



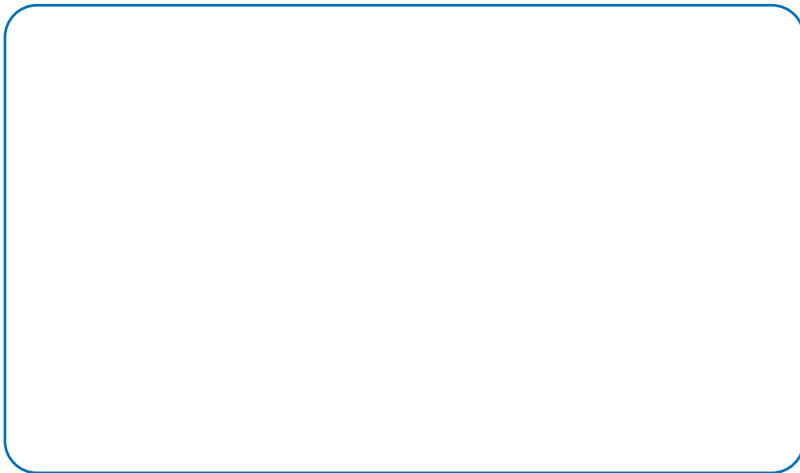
Wirral and West Cheshire Wheelchair Service

Information and advice on your new
powered wheelchair

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Your wheelchair has been provided by:



The wheelchair and all its accessories belong to the NHS Wheelchair Service and are loaned to you in accordance with the conditions of loan explained to you at handover (on page 4), for as long as you need it. Please look after it as if it is your own property, keep it clean and protect it from damage at all times.

If your wheelchair and / or cushion is no longer meeting your needs, or you are concerned about your posture or pressure areas, please contact us to arrange a review. We recycle returned equipment so please contact us if you no longer need your wheelchair so that collection can be arranged.

This booklet provides some basic information and safety advice about your new wheelchair. Should you need any more information or have any problems, please do not hesitate to contact us. Alternatively, you may find the information you need on our website: wchc.nhs.uk

Repair and Maintenance

Repairs and maintenance are provided by our Approved Repairer, this service is free of charge. If your wheelchair needs repairing, please contact them as soon as possible:

Ross Care: 9 - 13 Westfield Road, Wallasey, CH44 7HX

Tel: **0151 653 6000** or Email: repairs.wallasey@rosscare.co.uk

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Out of hours emergency number: **07971 987 844**. Weekdays: 5.00pm - 11.00pm,
Weekend: Saturday to Sunday, 8.00am - 11.00pm.

An emergency is when your wheelchair is not in a mobile or safe condition, and you rely on your wheelchair for essential mobility indoors (such as getting to the toilet or accessing food and drink).

A breakdown / rescue service is not provided so we strongly recommend that you have a back-up plan in place should your wheelchair fail when away from home.

Please check your wheelchair and all its accessories regularly for signs of wear and damage and report any issues to the approved repair service as soon as possible.

- Following a request for a repair, the repairer should respond within 3 working days, unless it is an emergency. In an emergency, the repairer should respond on the same day, providing the fault is reported before 11.00pm.
- The repairer should inform you whether they will visit you in the morning or afternoon.
- You are asked to ensure your wheelchair and accessories are in a clean condition before the visit.
- The visiting engineer should wear/ carry an identification badge/card, you are advised to check this before allowing them entry to your home.
- Every effort will be made to carry out repairs to your wheelchair at your home address; however, it may be necessary to call back, with any parts, or take your wheelchair into the workshop, to complete the repair.
- It may be necessary for you to transfer out of the wheelchair to allow the engineer to repair it. It will be your responsibility to arrange for this. For safety reasons, the visiting engineer will not be able to assist you with transfers.

Please Note:

The Approved Repairer cannot replace your wheelchair or make any comments or recommendations regarding the suitability of your equipment on issue. If you feel that your wheelchair is unsuitable for your needs, or you have outgrown your wheelchair, you must seek advice from your Wheelchair Service.

Conditions of Loan

The wheelchair and its accessories belong to the NHS Wheelchair Service (Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust) and are loaned to you on the conditions below:

- You must read and abide by the manufacturer's instructions in the **official user manual** given to you on handover of your wheelchair.
- It must only be used for carrying yourself and must not be given to anyone else.
- It must not be used in place of static seating.
- You must drive with due care and attention at all times.
- It must not be used/operated under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- It must be returned or given up for repair or inspection if we ask you to do so.
- It must not be disposed of/sold; you must let us know if you have no further use for it or no longer need the wheelchair.
- It must be kept clean and in good working order (this includes all accessories).
- It must be always protected from damage, such as theft, vandals, severe weather.
- It must be stored indoors and charged regularly.
- It must not be used on the beach.
- It must not be altered, such as making changes to paint work/structure of the wheelchair, nor have any attachments fitted without our agreement as this could cause other problems.
- You must only use the cushion, footrests, armrests and accessories supplied by the Wheelchair Service for your wheelchair. Using items from another wheelchair may result in an accident leading to injury.
- It must not be used for impact/contact sports/activities such as basketball, football, rugby, paragliding, weightlifting.
- You must not attempt to climb or descend steps or stairs with your powered wheelchair.

We must be informed immediately if:

- The wheelchair and/or accessories are lost and/or damaged in an accident (including when the wheelchair is in a vehicle involved in an accident) as safety may be affected.
- You change your name, address, contact details or GP so we can update your record.
- If you move into a care home/ shared care as we may need to check that you are still eligible for equipment from the NHS Wheelchair Service.
- There is a change or worsening in your medical condition, your wheelchair becomes too big or small, or is no longer meeting your needs.
- You no longer need your wheelchair so that we can arrange collection.

The powered wheelchair provided is for indoor use only, unless you have received permission (received a certificate) from the Wheelchair Service confirming that you are able to use it outdoors. If you don't understand or you don't agree with any of the conditions of loan, please inform us immediately. **We will assume that you agree to these conditions if you don't tell us otherwise. Failure to comply with the conditions of loan may result in withdrawal of your wheelchair and associated equipment.**

Learning how to use your wheelchair properly will help keep you and others safe and ensure the best performance of your wheelchair:

- Before you drive off, check your battery is showing a full charge and make sure you are familiar with all the controls.
- Always ensure that the powered wheelchair is switched off before getting in or out.
- Always keep your feet on the foot plates to prevent your feet from being caught/ trapped underneath your wheelchair.
- Take care not to trap the joystick when sitting at a table/ desk, especially if it is in a reclined position if you use a tilt in space wheelchair.
- Get used to a low speed before increasing to the maximum speed and then choose a speed level appropriate to your environment.
- Check the bus cables on a regular basis for signs of damage.
- Always refer to the **official user manual** and follow all the warnings and limitations of use.

Outdoor Use

You must only use your powered wheelchair outdoors if you have permission (received a certificate) from the Wheelchair Service confirming that you are able to use your wheelchair outdoors. You will have been informed whether you need to be accompanied or not, and you must have a back-up plan should your wheelchair fail when you are away from home.

An outdoor wheelchair is classified by the DVLA as a class 2 vehicle with a maximum speed of 4 mph, it can't be used on the road (except where there isn't a pavement). Pedestrians have the right of way, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not run into anyone in your powered wheelchair or cause any other damage.

- Avoid using your wheelchair in bad weather, especially when very wet, icy or if it snows.
- Ensure that you are visible to others when going out at night, either wear high visibility clothing/ reflectors or use outdoor lights.
- It is not advisable to drive across wet grass, muddy terrain or across deep gravel as your wheelchair may get stuck.
- Refer to the **official user manual** for instructions on how to do negotiate kerbs, ramps or steps, it will contain information on the maximum height of step you should attempt and maximum slope that your wheelchair is safely suited for.
- Wherever possible, mount and dismount footpaths using dropped kerbs or ramps.

Safety Advice

Wheelchair safety and positioning belts, straps and harnesses

All belts, straps and harnesses provided by the Wheelchair Service are for safety and positioning only, **they are not to be used as a restraint or instead of vehicle seat belts**. If not used correctly these can be dangerous to people to wheelchair users.

- The lap strap or safety belt fitted to your wheelchair must be used at all times when sat in the wheelchair, and in line with the **official user manual**.
- Before using your wheelchair, ensure the belt is clean, in good condition, not twisted.
- Make sure that you/ the person sitting in the wheelchair is sat/ positioned as far as possible back in the seat and then adjust the belt correctly and securely.
- When the belt is fastened, it should just be possible to fit the flat of the hand between the belt and you (the person sitting in the wheelchair).
- The belt should be firmly fastened across your hips but not too tight to cause you distress or any markings on your body.
- At the same time, the belt should not be too loose to allow you to slide down your wheelchair, which may cause you to end up with the belt around your neck and be strangled or cause you to fall from the wheelchair.
- Check the belt every time to use your wheelchair and adjust as required, how it fits can be influenced by wearing a coat, different clothing, or using a cushion or blankets etc.
- If you have a different type of belt, such as a pelvic positioning belt, harness or chest strap, please refer to the official user manual given to you at handover or seek advice from the wheelchair therapist if in you are any doubt how to use.

The chance of you developing a pressure ulcer increases when you are in a wheelchair; therefore, it is important to follow the advice you have been given regarding managing your individual pressure risk.

Battery Charging Advice

Follow the correct procedures for connecting and disconnecting the battery charger, as per the official user manual. It is also important to know:

- Connecting or disconnecting the battery charger from the wheelchair whilst still switched on at the mains will, over a period of time, result in damaged connections within the wheelchair battery charging socket; this will result in the wheelchair having a reduced range and reduced power.
- You should avoid topping up the charge your batteries during the day; wait until the evening for a full overnight charge.
- Failure to recharge your batteries fully will damage the batteries and can lead to shorter distances.
- You should only use the approved charger for your powered wheelchair.

Transport, Travel and Insurance

Wheelchair insurance

We strongly advise you to insure your NHS wheelchair and accessories, for any costs incurred due to damage/loss/theft, and to protect yourself against **third party liability** claims should you cause an accident or other damage whilst using your powered wheelchair.

You may be able to add this to your existing house and contents policy for little or no extra cost. Our website has a list of some companies who are known to offer specific insurance for wheelchair users and/ or breakdown service.

Transporting your wheelchair in the boot of a vehicle

Powered wheelchairs issued by the Wheelchair Service cannot be folded up to transport in the boot of a car but can usually be transported in a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV).

Travelling in a car or private transport

When travelling in a car or private transport, transfer to the car seat wherever possible, rather than staying in your wheelchair. If you need to stay in your wheelchair during transit, you must follow the instructions in the official user manual on how to do this safely as additional equipment will be required, such as a wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint systems (WTORS) or an alternative docking system, these are not supplied by the wheelchair service. It is also recommended that the wheelchair has a headrest when used in transport, although these are not supplied by the wheelchair service. If the wheelchair user is a child who weighs less than 22kg, the wheelchair must not be used as a seat in a vehicle, you must refer to the official user manual for specific advice. Please note, travelling on public transport, where the wheelchair is not tied down, is permitted.

Travelling abroad

If you are going on holiday abroad and wish to take your wheelchair with you, you need to make sure that your insurance covers any repairs that may be required whilst you are away. If your holiday company require details of your wheelchair, the specification of your wheelchair (dimensions and weight) is contained within the **official user manual** issued at handover.

Travelling within the UK

The wheelchair service supports the Right to Travel (UK) initiative. Should your NHS wheelchair require a repair when travelling or whilst on holiday in the UK, please contact us straight away and we will arrange to put you in touch with the local wheelchair service close to where you are staying for support with any repairs that may be required. More information about the process can be found on our website.

Your Involvement and Feedback

Join our wheelchair service user group!

Our wheelchair service user group meet regularly and actively contribute to how the service is developed and delivered.

All service users are invited to join the group, along with family members and/or main carers.

Please register your interest by contacting the wheelchair service on:

Tel: **0151 604 7261**

Email: wcnt.wctwheelchairservice@nhs.net

What do you think of our care?

If you have a compliment concern or complaint about any aspect of our service, then please tell us. You can do this in several ways.

Contact the Wheelchair Service or Ross Care directly on the usual telephone number.

Scan the QR code below:



Contact our patient experience service:

- Freephone: 0800 694 5530
- Email: wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net

If you would like this information in another format or language, or would like to provide feedback about any of our services, please contact the Your Experience team:

Freephone: **0800 694 5530**
or wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net

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