilt.</li> </ul>
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<b>Dual Operated Electrically Powered Indoor/Outdoor Electric Wheelchair</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
Electrically powered indoor/outdoor wheelchair where the user controls the chair but there is a second joystick control mounted near the push handle for the carer to take over control of the wheelchair if necessary.	<p>Criteria for provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Client must fulfil all criteria for EPIOC provision – please refer to EPIOC criteria.</li> <li>• Be able to operate an EPIOC but due to a deteriorating/fluctuating medical condition may require occasional assistance in controlling the chair when outside.</li> </ul> <p>Dual controls may also be added to a electric wheelchair during the learning process and for younger children who have not developed road sense and are therefore accompanied by parents/carers when out. Attendant only operated powered wheelchairs are outside the scope of the Kent &amp; Medway Wheelchair Service, however this could be considered through multi-agency commissioning arrangements.</p>

<b>Manual Tilt Wheelchairs</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
Tilt-ability to adjust the angle of the seat whilst maintaining the seat to back angle.	<p>Criteria for provision:</p> <p>A standard wheelchair with semi-reclining back and wedge cushion should be considered as the first option where a Client needs to sit in a tilt position. Any environmental constraints will be considered when prescribing this type of wheelchair.</p> <p>The Client must meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Client is unable to mobilise.</li> <li>• The Client will spend more than 4 hours per day in the wheelchair for mobility purposes not as an alternative to a specialist seating system.</li> <li>• The Client has significant postural needs which cannot be met in any other wheelchair.</li> <li>• The Client will gain significant improvements in their posture and mobility from the provision of a tilt in space wheelchair.</li> </ul>

<b>Buggy Provision</b>	
<b>Additional notes</b>	
Criteria for provision:	

### Single Buggy

- This will be issued where the child is developmentally delayed and is not able to walk distances and it is envisaged it will be needed for 2 years.
- The child will ordinarily have to be 36 months or older as it is expected normal buggies will be suitable for use up to this age. However, if the child has complex postural or medical needs (as identified through the assessment process) consideration to provide a specialist buggy will be directed to the relevant CCG for consideration to fund on an individual basis.
- The buggy will be age appropriate for the child.

### Double Buggy

- This will be issued only when both children have a specific medical need.
- Where one child has a specific medical need only, parents will be offered the use of the voucher scheme to purchase a double buggy.

There is very little available on the market to meet the situation of a large child with mobility needs and a smaller sibling especially when the second child is under 18 months. However the Kent & Medway Wheelchair Service will endeavour to meet the request or to give advice on a possible solution where both children have a clinical need.

For a child less than 36 months who needs postural support and the parents wish to keep their current buggy the Wheelchair Service will assess the possibility/viability of making postural supportive inserts for the parents' own buggy if clinically appropriate and directed to the relevant CCG for consideration to fund on an individual basis..

Three or four wheeled buggies could be considered by the Wheelchair to promote independence and quality of life on a case by case basis, there may be opportunities to develop a joint commissioning approach to the provision of three wheeled buggies or choice through the Voucher scheme.

NB. If a buggy is suggested by the referrer or parent/carer that on further investigation does not meet the child's postural/clinical needs then this would not be considered for provision by the Wheelchair Service.

### **Situations not included in this provision**

- If the assessed need for the Client is to have a buggy supplied by the service to facilitate a "safe space" in the community to promote mobility, independence and quality of life, then in exceptional circumstances this could be considered through a joint commissioned approach. However, the provision of the buggy should not be considered as the first option, alternative behavioral strategies should have been implemented first. A buggy should only be issued as part of a wider multi-agency strategy for supporting disabled children with an autism spectrum. Consideration should always be made for a joint commissioning approach to requests for buggies where the primary need is to facilitate a "safe space" in the community.

<b>Specialist Buggy</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p>A specialist buggy is a buggy that offers postural support to the occupant. It may also include a tilt-in-space facility.</p>	<p>Criteria for provision: a specialist buggy will be issued if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A standard wheelchair and/or seating system is not appropriate.</li> <li>• The child will ordinarily have to be 36 months or older as it is expected normal buggies will be suitable for use up to this age. However, if the child has complex postural or medical needs (as identified through the assessment process) consideration to provide a specialist buggy will be directed to the relevant CCG for consideration to fund on an individual basis. A buggy is age appropriate for the Client.</li> <li>• The Client meets the requirements for the provision of special seating.</li> <li>• The buggy is required full time or for significant periods of every day.</li> <li>• The Client is unable to walk independently.</li> <li>• Special seating cannot be used in the Client's existing buggy or in the standard buggy issued by the Kent &amp; Medway Wheelchair Service.</li> </ul> <p>Where there is no requirement for postural support, a standard buggy will be issued.</p> <p>Only one buggy will be supplied per Client, to be used in all environments i.e. home, community or early years' setting/nursery.</p> <p>Three or four wheeled buggies should be considered by the service to promote independence and quality of life. On a case by case basis, there may be opportunities to develop a joint commissioning approach to the provision of three wheeled buggies.</p> <p>NB. If a specialist buggy is suggested by the referrer or parent/carer that on further investigation does not meet the child's postural/clinical needs then this would not be considered for provision by the Wheelchair Service.</p>

<b>Special Seating</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p>Special seating comprises a range of individually manufactured or modified seating systems to sustain or correct posture to gain optimum posture of a user within their wheelchair or specialist buggy.</p>	<p>Criteria for provision:</p> <p>The Client must be eligible for a wheelchair for mobility purposes through the Kent &amp; Medway Wheelchair Service and this should be the PRIMARY reason for referral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Client requires the wheelchair for a significant part of everyday (e.g. 50%) as part of a postural management programme.</li> <li>• The Client requires support/stabilisation to achieve or maintain an appropriate sitting posture in the wheelchair and thereby maximise function.</li> <li>• The environment should be able to accommodate the seating required.</li> <li>• The seating will be used in agreement with Client and their parents/carers and Therapists.</li> <li>• There is a need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhance postural awareness;</li> <li>○ Correct posture;</li> <li>○ Inhibit unwanted movement;</li> <li>○ Monitor and minimize deformity and discomfort associated with deteriorating neurological conditions;</li> <li>○ Maximise functional ability;</li> </ul> <p>And;</p> <li>○ Support pressure care management.</li> </li></ul> <p>The provision of specialist seating is an area that can generate significant economies of scale and improved outcomes for the Client through a joint commissioning approach linked to an integrated assessment process.</p>

<b>Pressure Relieving Cushions, Modular Backs and Back Cushions</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p><i>Pressure relieving seat cushions</i> - cushions supplied by the Kent &amp; Medway Wheelchair Service for use in wheelchairs which offer degrees of pressure relief for Clients who have, or are at risk of developing, pressure ulcers. They are made out of a variety of different materials (basic foam cushions</p>	<p>Criteria for provision:</p> <p>Cushions are only supplied in accordance with the Wheelchair Therapist's assessment of clinical need. This assessment incorporates the use of a recognised risk assessment scale e.g. Waterlow, and takes into account the overall management of a Client's pressure relief.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure relieving cushions, modular or cushioned back rests are only supplied for full time users. They are not supplied for outdoor use only. Basic 2" or 3" foam cushions will be supplied for part time users.</li> <li>• Cushions must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions, and with the correct alignment and orientation in the wheelchair.</li> <li>• Cushions for postural support may be supplied to</li> </ul>



<p>are not classified in this category).</p> <p><i>Back cushions:</i> comfort cushions used behind the Client to pad the backrest, provide basic lateral support or alter the back angle of the wheelchair to enable a more upright or a reclined posture.</p>	<p>users who sit in their wheelchairs as their main means of seating and have difficulty in maintaining symmetrical positioning.</p> <p><b>Situations not included in this provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternating air pressure cushions (dynamic pressure cushions) are not supplied by the service.</li> <li>• Pressure cushions are not supplied from the service to people who are in hospital. Cushions are available for eligible Clients on discharge.</li> <li>• Pressure cushions are not supplied to residents of Nursing Homes, as provision of these cushions would be considered to be part of nursing care, except where a client is able to demonstrate independent mobility from a self-propelling or powered wheelchair and they spend at least 4 hours of the day in the wheelchair for mobility reasons.</li> </ul> <p>Although some cushions supplied provide high pressure relief, it is not recommended that users with active pressure ulcers sit in their wheelchair for longer than two hours at a time (even if supplied with a high pressure-relieving cushion). Instead it is recommended that they stay on bed rest, using a suitable pressure relieving mattress and seek the advice of the Community Nursing Team and/or their GP.</p>
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<b>Accessories and Modifications</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Additional notes</b>
<p>Accessories - items added to the chair, which enhance its use but do not change the manufacturer's specification of the chair.</p> <p>Modifications - alterations to the wheelchair which change the manufacturer's specification but do not change the original intended use.</p>	<p>Criteria for provision of accessories:</p> <p>Accessories are only supplied in accordance with assessment of clinical needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Trays:</i> will usually only be supplied as part of a seating system for postural needs. A tray is not an alternative to a table. Clients will need to be able to demonstrate safe use of the wheelchair with the tray fitted.</li> <li>• <i>Head supports:</i> will be supplied as part of a seating system for postural control. Head supports are not supplied for transport purposes only. The transport provider is responsible for appropriate head support. Information and advice will be provided by the Wheelchair Service to relevant Transport Providers, individuals and parents/carers on suitable equipment and from where this can be purchased.</li> <li>• <i>Elevating Leg Supports:</i> will be supplied if there is a clinical need due to inability to position the leg on a standard foot support, not as a primary method to raise legs to control swelling.</li> <li>• <i>Harnesses:</i> will be supplied for postural need.</li> </ul>

Harnesses are not supplied for transportation or as a restraint method.

- *Mobile arm supports:* These will be provided by other agencies as part of a multi-agency assessment process. The Wheelchair Service will work in partnership with these agencies to ensure full compatibility with the Client's wheelchair where technically possible.
- *Oxygen cylinder carriers:* will be supplied if a risk assessment by Therapists/Rehabilitation Engineers supports its provision.

Situations not included in this provision:

- *Power Packs:* these are not supplied. If privately funded, permission should be sought before fitting them to an NHS wheelchair. If the NHS wheelchair is not compatible an alternative chair will **not** be supplied. A suitable chair may be able to be provided via the voucher system. N.B. If an employee (e.g. from a Care Home) requires access to a Power Pack from a Health and Safety perspective, it is the responsibility of the employer to assess their employee's need for this piece of equipment and to fund it if it is required.
- *Powered seat riser units:* *These are not supplied by the Wheelchair Service. However these can be provided via a partnership voucher, with the client meeting the additional cost of the seat riser unit. However the client must be eligible for the type of powered wheelchair that is compatible with a seat riser unit and it is not clinically contraindicated.*
- *Rain Covers/Sunshades:* These are not supplied by the service unless there is a specific medical condition which evidences a clinical need.
- *Lights:* Will not be provided by the Wheelchair Service. However, advice and support will be provided to the client on how to use bicycle lighting to enable Clients to effectively travel around at dusk or night.

N.B.: The type of powered wheelchair that can be supplied by the NHS was stipulated in 1996 by the Department of Health as being 'Class 2'. This identifies a powered wheelchair that can be used on the pavement and therefore is not for road use, it is also restricted to a maximum speed of 4 mph.

Criteria for Provision of Modifications:

Custom made modifications are supplied to full-time users (more than 4 hours every day) to meet clinical need or

safety requirements.

There is evidence nationally that a joint commissioned approach to the provision of accessories or modifications can considerably improve outcomes for Clients and create savings for local authorities, schools, colleges and employers, particularly the provision of risers.