

FACT SHEET 12

NHS Wheelchair Voucher Scheme (KENT)

This Voucher Scheme for the supply of Manual Wheelchairs is now fully operational in most Wheelchair Centres. The scheme was introduced by the last Government to provide extra funding for NHS Wheelchair Services to increase the choice in provision for wheelchair users.

Under the new scheme disabled people have three choices:-

The NHS Option A standard manual wheelchair supplied free of charge that meets the users basic mobility needs. The chair remains the property of the NHS and will be eligible for free maintenance from the local wheelchair service contractor appointed to run the maintenance and repair service.

The Partnership Option Where a user wishes to have the security of NHS maintenance and repair services, they can choose to contribute to the cost of a wheelchair from a range of Manual chairs selected by the Wheelchair Service. The wheelchair user will be required to meet the additional cost of the wheelchair to the approved supplier. The NHS will own the chair and be responsible for its maintenance and repair.

The Independent Option The user can choose and purchase any manual wheelchair from the approved supplier, provided it meets their clinical need. The user will own the chair and be responsible for its maintenance and repair. The voucher will include an amount towards the chairs repair and maintenance.

Approved Suppliers There will be a list of approved suppliers who will be supervised by the Wheelchair Service and who meet their criteria.

Voucher Period The average period should be about five years, however, the users clinical condition should always be taken into account in deciding an appropriate period for the voucher.

Not Included Powered wheelchairs, pressure relieving cushions and special seating systems will continue to be supplied by the Wheelchair Service.

VAT A wheelchair provided under the **Partnership Option** remains the property of the NHS and is subject to VAT (the VAT element should be paid by the NHS Trust who will own the chair). Wheelchairs provided under the **Independent Option** will be zero rated under item 2 of group 12 of schedule 8 of the VAT Act 1994.

How to apply Existing users of the NHS Wheelchair Service should contact their local Wheelchair Assessment Centre directly and request an assessment for an alternative chair under the **Partnership** or **Independent Options**. New applicants should contact their GP or therapist who can send a referral to the service.

Note Kent NHS Wheelchair Centres only provide vouchers for manual wheelchairs. Vouchers for powered wheelchairs may be available from other NHS Wheelchair Centres, so don't forget to ask.

If you need more information:

Tel: 01303 226500 **E-mail:** wchairuser@aol.com

Website: www.wheelchairusers.org.uk

By snail mail:

Wheelchair Users Group, Shop 21, 2nd Floor, Bouverie Place Shopping Centre, Alexandra Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1AU

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