

Equipment to help in your home

Factsheet 79a – 16 November 2010 (5 pages)

How can we help?

When you first contact us we will talk with you about the type of help you need. We will then suggest how your needs may be met; perhaps by providing equipment to maintain your independence, or by giving you advice. The equipment could be to help with bathing or showering, managing in the kitchen, getting up and down stairs, in and out of your chair or bed.

If you are in hospital a health worker should make sure you have the equipment you need to ensure that you return home safely. They may also make a referral on your behalf to Adult & Community Services to assess your longer term needs.

Are you eligible for help?

Everyone's situation is unique, and we carefully consider each request for support. We use national guidelines from the Department of Health, called Fair Access to Care Services (FACS), making sure our services are provided fairly and used to support people in greatest need. For more details see our factsheet FS1 Assessment and Fair

Access to Care or for a personal explanation telephone Care Direct on 0845 1551 007.

If you are eligible for help we will arrange for someone to visit you as soon as possible. You will be given a prescription for any small simple items like raised toilet seats or walking frames and you will be able to exchange this for the equipment at an accredited retailer – see factsheet *FS58a – Community Equipment Prescriptions*. Large items like hoists or special mattresses will be loaned to you free of charge.

Anyone can get advice and information from our Customer Service Centre, Care Direct 0845 1551 007 who will be happy to supply lists of retailers, including those that are accredited to redeem prescriptions (or see factsheet *FS58b – Community Equipment Retailers, Exeter and East Devon*) and organisations that sell, hire, loan or fit equipment. They can also check with you that you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

(Note: If you are registered disabled with your local Adult & Community Services, you will be exempt from paying VAT on equipment purchased specifically to meet your disability needs). When you buy your equipment you should be given a form to claim VAT relief. Ask your retailer or see leaflet VAT Reliefs for disabled People Ref: Notice 701/7 from HM Customs and Excise (HMCE). For more information contact HMCE, Tel. 0845 010 9000 or visit their website www.hmce.gov.uk

The Independent Living Centre - 01392 687276 www.devon.gov.uk/ilc - offers an impartial assessment service that is free and available to

everyone. They have a range of equipment for you to try out, and trained Occupational Therapists on hand to advise. The centre does not sell equipment but can suggest where you can buy what you need.

If you have access to the internet the Disabled Living Foundation website at www.dlf.org.uk provides excellent information on equipment as well as links to suppliers.

Joint Health and Social Care teams, based in hospitals, work together to make sure you have appropriate services and equipment for returning home and may refer you to an NHS Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist or Nurse.

The role of the Physiotherapist (Health)

Physiotherapists may work with you while you are in hospital or as an outpatient, or in your own home. You will be referred to them by your doctor or consultant. They will usually carry out an assessment and give you advice on exercises, pain relief, treatment or things you can do to improve your particular problem. If you need a walking aid they will advise you how to use it properly. Physiotherapists aim to encourage your continuing health and well-being by improving your strength and mobility, and promoting your independence.

The role of the Occupational Therapist (Health or Social Care)

Occupational Therapists (OTs) will assess how your illness or disability is affecting your daily living. They look at how you manage a range of practical activities such as dressing, cooking or bathing.

They will then provide advice, equipment or treatment to enable you to become more independent. OTs will help you find solutions that you can use throughout your daily life.

Providing Community Equipment

Following assessment there are two ways of obtaining equipment depending on your needs:

Simple equipment is available from a network of retailers that have been accredited to national standards. Items may be supplied free of charge using a prescription, if you are eligible or they may be purchased. It is also possible to 'top up' a prescription i.e. pay the difference to obtain products that may have a different finish. The range of equipment includes equipment to help with mobility, household tasks, bathing, showering and toileting. All equipment provided by prescription is yours to keep and is covered by warranty. If equipment needs to be repaired it should be returned to the retailer. If your needs change or if an item out of warranty needs to be replaced call Care Direct on 0845 1551 007.

Complex and larger items will be provided on loan for however long you have an assessed need and will be delivered to your home by an integrated Community Equipment Service (CES) which is currently provided by Pluss. This service will supply, purchase, store, deliver, maintain, collect, clean and recycle equipment used in the community.

The range of equipment available includes:

- **pressure care equipment**

- beds, hoists, raising and transfer equipment.

It is important to inform the Community Equipment Store (CES) 01392 204144 or Care Direct 0845 1551007 if you have equipment that you no longer need. CES will then collect and, if possible, recycle it after cleaning and servicing. If your equipment is faulty and needs repairing or replacing please contact CES on 01392 204144 or 01392 678533 email: cesdevon@pluss.org.uk If you are not sure where your equipment came from please contact Care Direct 0845 1551 007.

Short-term loans of equipment not requiring an assessment

If you need to borrow equipment for a limited period, for example a wheelchair or commode this can be arranged through the Red Cross call 0845 331 3331 for details of your local service. Local retailers may also offer equipment on hire.

See also: Factsheet 79b, Adapting your home

If you have any further questions please contact Care Direct 0845 1551 007

Further factsheets can be found online at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets

If you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk.

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