

Now you have your wheelchair

SMART Wheelchair Service



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The footplates will have been adjusted to the correct height for you (thighs fully supported on the seat and your feet firmly on the footplates) and you will have been shown how to fold and unfold your wheelchair.

You will also have been given a copy of a booklet which gives some useful information on using your wheelchair.

Wheelchair repairs

Should your wheelchair need repaired please:

- Telephone the SMART Wheelchair Service on **0131 537 9177**,
- Or submit an **online Repair Request Form** on the Wheelchair & Seating Service page on the SMART Centre Website - www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/wheelchairs-seating

We will arrange for our contractors to visit and repair your wheelchair within 5 working days at no cost to you. If you want to arrange the repair yourself we will reimburse you up to a cost of £25. You will need to send us the receipt for us to refund your money.

Common questions

Should I have been given a cushion?

Cushions are usually supplied with self-propelling wheelchairs but generally not with attendant propelled wheelchairs. If you are uncomfortable in your wheelchair and feel a cushion may help, please phone the SMART Wheelchair Service on **0131 537 9177**.

Special pressure relieving cushions can be supplied where there is a specific need. Often it is useful to discuss this with your District Nurse, General Practitioner, Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist in the first instance. Pressure relieving cushions can only give you a little longer safe sitting time. The only way to prevent pressure sores is to have frequent changes of position throughout the day.

Do I need a seat belt?

A seat belt is fitted as standard on your wheelchair for safety. They can help if you find that you are sliding forward in the wheelchair or if you feel nervous when being pushed.

Belts fitted to a wheelchair are not enough to protect you whilst travelling in a van/bus.

Can I have a tray?

Trays can be provided for most wheelchairs. If you propel the wheelchair yourself a tray will let you carry objects. It can also provide a useful surface at mealtimes and for other activities.

What if my wheelchair does not suit me?

Contact the SMART Wheelchair Service and tell us what you feel the problem is. A therapist will review your file and decide on an appropriate course of action. If it is best that you are assessed you will be contacted by telephone or letter.

Common problems

Wheelchair is too heavy

The weight of the wheelchair makes very little difference when you are pushing it as the weight of the person sitting in it is always so much greater.

Lightweight wheelchairs are easier to lift into or out of the car. The wheelchairs provided by the SMART Wheelchair Service are amongst the lightest available. Often footrests, armrests and sometimes rear wheels can be removed to make a chair lighter and more compact for lifting it into and out of the car.

Large wheels at the back can make it easier for a helper to get the wheelchair up and down kerbs.

Not comfortable

Check that the footplates are adjusted correctly—thighs fully supported on seat and feet firmly on footplates.

A cushion may help.

If you find that you are falling to the side, sliding out of the wheelchair, or need more postural support contact the SMART Wheelchair Service on **0131 537 9177**. A therapist will contact you and arrange to visit if needed.

Wheelchairs are designed to provide mobility and cannot provide the same level of comfort as an upholstered chair. You should not sit in your wheelchair for any longer than necessary. Whenever possible you should sit in a suitable armchair. Your local Social Work Department Occupational Therapist should be able to advise on different types of armchairs.

Wheelchair pulls to one side

All pavements and roads have a slope on them which will make your wheelchair pull to one side or the other.

If your wheelchair has pneumatic tyres fitted and one is softer than the other, the wheelchair will pull to the side of the soft tyre—tyres should be inflated to approximately 45lbs/sq inch. Puncture proof tyres which do not need to be inflated can now be fitted to most wheelchairs.

Sometimes the wheelchair user sits in such a way that their weight is more to one side than the other—the wheelchair will pull to the side the person is leaning to, it may be possible to fit extra support to one side to reduce this.

Please contact the SMART Wheelchair Service on **0131 537 9177** if you have a problem with your wheelchair.

Suggestions, compliments and complaints

The SMART Wheelchair Service staff are committed to providing an efficient, effective and responsive service however occasionally things may go wrong. It is useful if you let us know there is a problem in the first instance by telephoning 0131 537 9177.

You can also submit feedback to us online at:

www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/ (Click on the green feedback button).

If you need to request a repair to your wheelchair, please telephone 0131 537 9177 or submit an online Repair Request Form at www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/wheelchairs-seating

Or you can contact the NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team:

- In writing - Waverley Gate, 2nd Floor, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EG
- By email - feedback@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
- By phone - 0131 536 3370 (open Monday-Friday, 9am to 2pm).

Smart Wheelchair Service

Southeast Mobility and Rehabilitation Technology Centre (SMART)

Astley Ainslie Hospital

133 Grange Loan

Edinburgh

EH9 2HL

Telephone: 0131 537 9177

Office Hours: 8:30am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-4:00pm, Monday to Friday