



National Health Service in Scotland  
Management Executive

St. Andrew's House  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

INDOOR/OUTDOOR POWERED WHEELCHAIRS

Summary

1. This letter explains the arrangements which have been made to provide indoor/outdoor powered wheelchairs to NHS patients who meet certain criteria.

Background

2. In February 1992, the former Minister of State announced an initiative to make available additional funding for the provision of a limited number of indoor/outdoor powered wheelchairs on the NHS. Following this the Management Executive consulted clinicians and technical officers from the Artificial Limb and Appliance Centres (ALACs/Wheelchair Centres) at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness on the specifications of the basic wheelchair and criteria for prescription. The specifications for the types of chair to be supplied and clinical criteria for patients to qualify for the provision of a chair have now been agreed. The Common Services Agency Supplies Division, after taking advice from a Commodity Advisory Panel including ALAC clinicians and technical officers, has placed a contract for the supply of 300 indoor/outdoor self controlled powered wheelchairs for the period to 31 March 1993.

3. Details of the funding, the CSA contract, the clinical criteria, and the advice which should be given to patients are set out in the Annex to this letter.

**Action**

4. General Managers, Chief Executives and Chief Executives Designate are asked to ensure that all staff who deal with people with disabilities should be made aware of the new arrangements.

21 October 1992

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Addressees

For action

General Managers,  
Health Boards

Chief Executives and  
Chief Executives  
Designate, NHS Trusts

For information

General Manager,  
Common Services Agency

General Manager, State  
Hospital

General Manager,  
Health Education Board  
for Scotland

To be copied to Unit  
General Managers for  
information

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Enquiries to:

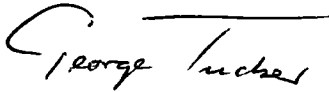
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Strategic Management  
NHS Management  
Executive  
Room 279  
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Edinburgh  
EH1 3DE

Tel: 031 244 2428  
Fax: 031 244 3487

5. This letter and the Annex has been copied to ALAC/Wheelchair Centre managers, clinicians and technical officers to ensure that action is taken.

6. This letter should be copied to Unit General Managers for information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Tucker". A horizontal line is drawn above the signature.

G W TUCKER

## INDOOR/OUTDOOR POWERED WHEELCHAIRS

Funding

1. The funding announced by the then Minister of State in February 1992 is £622,000 for 1992/93.
2. It has been agreed that the funds will be distributed to Health Boards on the basis of the population served by each ALAC/Wheelchair Centre. The funding is intended to cover the assessment, supply, repair and administrative costs for the provision of indoor/outdoor wheelchairs, and may not be used for any other purpose. The breakdown of the funding is as follows:-

ALAC/Wheelchair Centre	1992/93
GLASGOW	£332,424
EDINBURGH (Astley Ainslie)	£141,340
DUNDEE	£ 57,460
ABERDEEN	£ 62,586
INVERNESS	£ 28,191

Arrangements are in hand for the 1992/93 funding to be released to Health Boards and the Director of Finance will shortly be writing to General Managers.

Contracts

3. The Supplies Division of the Common Services Agency, with the assistance of a Commodity Advisory Panel drawn from the ALACs/Wheelchair Centre, has entered into a contract for the supply and maintenance of powered wheelchairs with Sunrise Medical Ltd. The contract will run from 1 September 1992 to 31 March 1994. It is estimated that the Sunrise chair will meet the needs of 80% of patients. Some funding should be held in reserve for the provision of non-standard models which may be needed to meet the specific requirements of individual patients.

Criteria

4. For patients to qualify for the provision of an indoor/outdoor self controlled powered wheelchair they must be able to meet all of the following criteria:-

4.1 those who, for medical and social reasons, are severely and permanently restricted in their mobility, and

4.2 have been supplied with an indoor-only powered wheelchair and would benefit from outdoor use, and

4.3 have no cognitive, visuo-spatial, visual or other medical problem eg poorly controlled epilepsy, which would make them a danger to themselves or other pedestrians, and

4.4 have demonstrated that they have the insight, intellectual capacity and dexterity to be able to operate a powered indoor/outdoor chair safely and responsibly, and

4.5 whose homes (including access and facilities for safe storage) allow them to make use of a powered chair capable of going outdoors, and

4.6 are able to ensure that the powered chair will be maintained adequately, either personally or by a carer.

5. These criteria may be revised, after due consultation with interested parties in the future. It should be noted that when the new indoor/outdoor chair is supplied the indoor only chair can then be made available for use by another patient.

#### ADVICE TO PATIENTS

6. It will be for the ALAC/Wheelchair Centre to devise its own conditions of issue, but it is suggested that the following points should be included. The patient and/or carer should be advised that although such chairs remain the property of the NHS it is hoped that patients will look after them as if they were their own property. In particular such chairs are likely to be attractive targets for vandals and joyriders, and should be kept indoors or in a locked garage overnight and when not in use. Patients and carers will be instructed in daily maintenance procedures by the suppliers agent as part of the terms of contract. (Breakdowns and any serious problems will be a matter for the suppliers under the maintenance element of the contract or the ALAC's or Wheelchair Centre's own repair contractors). Patients and carers should be reminded that wheels should be cleaned before a chair is taken into the house. Patients and carers should be advised in as tactful a way as possible that the chair should be returned to the ALAC/Wheelchair Centre if the patient can no longer use it effectively since there will be other patients waiting who could make use of this type of chair.

7. Patients and carers should be advised strongly to take out third party insurance. They should also be informed of the existence of comprehensive insurance policies covering theft, fire, third party liability, repair and 'get you home' cover. It is understood that such policies are available at moderate premiums. Further advice on insurance is available from the Common Services Agency Supplies Division, Trinity Park House, Edinburgh, EH5 3SE, Tel: 031-552-6255 Ext 2316 or 2591, Fax No 031-552-8651.

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