

Proposed Wheelchairs (Short-term access) (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to ensure the provision of wheelchairs to anyone assessed as needing one on a short-term, as well as on a long-term, basis. The consultation runs from 8 April 2019 to 30 June 2019. All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer. All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response. Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded. Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here: [Consultation document Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

Medical doctor with experience in the third sector and project research related to healthcare

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Sorcha Hume

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

sorchahume@gmail.com

Aim and Approach

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of establishing a duty to provide a wheelchair to anyone who has been assessed as having a short-term need for one (defined as less than 6 months)?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I have experience of setting up a wheelchair loan service for short-term use for patients at the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital. The reason for the creation of this service was that children who had been injured or undergone surgery (e.g. lower limb fracture or leg leg discrepancy surgery) could not access a wheelchair from statutory services and many therefore could not attend school for weeks/months while their injury healed and/or mobility improved. Many schools do not allow children to attend with crutches for health and safety reasons and younger children do not have the ability to manage using mobility aids such as crutches.

Q2. What is your view on setting a target for providing a wheelchair to a person who (a) has been assessed as having a short-term need for one and (b) is otherwise ready to use it?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

I think that a target is a good idea but I couldn't say what that target should be as it would depend on so many different factors and require input from a range of individuals and organisations. Different priority levels for targets could also be used - for example, a patient in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary who lives in Shetland would be prioritised before a patient who lives in Aberdeen City. If the patient needed the wheelchair before being discharged, the wait could result in a bed being blocked.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view of where the Bill should place the duty to provide short-term access to wheelchairs to people assessed as needing them?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Again, I do not feel qualified to answer this question but a partnership between NHS Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships might work as this would allow more flexibility of service although would admittedly be more complex to set up.

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your view of how further provision about wheelchair access (e.g. assessment criteria and eligibility) should be made?

Ministers should have power to make regulations, give directions, and guidance

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I think that there should be a degree of guidance and regulation from the Scottish Government as this will allow for equity of service across the country, but that the finer details should be agreed locally as there are many differences between health boards in geography, population, facilities etc.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of requiring Scottish Ministers to report back to the Parliament on the operation of the legislation?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I don't think that annual reporting is necessary for this legislation but if there is an option to have an initial period of annual review to ensure expedient service development in each health board which could then be scaled back.

Financial Implications

Q6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
Government and the public sector (including the NHS, local authorities)				X		
Businesses (including makers and suppliers of wheelchairs)				X		
The third sector (including charities and voluntary bodies)				X		

Q6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

supporting those with mobility issues)						
Individuals (including people with mobility issues and their relatives)					X	

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Individuals may be able to leave hospital sooner, recover quicker and return to work faster. Businesses supplying wheelchairs would have increased sales. The third sector would not have to get involved in so many cases (such as the wheelchair loan service which exists in Aberdeen). The government and public sector should see a benefit in patients being discharged home sooner and therefore opening up hospital beds for others and may reduce the requirement for social care involvement in the community as patients are more mobile and independent.

Equalities

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Slightly positive

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

No Response

Sustainability

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

General

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

No Response

