

# Disabled Children's Equipment Provision Children's Occupational Therapy Service



## **Frequently asked questions**

Disabled children often require specialist equipment. This equipment is often required both at home and at school and in all the places the child visits in their daily lives.

This leaflet is designed to help you through common situations and occurrences. In some situations you will need to gain specific help; the person usually best able to advise you or signpost you to the correct service will be your child's Occupational Therapist (OT) and/or physiotherapist (PT).

### **I need help managing my child's daily routines and personal care at home. I think equipment may help me. Who should I contact?**

In the first instance, please contact your child's OT. If your child does not have an OT please contact the OT service (contact details at the end of this leaflet).

### **When I have contacted the OT what will happen next?**

The OT will visit you and your child at home in order to fully understand your situation. The OT will then suggest and discuss with you specific equipment and /or changes in routine which may help you. The OT may arrange for your child to try equipment and in some circumstances may arrange for an equipment supply company representative to visit you and your child.

### **What happens once the OT has identified what we need?**

Once you and the OT have agreed the equipment that is needed the OT will check to see if the item(s) is in stock at our Equipment Store in Huntingdon. If the item(s) is in stock it will be ordered and delivered to your home. If the item is not in stock the OT will request that it is ordered from the manufacturer/ supplier.

## **How long will it take to get the equipment?**

If the item is in stock it will take around 1-2 weeks to be delivered to your home. If the equipment is required urgently the OT and the store will endeavour to get the equipment to you as soon as possible. If the item is not in stock then delivery is dependent on manufacturing/supplier timescales. The OT or representative from the Equipment Store will be able to give you an idea of how long this may be; if an item is delayed the store will be able to chase this up for you and let you know what is happening. If you would like to be kept informed then please let your OT know or phone the store direct. (Telephone number on page 5)

## **Can we choose a delivery day/time for the equipment? (or collection)**

The store will phone you to agree a convenient day for delivery. It is not possible to choose a delivery time, however if you contact the store on the morning of the scheduled delivery/collection they will do their best to give you an approximate delivery/collection time; alternatively the store may be able to phone you an hour before they expect to be at your home. Please speak to the store direct.

## **I think there is a similar issue at school. Who will help?**

Therapists, your child's school and The Student Assessment and Resources Team (STAR Team, Children and Young People's Services, Cambridgeshire County Council) will all work together to ensure your child has the equipment they need at school.

Responsibility for the purchase of equipment for children attending mainstream schools is the responsibility of the Statutory Assessment and Resources Team. Your child's Occupational Therapist and/or Physiotherapist will help with the selection of the equipment and your child's school will send the information to the STAR Team who will consider the request for funding. Once the funding has been agreed the STAR Team will check to see if the equipment is in stock at the Equipment Store in Huntingdon. If the item(s) is in stock it will be ordered and arrangements will be made for the equipment to be delivered to your child's school. If the item is not in stock an order will be placed and delivery will be requested as soon as possible. Once the equipment has been delivered to your child's school your child's Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist will assist with any adjustment/setting up that may be required.

Your child's Occupational Therapist and/or Physiotherapist will help with the selection of the equipment and any adjustment/setting up that may be required.

## **Can the equipment my child uses at home also be used at school and vice versa?**

This is on occasion possible (slings are easily transported); however, it usually becomes too complicated with regard to daily transportation and the need to check/re adjust the relocated equipment twice a day.

## **The equipment delivered appears second hand. Can you explain this please?**

The store operates a system of recycling used equipment; children grow and change quickly and equipment is rarely “worn out”. When equipment is returned to the store it is cleaned, checked for faults and any maintenance required carried out. The equipment is then logged in a web based catalogue and made available for therapists to reissue as required. The equipment your child receives should have minor wear and tear only, such as small cosmetic scratches.

## **What should I do if the equipment breaks/develops a fault?**

If the equipment breaks or develops a fault (and was delivered to you from our Huntingdon store); please phone the store direct and a repair will be arranged.

There is an out of hour's service for beds, pressure mattresses and hoists; call the same number and you will be put through to the on call Technician who will attempt to help you over the phone; if the problem cannot be solved over the phone the technician will visit you at your home.

## **Is there any equipment available for my child to use when on a “Short Break”? Who will help?**

There is a small stock of equipment available to support a Short Break - e.g. holidays away, visits to the beach. This includes such equipment as portable hoists, mobile changing benches and beach wheelchairs. These can be requested via your child's Occupational Therapist who can also provide you with a catalogue containing details of the range of equipment available for Short Break loan. (<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/specialneedsdisabilities/supportfromsocialcare/equipmentsn.htm>)

## **How is equipment funded?**

Equipment for bathing, toileting, seating, sleeping (specialist beds) and moving and handling all come from the Equipment Store in Huntingdon and are paid for by health and social care.

**Physiotherapy equipment** (standing frames, walking frames etc) are purchased by the NHS but any recycled items are returned to the store for cleaning, maintenance, re issue and delivery.

Physiotherapists also work with the Orthotics Department re the assessment and supply of orthotics.

**Communication aids.** Funding for communication aids is on an individual basis. Speech and Language therapists assess the child in conjunction with parents and the child's school team. Once an aid has been identified funding will be requested through the County Resource Panel.

**Wheelchair Services** are commissioned and funded by Cambridgeshire NHS but the service itself is provided by Central Essex Community Services, (CECS). Please discuss your wheelchairs queries with your child's Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist.

## **Useful Telephone Numbers:**

- Central Essex Community Services (Cambridgeshire's wheelchair Service provider). Tel: 0300 1231403
- Equipment store in Huntingdon (Integrated Community Equipment Service). Tel: 0845 1213456
- Statutory Assessment and Resources Team. Tel: 01480 372620
- OT Adult service – Contact Centre details. Tel: 0345 6502150

## **What are “direct payments” and how might this apply to the equipment my child requires?**

A direct payment for your child’s equipment is a sum of money paid to you to purchase the equipment your child needs. To receive a direct payment your child must have been assessed by an OT or Physiotherapist who has worked with you to identify the equipment required. Payment is made by cheque to you. Some parents choose to do this when they have a preference for a piece of equipment which goes beyond the child’s needs and provides additional features; in effect the parent “tops up” the direct payment money (which covers the equipment which meets the child’s clinical needs) and orders a higher specification model. If you choose to do this you would be responsible for repairs and maintenance and would not be able to use the technical services provided by ICES.

## **What happens when I no longer require the equipment?**

All equipment that is no longer required should be returned to the equipment store. Your OT or Physiotherapist can arrange this for you or you can phone the equipment store yourself (contact details on page 5). Returned equipment is checked for faults, maintained, cleaned and stored ready for re issue. Children’s equipment is costly and it is therefore very important that it is returned for re-issue whenever possible. (A specialist bed or chair costs approx £2,500 - £5,000 each)

## **What can I do to help the equipment service?**

It would be helpful if you could keep the equipment clean and report any faults. Delivery/collections drivers work on tight time scales; please ensure you are at home at the agreed collection/delivery times.

## **My child will soon be transitioning to adult services; what happens to the equipment we have?**

You will be able to keep any equipment that you currently have at home (adult and children services use the same equipment store). When your child is transitioning between adult and children’s services their equipment needs should be considered as part of their Transition Plan. Once the transition is complete if your young adult requires a new assessment and/or equipment at home you/they will need to contact the adult OT services. (Via the Contact Centre, telephone number on page 5.)

## **What happens if we move away from Cambridgeshire?**

The equipment that you have on loan is the property of Cambridgeshire. We very much want to work with you to ensure you have what you need from day one in your new home or at your child's new school. Please contact the person who supplied your equipment as soon as you know you will be moving. We will do our best to plan the transfer of your child's equipment needs to your new county. Each county approaches this slightly differently, some are able to purchase the equipment you currently use direct from Cambridgeshire so that you can take your child's equipment with you; other counties will prefer to re-issue equipment from their own store in which case Cambridgeshire's equipment needs to be returned to the Equipment Store in Huntingdon before you move. The most important thing to do is give both counties as much notice of your move as possible. (It may take several months to arrange).

## For further information about this service contact:

Children's Occupational Therapy Service  
The Peacock Centre, Brookfields Campus  
351 Mill Road  
Cambridge CB1 3DF

**Occupational Therapy**  
Tel: 01223 218065

**Physiotherapy**  
Tel: 01223 218065

**Speech and Language Therapy**  
Tel: 01223 218062

If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: [ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net).

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.