

damage and third party. Ask the West Berkshire Wheelchair Clinic for details on insurance companies.

Can I reapply in the future?

The voucher lasts a minimum of five years for adults and three years for children, (but users are not automatically entitled to vouchers every five years). However, with care and attention, wheelchairs will last longer than that.

New vouchers would be subject to full re-assessment.

In all cases...

the user can expect to receive:

- Assessment, instruction and review of their needs by the Wheelchair Service;
- Prescription of a suitable wheelchair in consultation with the user (and where appropriate, their carer or representative);
- Supply of a voucher wheelchair through an agreed supplier;
- Continued access to the NHS to provide special seating/pressure-relieving cushions, if needed;
- Continuing help and advice, if required.

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West Berkshire Wheelchair Service
Reviewed: January 2019
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Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Wheelchair independent voucher scheme

Information for existing clients
and users of wheelchairs issued
by the West Berkshire
Wheelchair Clinic

The wheelchair voucher scheme was introduced nationally in December 1996. It was designed to allow disabled people more choice by upgrading wheelchair equipment normally issued by the NHS. Where the scheme is available, the NHS puts a contribution towards a higher specification wheelchair.

How does the scheme work?

If you have been known to our service and using one of our NHS wheelchairs for a minimum of six months, you may be considered for a voucher.

Please remember that the voucher route is not suitable for everyone, particularly those with changing or deteriorating conditions. This should be discussed with one of our therapists.

Furthermore, any applicant must meet our criteria for the equipment they intend to purchase (e.g. a voucher cannot be redeemed against a power pack, which is not within our criteria).

If you wish to apply, you will need to attend an appointment during which a therapist will assess whether a voucher is appropriate for

you. If it is, you will be issued with a voucher value, according to your clinical need.

Independent ownership

The West Berkshire Wheelchair Service operates an “independent” voucher scheme. The voucher value represents the cost of a standard NHS wheelchair for the client’s need, plus an amount towards repairs.

The client, through either personal means or charity funding they have sourced themselves, pays the remainder of the cost to the supplier.

The client then becomes the outright owner of the wheelchair and is responsible for all further costs and its maintenance upkeep.

Vouchers can only be used with our approved suppliers (a list will be supplied) and we would need to approve any proposed wheelchair before its final supply.

A voucher cannot be issued retrospectively (i.e. against a previous purchase or a purchase you have already agreed). The client must be assessed and the voucher agreed before committing to a purchase.

The voucher does not include pressure cushions or postural accessories. The West Berkshire Wheelchair Clinic will continue to supply these where the wheelchair is compatible and equipment can be suitably attached by the clinic.

Your questions answered:

Who can apply for a voucher?

Anyone who lives within the West Berkshire Wheelchair Service area, has a permanent need for a wheelchair, and has been known to the West Berkshire Wheelchair Clinic for six months may apply for a voucher. To find out if you are eligible, or to discuss further, please telephone 0118 322 6706.

What should I do with my voucher?

You will need to give the voucher and the associated paperwork to the approved supplier. The voucher has all the information needed for the supplier to provide you with a wheelchair that meets your individual needs.

When do I pay my contribution to the cost of the wheelchair?

When the voucher is given to the agreed supplier, you will then be asked to pay the balance of the cost of the chair to the supplier.

What can I do to protect my wheelchair?

You would own the chair and be responsible for its upkeep. We strongly recommend you take out insurance for theft,