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Acronyms:

CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOSD	Ministry of Social Development
OT	Occupational Therapist
PT	Physiotherapist
SW	Social Worker
WHO	World Health Organization
PSD	Postural Drainage Device



Wheelchair Provision Procedure

1. Introduction

The wheelchair is one of the most commonly used assistive devices for enabling personal mobility. For people who have difficulty in walking or moving around, a wheelchair is an essential tool for their mobility, empowerment, dignity, and overall well-being. Mobility opens up the opportunities for wheelchair users to be independent and access health care, education, work and employment, and also assists wheelchair users to participate in social and cultural activities. However, WHO estimates that more than 70 million people need a wheelchair and only 5–15% have access to one. In addition, training opportunities for personnel to gain the knowledge and skills needed to effectively deliver a wheelchair are limited.

The importance of mobility is reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which advocates for “effective measures to ensure personal mobility with the greatest possible independence for persons with disabilities”. To ensure effective personal mobility, wheelchair users need a wheelchair that fits correctly and meets their specific needs, especially lifestyle and environment. This requires an approach that is responsive to individual needs.

2. Scope

This document is applicable to all healthcare institutions in the governmental and private sectors.

3. Purpose

The Purpose of this document is to provide a systematic mechanism on the steps to be followed prior to and during provision of wheelchairs at the national level.

4. Definitions

4.1 Appropriate wheelchair: A wheelchair that meets the user’s needs and environmental conditions; provides proper fit and postural support; is safe and durable; is available in the



country; and can be obtained and maintained and services sustained in the country at the most economical and affordable price.

- 4.2 **Manual wheelchair:** A wheelchair that is propelled by the user or pushed by another person.
- 4.3 **Postural support device (PSD):** A physical device that provides additional postural support.
- 4.4 **Wheelchair:** A device providing wheeled mobility and seating support for a person with difficulty in walking or moving around.
- 4.5 **Wheelchair modification:** A change made to a wheelchair
- 4.6 **Wheelchair provision:** An overall term for wheelchair design, production, supply and service delivery
- 4.7 **Wheelchair service personnel:** Persons skilled in the provision of an appropriate wheelchair
- 4.8 **Wheelchair user:** A person who has difficulty in walking or moving around and uses a wheelchair for mobility

5. Procedure

The following steps shall be considered prior to and during service provision

5.1 Step One: Referral:

- 5.1.1 The wheelchair provision service starts by referring a patient for occupational therapy or physiotherapy services. Wheelchair need will be determined by the therapist utilizing the eligibility criteria (Appendix 1)
- 5.1.2 The wheelchair provision shall be administered even if the referral is general and does not mention the need for an assistive device (e.g. patient is referred for management of cerebral palsy).

5.2 Step Two: Assessment:

- 5.2.1 Assessment should be in the most appropriate environment. Every assessor for the prescribing of wheelchairs shall have appropriate current experience in wheelchair assessment.



5.3 Step Three: Prescription:

5.3.1 Effective and economical deployment of limited resources, giving the greatest good for the greatest number, requires prescription of the least expensive solution which will meet the applicant's assessed clinical and lifestyle needs.

5.4 Step Four: Handover:

5.4.1 Handover will be the responsibility of named qualified staff. The measurements and prescription form must be handed over to the wheelchair provider i.e. MOSD social worker or the MoH representative.

5.5 Step Five: Repair and Maintenance:

5.5.1 The therapist to liaise with MOH/ MOSD representative for any wheelchair modifications or repairs.

5.6 Step Six: Documentation and Records:

5.6.1 The wheelchair provision service to be documented in a recognized platform by the qualified therapist

5.7 Step Seven: Evaluation:

5.7.1 Wheelchair Services are encouraged to carry out annual audits and continued evaluation of processes and procedures against standards and timescales.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. The Occupational/ physiotherapist is responsible for:

- 6.1.1. To assess the need for a wheelchair
- 6.1.2. To prescribe suitable wheelchairs to all targeted users.
- 6.1.3. To guide the patient regarding obtaining the wheelchair, either through the social worker or privately.

6.2. The Social Worker is responsible for:

- 6.2.1. To receive the prescription from the therapist and liaise with the family and funding bodies/ MOSD to provide the wheelchair.

6.3. The Head of Department is responsible for :

- 6.3.1. Ensuring that all rehabilitation professionals involved in the wheelchair provision service are aware of the system.
- 6.3.2. Conduct regular evaluation of the service.



7. Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control			
Version	Description of Amendment	Author	Review Date
01	Initial Release	Nuha Alshaaili	October / 2023
02			
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Written by		Reviewed by	Approved by
Nuha Alshaaili		National Rehabilitation Taskforce for Policies and Guidelines Development	Dr.Kadhim Jaffar Sulaiman

8. Related Documents:

There is no related document for this procedure



9. References:

Title of book/ journal/ articles/ Website	Author	Year of publication	Page
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Newhttp://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convention_accessible_pdf.pdf).	United Nations	2007	2
Wheelchair Service Training Package – Intermediate Level. Genev(http://www.who.int/disabilities/technology/wheelchairpackage/wstpintermediate/en/)	World Health Organization	2013	
Guidelines on the provision of Manual Wheelchairs in less resourced settings.	World Health Organization	2008	
Wheelchair eligibility criteria/operational policy http://millbrook-healthcare.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/northants_sec.pdf	NHS (National Health Services, United Kingdom)	2014	2-4



Appendix 1: Eligibility Criteria

The Wheelchair service is provided for patients who undergo the rehabilitation services in order to meet assessed clinical needs. All persons referred to the service will only be assessed for a wheelchair where the following general criterion is met:

- The Service provides wheelchairs for Adults and Children with a long-term physical disability or illness that affects their mobility. The definition of long-term is for a period of more than six months. The definition of short-term is a period less than six months. The service is also provided to patients who have a short life expectancy.

1. General Eligibility Principles

Patients will be supplied with a wheelchair providing all the following criteria are met.

1.2. Long term provision

For all new patients i.e. those not known to the wheelchair service

- The patient has been referred to the service by a health professional
- The patient has a long-term condition that restricts their mobility
- The patient is unable to mobilize within their own home

1.3. Short-Term Provision

- The need for a wheelchair has been identified by their Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist as required for discharge from hospital, and the patient is non-weight bearing and cannot use crutches