

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.

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Public sector body (Scottish/UK Government/Government agency, local authority, NDPB)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).

This response is being provided on behalf of the Equipu Partnership. Equipu is a Community Equipment partnership service covering local authorities in the West of Scotland and their respective Health Board area

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

(Health & Social Care Partnerships and hospital settings). The partners represented in Equipu and therefore in this response include, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City HSCP, East Dunbartonshire HSCP, West Dunbartonshire HSCP, Renfrewshire HSCP, East Renfrewshire HSCP, and South Lanarkshire HSCP.

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).

Alison Docherty, Equipu Project Partnership Manager on behalf of all Equipu Partnership Community Equipment service Partners

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.

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)?

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The Equipu partnership implemented a policy of providing wheelchairs for short-term loan in 2017 following a pilot to test the implications of this provision, as it recognised this as a service gap. Current criteria is applied for needs of up to 4 weeks, however the policy allows for longer term use if the service is satisfied this meets the overall criteria. The longest loan to date has been for 3 months, and the average has been 4 weeks. However, we do not feel that legislation is necessarily required, and that it would be more appropriate for the Scottish Government to issue updated guidance, linking to the existing guidance relating to the provision of equipment and adaptations. New guidance on the provision of Equipment and Adaptations was issued by the SG in 2008 http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/publications/CC2009_05.pdf. We understand that this is due to be reviewed, and that would provide an opportunity to insert more directive guidance related to short-term loan wheelchair provision.

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?

No target in the legislation

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?

Please explain the reasons for your response

Although Equipu can provide a wheelchair within 4 hours (Emergency order) if required, the ability of Stores services across Scotland to respond to any equipment provision differs considerably and is dependent on logistics/resources. There are no targets in legislation for any other equipment provision so this would be inconsistent with other guidance.

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?

Duty placed on NHS Boards, but with a requirement to delegate it to Integrated Authorities (Health & Social Care Partnerships)

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Following the Integration of Health and Social Care, equipment and adaptations are services that must be delegated to Integration Authorities. NHS Boards have the statutory responsibility for the provision of permanent wheelchairs and it therefore important that they have the strategic overview for both areas of provision whilst delegating short-term loan (in line with integration arrangements) to the HSCP's.

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?

It should be left to NHS Boards or Integrated Authorities (as the case may be) to develop criteria for themselves

Please explain the reasons for your response.

criteria must be developed and applied in line with local strategies consistent with other service arrangements.

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?

Duty to report every three years

Please explain the reasons for your response.

this is an appropriate timescale

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

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We have had some examples where people have been discharged earlier from hospital because we were able to provide a temp wheelchair. There is also an expectation that temp provision may save requirements for other service provision and contributes to the person's well-being which may save expenditure in other parts of the system. standard wheelchairs are very inexpensive and very recyclable especially if only out for short-term loan. This make provision very cost-effective. We expect that this may reduce the impact on the third sector and should reduce costs for families and individuals as they would no longer have to try and source this service themselves.

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?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

temp loan of wheelchairs may allow people with short term limiting conditions to better participate in every day activities and special occasions

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

per answer at question 1 - we are not convinced that legislation is required and although our service could easily accommodate the principles and requirements articulated in this Bill (as we are already providing this service) there are other services in Scotland who may struggle to do so.

General

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

No Response