



**Provide**  
**Equipment Hub**

# **Croydon wheelchair service eligibility criteria**

## Croydon wheelchair service eligibility criteria

The wheelchair and seating service is available to people of all ages including those under 36 months:

- with a long-term mobility impairment, lasting at least 6 months, requiring the use of a wheelchair except in the case of palliative care
- where the client is receiving end of life and/or palliative care
- where the client will use the wheelchair on a regular basis for a minimum of 4 days a week
- who have a mobility impairment which must affect their ability to walk or have a medical condition that means that walking could adversely affect their health
- who reside within the service's catchment area
- who are registered with a general practitioner (GP) within the area
- who reside out of area but are funded by Croydon Continuing Health
- with the ability to use the equipment safely or have a carer who is able to use the equipment safely

### Eligibility criteria for active wheelchair

- the criteria for a self-propelling wheelchair must be met
- the user can safely propel the wheelchair independently
- the user must be functionally unable to walk and need to use a wheelchair for independent mobility
- the user must be a skilled wheelchair user who would directly benefit by having this type of wheelchair and be capable of exploiting its features or have the potential to develop these skills
- the user must have required postural trunk control to manoeuvre
- the user must be a full-time user and their life style needs and ability must be such that maximum independence and mobility will be gained by such provision
- a user who is an independent driver who cannot put a standard self-propelling wheelchair into their car independently without detriment to their health may be considered (check with clinical lead)
- this type of wheelchair will not be provided to powered wheelchair users

### Notes

The assessment focuses on the user's clinical and lifestyle needs and supply of equipment is from a specific range designed to fulfil the client's clinical needs.

This type of wheelchair will not be provided where the carer finds the chair heavy to lift into the car; instead the carer will be given instruction on alternative ways of doing this.

Advice can be given regarding the purchase of car hoists for wheelchairs.

Any user requiring a high-performance chair for employment should have their needs met by [Access to Work](#) or a similar scheme.

## **Eligibility criteria for Tilt in space wheelchairs**

Tilt in space wheelchairs will be issued to facilitate multi-positional caring for dependent wheelchair users where a user has met initial wheelchair service criteria.

A tilt-in-space wheelchair has the ability to adjust the angle of the seat whilst maintaining the seat to back angle.

### **Eligibility criteria**

A standard wheelchair with a fixed semi-reclining back and wedge cushion should be considered as the first option where a user needs to sit in a tilted position.

The user must meet all of the following criteria:

- the user has significant clinical and postural needs, which cannot be met in any other wheelchair
- there is a need for wheeled mobility in addition to postural support
- the user has a need to mobilise both indoors and outdoors
- the user is unable to walk
- the user will spend more than 4 hours per day in the wheelchair
- the user will spend a significant time using the variable tilt function on the chair
- the user will gain significant improvements in their posture and mobility from the provision of a tilt-in-space wheelchair
- at the time of issue the user is residing in their permanent home environment

Environmental constraints and needs of main carer will be considered when prescribing this type of wheelchair. There must be sufficient space for such a wheelchair to be used. These wheelchairs will not be provided to overcome moving and handling/hoisting issues only.

If all of the above criteria are not met, consider:

- posturally supportive armchair
- a standard wheelchair with a fixed semi-reclining back and wedge cushion

### **Notes**

Hospitals or rehabilitation units are expected to supply their own tilt in space wheelchairs to be used during rehabilitation.

Assessment for a tilt-in-space wheelchair will not be carried out while progress is being made and posture and/or mobility is still improving.

## **Provision into care homes eligibility criteria**

The user must meet all of the following criteria:

- the user will be the only person using the wheelchair
- the user has a long-term condition that permanently and significantly affects the individual's mobility and their independence
- the user will require the use of the wheelchair for at least 4 days a week or more

The user will not meet the criteria if:

- provision of attendant pushed wheelchairs is for general use or 'portering' purposes within the care home setting or by a number of individuals
- the provision of pressure relieving cushions for use in armchairs
- the provision of a wheelchair to be used instead of appropriate armchairs or dining room chairs (static seating)

- the provision of wheelchairs to take clients out on occasional outings either by the care home or by members of the person's family
- the provision of wheelchairs to support a rehabilitation/recovery programme ie where the person's condition is likely to change and therefore the wheelchair may not be suitable for the person's needs when they return to their normal place of residence
- the provision of equipment where the client is unable to be seated safely in a wheelchair to support their function and independence; this will be discussed on an individual basis following an assessment

Following an assessment, wheelchair equipment can be provided to enable a person to achieve independent mobility. This can either be a self-propelling manual wheelchair or a powered wheelchair, so independence means the individual can independently operate the wheelchair.

Environmental constraints and needs of main carer will be considered when prescribing this type of wheelchair. There must be sufficient space for such a wheelchair to be used.

### **Notes**

In some instances it is more suitable, for those requiring significant postural support, to be provided with a suitable static seating system rather than a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are not intended to be sat in for prolonged periods of time. In such cases, it is not the responsibility of the wheelchair service to provide static seating. Tilt in space wheelchairs are not normally provided in care homes unless the family are actively involved in taking the client out regularly (see tilt in space criteria).

## **Guidance for provision of wheelchairs in care homes**

### **Purpose of the wheelchair service**

The purpose of the wheelchair service is to meet the needs of individuals with a permanent need for a wheelchair from the NHS that optimises mobility, with the overall aim of achieving optimal independence and function related to activities of daily living.

### **How the wheelchair service knows what it can provide for**

The wheelchair service is supported by eligibility criteria. This sets out the areas of need it is able to support and those it does not have a responsibility to provide for. The wheelchair service ensures that available resources are targeted at those who need wheelchairs to help with their independence and daily living activities.

### **What the eligibility criteria says about wheelchair provision for individuals in care home settings**

The wheelchair service is there to provide wheelchairs for individual need, where the individual has a long-term condition that permanently and significantly affects the individual's mobility and their independence. It is also a requirement that the need for a wheelchair is for 4 days a week or more. It is understood there can be a range of mobility needs for clients within a care home setting, from independent mobility needs, to being taken between rooms within the care home. Some of these needs can be met by the wheelchair service; however other requirements are outside the remit of this service. The following information is provided to ensure there is clarity as to what the wheelchair service can and cannot provide for those residing in care home settings.

### **Circumstances the wheelchair service can provide a wheelchair for**

The person has a long-term condition that significantly affects their mobility. Following an assessment, wheelchair equipment can be provided to enable a person to achieve

independent mobility. This can either be a self-propelling manual wheelchair or a powered wheelchair, so independence means the individual can independently operate the wheelchair. The person requires significant postural support to minimise postural deterioration and to maximise function. It must be noted that in some instances it is more suitable, for those requiring significant postural support, to be provided with a suitable static seating system rather than a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are not intended to be sat in for prolonged periods of time. In such cases, it is not the responsibility of the wheelchair service to provide static seating.

### **Circumstances the wheelchair service is not able to support**

- provision of attendant pushed wheelchairs for general use within the care home setting by a number of individuals
- wheelchairs for portering purposes ie transferring residents from room to room within the care home setting
- the provision of pressure relieving cushions for use in armchairs
- the provision of a wheelchair to be used instead of appropriate armchairs or dining room chairs (static seating)
- the provision of wheelchairs to take clients out on occasional outings either by the care home or by members of the person's family
- the provision of wheelchairs to support a rehabilitation/recovery programme ie where the person's condition is likely to change and therefore the wheelchair may not be suitable for the person's needs when they return to their normal place of residence
- the provision of equipment where the client is unable to be seated safely in a wheelchair to support their function and independence; this will be discussed on an individual basis following an assessment
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### **Who can make a referral to the wheelchair service for a resident of a care home**

If the individual already has a wheelchair to support their independence they, their next of kin, the care home or GP can contact the wheelchair service on their behalf and ask for a further assessment if their needs have changed significantly.

If the individual is not previously known to the wheelchair service and they meet the eligibility criteria laid out in this document, a referral can be made by their GP, community nurse or allied health or social care professional.

### **What will happen next**

The information provided on the referral form will be reviewed and if it is assessed that the individual is not eligible for a provision from the wheelchair service, the referrer will be advised. If from the information provided by the referrer, the individual has a need that meets the criteria, they will be invited to an assessment.

At this clinic appointment their needs will be reviewed and a plan put into place to enable the identified needs to be met through the provision of wheelchair equipment and training where necessary.

### **If the person already had a transit/attendant pushed wheelchair before they became a resident in a care home**

The wheelchair service will not replace the wheelchair in the event of it reaching the end of its useful life or the person's size changes for example. If the client no longer requires their wheelchair, we expect it to be returned to the service. However, if the individual's

needs change and there is a consideration for a wheelchair to support independent mobility, then this can be assessed for and considered as for any other person accessing this service.

If you have any questions regarding the above information, contact the wheelchair service using the contact details below.

**What happens when the resident no longer requires the wheelchair**

Staff should notify the wheelchair service so we can arrange collection of the wheelchair, cushion and all accessories. The wheelchair remains the property of the wheelchair service and should NOT under any circumstances be used for another resident. Care homes are advised that they are not insured if an accident occurs when a prescribed wheelchair is used by other residents.

**Ownership of wheelchairs provided by the wheelchair service**

Wheelchairs remains the property of the wheelchair service. The wheelchair is on loan to the resident of the care/residential home and not to the care/residential home itself.

A person will not be eligible:

- if they require a short-term use wheelchair
- if they live out of area or have an out of area GP and are not funded by Croydon Continuing Health; people from outside the Croydon CCG area will be treated in accordance with [Who Pays? Establishing the Responsible Commissioner](#) and other Department of Health guidance relating to patients entitled to NHS care
- if they are unable to use the equipment safely
- if the wheelchair is required in care homes for general portering use only
- for electrically powered wheelchairs required for outdoor use only
- if an electrically powered attendant controlled-only wheelchair is required
- if the wheelchair is required:
  - for work use only (funding for this can be sourced from [Access to Work](#))
  - for rehabilitation purposes only – on wards or in the community
  - for sporting activities only
  - in place of suitable static seating
  - for transportation purposes only