

Service user guide

Understanding the wheelchair service

Service provided by



This leaflet was designed to help you, your family, carers or personal assistants to understand the service we provide.

It was created in conjunction with members of our wheelchair service user groups.

Introduction

Your NHS wheelchair service is provided by AJM Healthcare, who provide mobility, specialist seating and pressure care cushions to adults and children with long-term mobility problems.

AJM Healthcare has over 35 years' experience specialising exclusively in wheelchair services and is the leading provider of NHS wheelchair services throughout the UK.

Our services are designed with customer care as a priority. Our teams provide a supportive and comprehensive approach. We will involve you in making decisions and respect your views and tailor your care to your exact needs, wherever possible.

Our aims and goals

Our aim is to provide high-quality specialist assessment and provision for wheelchairs, postural mobility seating and pressure care cushions to those people with mobility difficulties who meet the wheelchair service criteria.

This service is delivered by a specialist team of staff with skills in a wide range of clinical areas.

The wheelchair service provides assessments for people with permanent mobility problems (longer than six (6) months), including specialist seating for wheelchair users with postural needs.

The wheelchair service aims to promote and maintain users' independence within their own homes, education, places of work and social settings.

Receiving your wheelchair

When you receive your wheelchair you will also receive some paperwork, this will include the condition of loan and some information about your wheelchair. You should keep this in a safe place.



Wheelchair services frequently asked questions

What are the contact details for the wheelchair service?

The contact details can be found on our website:

<https://www.wheelchair.services>

You can contact us by phone, email, post or online form.

Do I need to insure my wheelchair?

Taking out insurance is not mandatory, but is a sensible precaution. We would recommend that you take out third party insurance in case your wheelchair causes accidental damage to something or someone else.

If you have a powered wheelchair, you should also consider including recovery assistance to get you home if your wheelchair breaks down while you are away from home.

Check any existing insurance policies for home or car insurance as you may already be covered - you may be able to add additional cover to your existing policy.

AJM Healthcare has no association with any insurance companies, but you may find the following useful:

Fish Insurance

Tel: 0333 331 3770

www.fishinsurance.co.uk

Lockton Mobility

Tel: 0345 602 8000

www.locktonmobility.co.uk

En Route Insurance

Tel: 0800 783 7245

www.enrouteinsurance.co.uk

Royal Sun Alliance Mobility Insurance

Tel: 0300 037 3737

www.motability.rsagroup.co.uk

Can I make modifications to my wheelchair to suit my needs?

No. Your chair is designed and set up for your needs. If you need to have anything changed, please contact us.

Do you provide power packs?

We don't provide power packs or power assist wheels for manual wheelchairs as part of the NHS service.

If you have trouble pushing your manual wheelchair up slopes, then a power pack or power assist can be purchased from a range of suppliers, including mobility shops and online retailers. There is a wide range of products available, starting from £600 and rising to over £3,000.

We may be able to help you to get a competitive price. Please discuss your intention to fit any power pack or power assist wheels to your NHS wheelchair with us.

Care should be taken when selecting a power pack or power assist wheels.

- They must be suitable for your needs.
- They must fit and work properly on your chair.
- They must not impact on your support.
- They must not be a trip hazard.

There are limitations with all power packs and power assist wheels. Not all products work with, or fit on, all wheelchairs and not all products suit all people.

We strongly recommend that you trial any product prior to purchase.

Our Clinical Commercial Services team is happy to provide you with advice. Please call 0330 128 1260.

There is an annual check for indoor or indoor/outdoor powered wheelchairs. What is checked and who arranges it?

The annual check will be arranged by AJM Healthcare and we will contact you when it is due. The inspection covers a comprehensive list designed to ensure your chair is kept in good condition and is safe to use.

Can I use my wheelchair on all surfaces?

No. Not on all surfaces. Care should be taken on loose gravel and grass, which can make moving and braking difficult. Do not attempt to use your wheelchair on sand as the sand and salt could damage the bearings and other moving parts of the wheelchair.

Can I take my indoor/outdoor powered wheelchair on the road, as opposed to the pavement or path?

The wheelchair should only be driven on the road when there is no alternative. It is classified as a pavement vehicle.

How do I request a repair to my wheelchair?

Contact the AJM Healthcare customer service team who will arrange the repair. You can contact them by phone, email or complete the form on the website.

What are the service standards that I should expect from the repair service - i.e. how long should it take for a repair?

Repairs should be completed within three days for most wheelchairs, although replacement parts for some complex chairs may take a little longer.

Can I take my wheelchair to the service centre to be repaired?

Yes. We can fix or adjust your wheelchair at our centre, but please call to make an appointment so that the appropriately trained staff are available.



What do I do if the problem with my wheelchair is an emergency situation that arises out of office hours?

Call AJM Healthcare, who will arrange a suitable time to repair your wheelchair at home.

We do offer an out-of-hours service up until 11.00pm at night and from 7.00am in the morning. Please phone the usual number of your wheelchair service and we will make the arrangements to repair your chair.

What do I do if my wheelchair breaks down in an emergency situation, e.g. when out shopping or in a country lane, and I am effectively stranded?

The conditions of loan state that you are responsible for getting yourself and your wheelchair home. In this situation, we are not able to provide an emergency service.

Some of the insurance companies offer this service so remember to include a recovery service to get you home when arranging your insurance.

Here are some helpful tips that may help you if you get stranded.

- Always make sure your mobile phone is fully charged and contains up-to-date contact information for friends and family that may be able to help you.

- Always tell somebody where you are going and when you expect to be back.
- Always ensure your battery is fully charged and your wheelchair is in good working order.
- If you have a problem with your wheelchair, make sure it is reported to us as soon as possible.
- If your wheelchair is unsafe to use, do not use it.
- Always have some warm clothes and some food or drink with you if you're going out for a day trip.
- Ensure you have other essential items with you, such as medication and other items if you're going for a day trip.
- If possible, if you're going somewhere you don't know or somewhere you feel potentially unsafe, ask a friend, family member or support worker to go with you.

Can I take my wheelchair on holiday?

Yes, but we would recommend that you review your holiday or home insurance to cover any accident or loss.

If your holiday company requests the weight of your wheelchair, it is listed in the handbook provided when the chair was issued. There is space at the end of this leaflet for you to record these details.

What do I do if my wheelchair breaks down on holiday?

Contact AJM Healthcare who will help you to find a local wheelchair service if you are in the UK.

If you are abroad, please contact the service on your return to arrange a repair as required.

You can find out where the wheelchair services across the UK are located through the wheelchair managers right to travel programme at:

www.wheelchairmanagers.org.uk

What do I do if my wheelchair doesn't meet my needs anymore and is uncomfortable?

Please contact your local wheelchair service and ask for a reassessment as you feel your needs may have changed.

How do I return equipment that is no longer needed?

Please make contact with customer services at your wheelchair centre to arrange a collection so that it can be refurbished and given to somebody else who needs it. We will want to complete the collection within seven (7) days of your request.

Can I sell or give away my wheelchair if I no longer need it?

No. If you have an NHS wheelchair, then the wheelchair must be returned to the NHS for reconditioning and reissue.

Where can I meet other wheelchair users ?

AJM Healthcare runs regular service user forums where you can meet other service users and get involved with the further development of the wheelchair service. If you would like to know more, you can email your partnership and engagement officer at

userforums@ajmhealthcare.org

Does the wheelchair service have a Facebook group?

Yes. Your local wheelchair service has its own Facebook group that you can join. You will find the link on the AJM Healthcare Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/AJMHealthcareUK

You can also keep up-to-date by following us on our social media pages.



[@AJMHealthcareUK](#)



[@AJMHealthcare](#)



[/AJM-Healthcare](#)

If you need us to communicate with you in a different way, or have any other accessibility requirements, please let us know



Information hub

Information documents can be provided to facilitate your journey through the wheelchair service.

Signposting information can be provided for those who are seeking alternative sources of wheelchairs.

Details about personal wheelchair budgets (formerly wheelchair vouchers) can be provided.

Specific support can be provided by the partnership and engagement officer, if required.

Your partnership and engagement officer

You can invite your partnership and engagement officer to community groups or organisation meetings.

Through this connection, information about the services can be provided and views can be collected.

In addition, future communication plans can be created to keep your groups informed about the service.

You can contact your partnership and engagement officer directly to share your views or to receive more information or additional support.

For partnership and engagement activities in your area, please contact:

Sue Harris
Partnership and Engagement Manager

Tel: 07851 250148
email: sue.harris@ajmhealthcare.org

Online survey

You can complete our online survey to provide us with feedback on your experiences with the services at:

www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/service-user-satisfaction/

AJM Healthcare - Service User Satisfaction Survey - 2021



1. Service user satisfaction feedback survey

At AJM, we are committed to improving the wheelchair services we provide. To do this, we need your feedback. In completing this questionnaire, you might like to consider the relevant items from the following list.

- Appointment booking process
- Timing of the appointment
- Waiting time to be seen and to receive your equipment
- Quality of work completed
- Whether you received the care, service or information you needed
- Support and training given about the use of equipment
- If the needs of your carer or personal assistant were met
- Whether the equipment helped your posture and/or level of independence
- PWB (personal wheelchair budgets): whether you were informed about this NHS scheme

Your right to complain

AJM Healthcare welcomes feedback about the wheelchair services they provide on behalf of the NHS.

It is important to learn from feedback and complaints in order to make the service better for everybody.

Our promise

Staff will not discriminate against any service user, carer, family relative or personal assistant, and our support will not be compromised if concerns are raised.

We invite all of our service users to complete our service user satisfaction survey. If you are not offered a survey, it is available on the website.

Your concerns

If you have concerns about the service, support or equipment being provided to yourself, a relative or friend, please speak with the customer services team. It is likely your concern can be quickly resolved without making a formal complaint.

DON'T GET ST

POWER UP YOUR LIFE

Front
power
add on



Call our Clinical Commercial Team now on 03

STUCK IN A RUT

TREAT YOURSELF

Power assist



Loopwheels



Front wheel
add on



Help is at hand

AJM's partnership and engagement officer is employed by AJM Healthcare to help service users, carers, personal assistants, parents and family to get the most out of the wheelchair service. They can advocate and support you if you need help.

Making a formal complaint

If we have been unable to resolve your concern, you may wish to make a formal complaint. It is best to do so as soon as possible once the problem has been identified.

You should make a complaint within 12 months. This time frame may not apply if there are valid reasons for not making the complaint sooner.

All complaints are treated in the strictest of confidence and we always aim to resolve them quickly and, where possible, correct any mistake straight away.

You can make a formal complaint to your local customer service team in the first instance.

It is important that you provide your full name, address, date of birth and contact information when making your complaint, as this information is required to proceed with the investigation.

In your complaint, please provide as much details as possible about your concerns.

The complaints process

Once you have raised a formal complaint, the customer service team will contact you by telephone. This will usually be within one (1) working day. Please let us know during this call if you need us to communicate with you in a different way, or have any other accessibility needs, e.g. you require an advocate or interpreter.

A written acknowledgement will be provided within three (3) working days, giving contact details of the person who will initially be dealing with your complaint and the next steps.

We aim to resolve all complaints within 25 working days. We understand, however, that some complaints are more complex and it may take longer to conduct a thorough investigation and provide a full response. If this is the case, the customer service team will agree a more realistic timescale with you.

Please put your complaints in writing to:

complaints@ajmhealthcare.org

or:

Complaints Team
AJM Healthcare
1st Floor, Ash House
Woodlands Business Park
Linford Wood West
Milton Keynes
MK14 6ET

If you are still unhappy with the situation you may ask for an appeal , which will be escalated to an AJM Healthcare director for a review of your case.

Alternatively, you can appeal to the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group for your area, or the Ombudsman, which is completely independent of both the NHS and the government.

Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

Tel: 0845 015 4033
www.ombudsman.org.uk

Maintenance checklist – manual wheelchairs

Frame

Clean entire frame. Use a damp cloth and mild detergent or disinfectant. Do NOT use bleach. Take care not to get water inside the frame.

Dry chair thoroughly using a towel, especially around the screws to prevent rust.

Polish chrome-plated parts. Use a commercially available polish or metal protector spray. Follow instructions provided.

Check frame for rust and cracks. If you find any significant rust or cracks, contact AJM for repair by professionals.

Nuts and bolts

Check nuts and bolts are in place and secure. If missing, contact AJM to arrange for repair. Your wheelchair supplier or local repair agent can provide advice on how much to tighten various nuts and bolts.

Upholstery

Clean. Use a damp cloth and mild detergent or disinfectant. Do NOT use bleach. Dry with a towel.

Inspect for excessive stretch of backrest or seat sling upholstery. Check all areas, including armrests for cracks or other signs of damage and wear.

<p>Upholstery (cont...)</p>	<p>Contact AJM for repairs as required.</p> <p>Nourish vinyl. Use a commercial upholstery restorer or general-purpose protector spray.</p> <p>Consider applying fabric protector to upholstered seats, backrests or headrest to keep clean and make future cleaning easier. Use a commercially available fabric protector.</p>
<p>Tyres and wheels</p>	<p>For inflatable tyres, check pressure and inflate to correct PSI. The recommended pressure is printed on the side wall of the tyre.</p> <p>Check tread. Inspect for flat spots and wear. Check for wobbles when pushing the chair. Contact AJM to arrange for repair or replacement of tyres/wheels as required.</p> <p>Inspect axles. Remove hair, lint and dirt.</p> <p>Check spoked wheels. Squeeze spokes, checking for any loose or broken spokes. Work around both sides of each wheel, checking all spokes. Loose or broken spokes need service, particularly for active wheelchair users.</p>
<p>Castors</p>	<p>Remove hair, lint and any dirt from axles.</p>

Castors (cont...)	<p>For inflatable tyres, check pressure and inflate to correct PSI. Recommended pressure is printed on the side wall of the castor.</p> <p>Castors should spin and pivot freely.</p> <p>Check for excessive wobbling or binding of the castors while propelling the wheelchair.</p> <p>If there are wobbles, contact AJM to arrange for repair or replacement of castors or bearings.</p>
Brakes	<p>Once the tyres are correctly inflated (see above), check the operation of the brakes.</p> <p>The brakes should lock the drive wheels as the user gets in/out of the chair and completely clear the wheels when pushing.</p> <p>Minor adjustments may be made by the user. If the brakes need significant adjusting, contact AJM to arrange for repairs.</p>
Armrests	<p>Check the armrests are easily removed, swung away and adjusted (if they are designed to do this).</p> <p>Armrests can seize up if they are not moved regularly.</p>

Footplates	<p>Check position of footplates.</p> <p>Speak to AJM about the correct positioning of your footplates.</p> <p>Footplates should be high enough that the soles of the feet are taking weight, but not removing weight from the thighs. The thighs should be taking weight for almost their full length.</p> <p>Check action of swing away, fold up or removal mechanism.</p> <p>Footplates can seize up if they are not moved regularly.</p>
Headrest and posture supports	<p>If fitted, check that headrests and other posture support components are secure and adjusted for the user.</p> <p>Clean oils from hair off vinyl headrests to prolong lifespan.</p> <p>If upholstery is very worn or damaged, or hardware mountings are very loose or damaged, contact AJM to arrange repair.</p>

Maintenance checklist - power wheelchairs (PWC)

Batteries

Use the correct charger. Charge 8-12 hours daily. Do NOT charge for less than 4 hours - drive distance is reduced by undercharging.

- The first 1 hour of charging is used to prepare the batteries to accept charge.
- The next 3-4 hours is the main charging period.
- If the charger indicator light goes off after a few hours, this is NOT a sign that the batteries are at full charge.
- From 4-12 hours, the charger provides trickle charge to take batteries up to their full capacity.
- High capacity batteries generally need longer charge times.
- If the charger or controls get very hot during charging, the plug may not be connected fully.

Unplug the charger during electrical storms.

If the batteries have been recharged each day for a continuous 8-12 hour period, and the lights on the wheelchair control indicate the batteries are still not fully charged, then the batteries may not be holding charge. Contact AJM to arrange for service.

Controls	<p>Check flexible cover between joystick and control module, and all buttons on the keypad for wear or cracks. If there are cracks or holes immediately arrange repair by contacting AJM.</p> <p>If not repaired, the power wheelchair may soon malfunction or stop working as moisture from hands damages circuits.</p>
Cables and connections	<p>Check that cables and plug-in connections are secure and not worn.</p> <p>If cables are frayed, showing through insulated cable housing, or plugs are showing bare wire, immediately arrange repair by contacting AJM.</p> <p>If not repaired there is a risk of malfunction, power failure, battery damage or fire.</p>
Tyres (Pump Up/ Pneumatic)	<p>For inflatable tyres, check pressure and inflate to correct psi.</p> <p>Recommended pressure is printed on the side wall of the tyre.</p> <p>A small domestic compressor or foot pump is most suitable.</p>

Tyres (cont...)	<p>Air hoses at petrol stations should NOT be used. Tyres can burst or distort in shape if over inflated.</p> <p>Check tread. Inspect for flat spots and wear. Contact AJM to arrange for replacement of tyres as required.</p>
Castors and drive wheels	<p>Inspect axles. Remove hair, lint and dirt.</p> <p>Castors should turn and pivot freely.</p> <p>Drive wheels run smooth, driving even both sides; no noises or squeaks.</p> <p>Check for excessive wobbling or binding when driving or that the chair does not pull to one side.</p> <p>Contact AJM to arrange for service as needed.</p>
Freewheel mechanism	<p>Disengage the drive mechanism using the free-wheeling device (hubs or lever operated). The chair should be able to be pushed manually.</p> <p>(Your power wheelchair supplier can advise how to operate freewheel)</p>

Park brakes	<p>Disengage the drive mechanism using the free-wheeling device as described above.</p> <p>Apply the park brakes. The drive wheels should be locked and chair will not roll.</p>
Frame	<p>Clean entire frame. Use a damp cloth and mild detergent or disinfectant. Do NOT use bleach. Take care not to get water inside the frame. Dry chair thoroughly using a towel, especially around the screws to prevent rust.</p> <p>Polish chrome plated parts. Use a commercially available polish or metal protectant spray. Follow instructions provided.</p> <p>Check wheelchair frame for rust and cracks. If you find any significant rust or cracks, contact AJM.</p>
Nuts and bolts	<p>Check all nuts and bolts are in place and correctly tightened.</p> <p>If nuts and bolts are missing, contact AJM to arrange for a repair.</p> <p>Your power wheelchair supplier or local repair agent can provide advice on how much to tighten various nuts and bolts.</p>

<p>Armrests</p>	<p>Check that armrests can be easily removed, swung-away and adjusted (if they are designed to do this).</p> <p>Armrests can seize up if they are not moved regularly.</p>
<p>Footplates or foot board</p>	<p>Check position of footplates.</p> <p>Speak with your prescriber about the correct positioning of your footplates.</p> <p>Footplates should be high enough that the soles of the feet are taking weight but not removing weight from the thighs. The thighs should be taking weight for almost their full length.</p> <p>Check action of swing-away, fold up or removal mechanism.</p> <p>Footplates can seize up if they are not moved regularly.</p>
<p>Headrest and posture supports</p>	<p>If fitted, check that headrests and other posture support components are secure and adjusted for the user.</p> <p>Clean oils from hair off vinyl headrests to prolong lifespan.</p> <p>If mountings are very loose or damaged, contact AJM to arrange repair.</p>

Upholstery

Clean. Use a damp cloth and mild detergent or disinfectant. Do NOT use bleach. Dry with a towel.

Inspect for excessive stretch of backrest or seat sling upholstery.

Check all areas, including armrests and headrests, for cracks or other signs of damage and wear.

Contact AJM for repairs as required.

Treat vinyl. Use upholstery restorer or general purpose protector spray.

Consider applying fabric protector to upholstered seats, backrests, or headrest to keep clean and make future cleaning easier. Use a commercially available fabric protector.

If you have any concerns about your wheelchair, please contact the AJM Healthcare customer service team.

Wheelchair passport information

It will help you to keep a note of the most important information about your wheelchair.

Type of wheelchair	Manual/Power
Serial number of wheelchair	
Classification eg 4MPH/6KMH	
Manufacturer of wheelchair	
Purchase price	
Date purchased	
Purchased from/supplied by	
Age of equipment	
Model of wheelchair	
Height of wheelchair	
Width of wheelchair	
Height of wheelchair when folded (if applicable)	
Width of wheelchair when folded (if applicable)	
Length of wheelchair including footplate	
Weight of wheelchair in kgs	
Size of wheels	
Size of castors	
Length of arm rests	
TYPE OF BACK	
Cushion type	
Cushion - width, length, depth	
Any other information, e.g. lap belts, detachable back, add on to the chair	
POWER WHEELCHAIRS	
Controller type	
Controller size	
Type of battery	
Instructions for disconnecting battery	



www.wheelchair.services

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