

Wheelchair services - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Accessing the Service

How can I get a wheelchair?

In order for a wheelchair to be provided by us, you will need to be assessed. A referral will need to be made by your GP or a registered healthcare professional.

You will need to be registered with a Warrington GP and have a long-term mobility need.

If you already have an NHS wheelchair, you can contact us directly to request a reassessment if your clinical needs change, unless you wish to be referred for your first powered wheelchair.

If you do not already have a powered wheelchair, you must ask a Healthcare Professional to complete a referral on your behalf.

What happens after I've been referred?

The referral will be triaged by a member of the clinical team who will then decide whether to accept referral for assessment.

An appointment will be made for you to have a full clinical assessment of your mobility needs, including pressure care, by one of our qualified Occupational Therapists or Therapy Assistants.

How long does it take to get a wheelchair?

We aim to provide you with your equipment within 18 weeks of receiving your referral, but you may receive your wheelchair more quickly than this.

Where will the assessment take place?

Most assessments are carried out in our purpose-built clinical facilities. Depending on your circumstances, an assessment can be carried out at your home.

Will my home be suitable for a wheelchair?

You may require an environmental assessment of your property for suitability of the equipment that best fits your needs.

What happens after I've been assessed?

If, after your assessment, it has been determined that you need a wheelchair, we will supply and set up the mobility equipment, including any cushions or accessories that you may require.

I have a private wheelchair; can the wheelchair service provide me with a cushion?

No, we can only provide cushions for NHS prescribed wheelchairs

Are all surfaces suitable for my wheelchair?

No, unfortunately not. Some surfaces, such as loose gravel and grass, can be difficult to manoeuvre over and a loss of traction may be experienced.

Extra care and consideration should be taken before you decide to drive your powered wheelchair over such surfaces.

Sand is not a suitable surface for a wheelchair at all due to the loss of traction that can occur and the potential damage to the wheelchair bearings and/or the motors. Please read the wheelchair manufacturer's instructions for further information.

Service & Repairs

What do I do if my wheelchair needs repairing?

We offer a repair and maintenance service.

A trained wheelchair service engineer will be available to repair your equipment in your home, school, workplace, or day centre.

You can make an appointment via email bchft.waringtonwheelchairservice@nhs.net or by calling the wheelchair service on 01925 946080

Can I have my wheelchair repaired at the service centre?

Yes, if this option is more convenient for you. Please phone the service to arrange this.

Do I have to pay for repairs?

Normally, any wheelchair and accessories provided through the NHS is repaired at no cost to you.

However, costs will apply should you decide to pursue an alternative option to fund your wheelchair under the Personal Wheelchair Budget scheme (PWB). Please see the attached PWB leaflet for details.

If I breakdown away from home, will you be able to repair my wheelchair while I am out or take me home?

The repair service does not provide roadside repairs or recovery home. You need to make your own arrangements for this.

What happens if my wheelchair needs repairing when you are closed?

Our out of hours repairs service is provided by Rosscare. They can be contacted by telephone or email Monday to Thursday from 5pm to 11pm, and on Friday to Sunday from 5pm 11pm:

Telephone number: 0151 653 6000

Email:

repairs.wallasey@rosscare.co.uk

How do I arrange for my wheelchair to be serviced?

Depending on the type of equipment you have been supplied with, we will be in contact with you to carry out a multi-point safety check on the wheelchair.

If you have a manual wheelchair this will be every 3 years and if you have an electric powered wheelchair this will be every 12 months.

Short term loans

I have broken my leg and will require a wheelchair while I recover. Am I entitled to a wheelchair?

The wheelchair service only provides a wheelchair if you have a medical need lasting longer than 6 months.

If you require a wheelchair for short term loan (up to 6 months) then you should be able to hire one from Shopmobility at the following shopping centre:

I want to be able to go out with my family when they visit once a month. Where can I obtain a wheelchair?

The wheelchair service only provides a wheelchair for regular use (at least 4 times a week for 4 hours at a time). Please click the link for information on where you can hire a wheelchair for occasional or short-term loan.

Rehabilitation

I am being transferred for rehabilitation. When will I receive my wheelchair?

The rehabilitation facility is responsible for supporting your mobility needs while you are undergoing rehabilitation.

The wheelchair service provides equipment when a person has reached their full rehabilitation potential.

Your therapist will refer you to the wheelchair service when the time is right to establish your longer-term wheelchair and seating needs.

Being discharged from hospital

I do not know when I will be discharged from hospital. When will I receive my wheelchair?

While you are in hospital, you will be assessed by a hospital therapist (OT or Physio) who will refer you to the wheelchair service once your discharge date is known.

You will be provided with the wheelchair prior to discharge if you need it to be independently mobile within your own home. Otherwise, you will receive your wheelchair as soon as possible after you have been discharged.

I do not know my discharge destination. When will I receive my wheelchair?

Before a wheelchair can be issued, we need to know your discharge location. Depending on the location, you may or may not meet the criteria for NHS provision.

I am being discharged to a care home. Am I entitled to a wheelchair?

If you need a wheelchair to move independently within the care home, you may be eligible for an NHS wheelchair. If you need a wheelchair so that care staff can move you between the rooms in the care home, the care home is responsible for providing a wheelchair.

My needs have changed

What do I do if I no longer need my wheelchair?

We offer a collection service. If you have any equipment, you no longer require, you can arrange for this to be collected by contacting the Wheelchair Service on 01925 946080

What do I do if my needs change?

If you feel that your needs have changed, please contact the Wheelchair Service on 01925 946080, so that you can be placed on the list to be re-assessed.

What can I do if my wheelchair is uncomfortable?

If your wheelchair is uncomfortable, please contact the Wheelchair Service on 01925 946080 who will open a new referral and will place you on the list to be re-assessed.

Can I sell my NHS wheelchair and equipment if I no longer need it?

No. If you no longer need your NHS provided wheelchair and accessories, these will need to be collected by us. It is not permitted to sell equipment that was provided by the NHS once it is no longer required.

Can I make modifications to my wheelchair?

No. It is not permitted to carry out any modifications to the wheelchair, either by yourself, your carer, or your family member.

If you feel your wheelchair needs any adjustment, please contact the Wheelchair Service team, and request a review.

Can I give my NHS provided wheelchair to somebody else?

No. Your equipment may not be suitable for their needs and the old equipment must be returned to us.

Holidays

Can I take my wheelchair on holiday?

Yes, if it is covered by your holiday or home insurance. If your holiday company request the weight of your wheelchair, you can find it on the manufacturers label on the frame of your wheelchair.

What if my wheelchair breaks down while I am on holiday?

Contact the local wheelchair service if in the U.K. If you're abroad, please contact the wheelchair service on your return to arrange a repair.

Adding on power

Do you provide power packs?

No, we do not provide power packs.

I want to be able to fit a power pack to my wheelchair. Can I do this?

You may be able to have a power pack added to your wheelchair depending on its compatibility with the manufacturer's guidelines.

The Wheelchair Service will be able to advise you as to which of our NHS wheelchairs are compatible for use with a power pack.

You can purchase a power pack privately and you should get advice and an assessment from a local approved dealership to do this. If a compatible power pack can be supplied, it should be fitted by a person who is competent to do so.