

Wiltshire Wheelchair Service
Melksham Community Hospital
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Wiltshire
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NHS Personal Wheelchair Budget Information Sheets

Personal Wheelchair Budgets (PWBs) are a means of offering wheelchair users a greater choice when selecting a wheelchair.

Following a referral to the Wheelchair Service the client will be assessed by one of our Wheelchair Therapists and, providing they meet the criteria, will be offered a Wheelchair which meets their clinical need. The wheelchair is provided free of charge on loan for as long as necessary, and the Wheelchair Service will meet any maintenance and repair costs. The chair remains the property of the Wheelchair Service and it must be returned to the service when it is no longer required.

A Personal Wheelchair Budget may be issued to a client who, following their assessment, would like a wider choice of wheelchair. The Personal Wheelchair Budget allows the user to use the money that the NHS would have spent on a wheelchair for them as part payment for the wheelchair of their choice. The Personal Wheelchair Budgets is issued for a period of 5 years (3 years for children). This is considered to be the minimum life expectancy of a wheelchair.

The wheelchair budget scheme allows you to have a wider choice of wheelchairs either from the NHS or the commercial retail sector. There are three options available:

1. A Notional Plus PWB with top-up accessories:
This option allows the client to select additions to the chair provided by the service by paying for the difference between their chosen chair and the extras required i.e lights.

The wheelchair will remain the property of the Wheelchair Service, even though the user will have contributed to its cost. However, the maintenance on this wheelchair will be provided free of charge by the Wheelchair Service.

The wheelchair must be returned to the Wheelchair Service when no longer required.

2. A Notional Plus PWB alternative wheelchair:

This option allows the client to upgrade to a different wheelchair within the fleet used by the wheelchair service, and pay for the difference between the two chairs.

The wheelchair will remain the property of the Wheelchair Service, even though the user will have contributed to its cost. However, the maintenance on this wheelchair will be provided free of charge by the Wheelchair Service.

The wheelchair must be returned to the Wheelchair Service when no longer required.

3. Third Party Personal Wheelchair Budgets

This option allows the client to purchase a wheelchair from the commercial sector with financial and clinical support of the Wheelchair Service. Again, following assessment the chosen wheelchair must meet the clinical need of the user but they will be able to purchase any wheelchair available from the supplier of their choice.

The wheelchair service will contribute to the value of what the Wheelchair service would have spent on a wheelchair, together with a contribution towards the maintenance of the wheelchair. Payment is then sent directly to the retailer as part payment towards the cost of the chosen chair.

The wheelchair would then be owned by the user and therefore the user would be completely responsible for its upkeep and maintenance for a period of 5 years.

If the user requires pressure relieving cushions and or specialist seating the provision of these items will be discussed at assessment.

Where appropriate the Wheelchair Service will supply a suitable pressure cushion.

Personal Wheelchair Budgets Exclusions

Electrically Powered Wheelchairs are only included in Third party PWBs via an exceptions group.

Specialist seating is not supplied and fitted by the NHS through Personal Wheelchair Budgets.

Important Information.

Personal Wheelchair Budgets cannot be offered retrospectively to pay for wheelchairs already ordered or in use by a client. Personal Wheelchair Budgets must be issued **prior** to an order being placed.

The specification of the wheelchair to be purchased must be agreed by the wheelchair service prior to an order being placed.

Personal Wheelchair Budgets must only be used to purchase a chair that meets the prescription and chair type detail as completed by the wheelchair service at assessment e.g. a Personal Wheelchair Budgets issued for a manual wheelchair cannot be used to purchase a power chair.

Personal Wheelchair Budgets cannot be used to purchase second hand chairs.

For more detailed information please refer to the step by step guide attached.

Step by Step guide to the Notional Plus alternative chair or top-up accessories PWBs.

1. Referral is received by the Wheelchair Service from the relevant Health Care Professional.
2. Assessment is undertaken by the Wheelchair Service, the user meets the criteria and a prescribed wheelchair is identified.
3. The user identifies a higher specification of wheelchair than the prescribed one from the Wheelchair Service fleet and requests to pay the difference in costs between the two.
4. The Wheelchair Service calculates the cost to the user and sends the information to them.
5. The user agrees to pay the cost and sends payment, by cheque or BACS transfer, to the Wheelchair Service. Once the cheque has cleared the Wheelchair Service will then order the wheelchair or item in question and arrange delivery.

Frequently asked Questions

Can I pay in Cash?

No, we can only accept cheques or bank transfer.

Who should I send it to?

Please send your cheques together with the relevant paperwork you have been issued with to The Administration Department, Wiltshire Wheelchair Services, Melksham Community Hospital, Spa Road, Melksham, SN12 7NZ.

What happens next?

As you are paying towards the cost of the wheelchair or additional equipment this will not be provided from our stock and we will have to specially order the item. Once the cheque has cleared we will place the order with the relevant manufacturer. The item/items will be delivered directly to the Wheelchair Service and this can take 6-8 weeks.

How do I get the wheelchair?

The wheelchair will be delivered to you by our Delivery & Repair Team or via a clinic visit with the therapist, and if appropriate your old wheelchair will be collected from you at the same time.

What happens if something goes wrong with it?

The wheelchair remains the property of the Wheelchair Service, if something goes wrong with it you just need to call the Wheelchair Service and report the problem. Telephone: 01225 899130.

If specific accessories that you have paid for can no longer be repaired, and are not under warranty, there will be a charge to replace them at the same specification, or standard items put on to replace them.

Do I have to buy a cushion for the wheelchair?

No, the Wheelchair Service will provide the necessary cushion for you.

What if I don't like any of the wheelchairs available through this PWB option?

If you do not like any wheelchair available through the Notional Plus option you may want to consider the Third Party Personal Wheelchair Budget.

Step by Step guide to Third Party Personal Wheelchair Budget.

1. Referral is received by the Wheelchair Service from relevant Health Care Professional.
2. Assessment is undertaken by the Wheelchair Service, the user meets the criteria and a prescribed wheelchair is identified.
3. The user identifies a higher specification of wheelchair than the prescribed wheelchair and requests to purchase the wheelchair from the retail sector.
4. The wheelchair service identifies the value of the Personal Wheelchair Budget that will be issued, informs the user of their entitlement and sends out the initial paperwork for completion.
5. The user then arranges assessments and quotes from a reputable supplier which is happy to accept NHS Personal Wheelchair Budget. **(Please do not purchase the chair until the Wheelchair Service has checked and confirmed with you that it will meet your clinical needs).**
6. The user then sends the quote from the supplier to the Wheelchair Service. The Wheelchair Service then approves this quote and will issue the money **directly to the supplier**. The Service will then notify the user that this has been completed. It is the user's responsibility to pay the balance directly to the supplier.
7. The user will then be the owner of the wheelchair and be responsible for its maintenance and repair.

Frequently asked Questions

How can I find a reputable wheelchair supplier?

There are many reputable wheelchair suppliers in the retail sector and many in Wiltshire are known to us and will have dealt with us before. It is a good idea to use a retailer that is registered with the BHTA (British Health Trades Association), but it is not compulsory. The most important thing to check is that they are happy to accept NHS Personal Wheelchair Budget.

Will the PWB money pay for the wheelchair I choose in full?

No, the Personal Wheelchair Budget value is based on the cost of an NHS wheelchair; these are generally less expensive than private sector wheelchairs.

When do I pay my contribution to the cost of the wheelchair?

Once the supplier has received the Personal Wheelchair Budget from Wheelchair Service they will expect you to pay the balance.

I have already purchased a wheelchair, can I get some of the money back?

No the PWB cannot be paid retrospectively as the Wheelchair Service needs to approve the type of chair we are contributing towards. Do not pay a deposit or anything towards the overall cost of the wheelchair until the PWB has been agreed by the Wheelchair Service.

Who will carry out maintenance and repairs on my wheelchair?

The wheelchair will be your property so it will be your responsibility to arrange for repairs and maintenance. The supplier will be able to discuss the options available to you.

Do I have to buy a cushion for the wheelchair?

The Wheelchair Service will provide a cushion that meets your posture and pressure relief needs where necessary.

Can I have an NHS Wheelchair as well?

No, you are only issued with one wheelchair, be this through the Personal Wheelchair Budget or standard issue option.

When can I ask for another voucher?

The voucher life is for a period of 5 years for adults and 3 years for children. However, if your medical needs change you can request a reassessment before the end of this time period.

Should you have any further questions about Personal Wheelchair Budget please contact the Wiltshire Wheelchair Service and ask to speak to the Duty Clinician, who can answer your questions.

The Duty Clinician is available from 8.30am – 12.30pm each day
Tel: 01225 899130