

Criteria for the Provision of Indoor/Outdoor Powered Wheelchairs with Dual controls for occupant and attendant (EPIOC, Dual)

Background

A number of patients are able to control a powered wheelchair only in an indoor environment and have been excluded from provision of an Indoor / Outdoor powered wheelchair (EPIOC). They may, however, have an attendant who is available to take over the control of a powered wheelchair for use outdoors. For such people, the NHS Wheelchair services may consider providing an EPIOC fitted with dual controls for occupant control when indoors and attendant control when outdoors.

Criteria

To be eligible for the provision of an EPIOC with dual controls, patients must have failed to meet the full criteria for EPIOC provision but meet all the criteria for an Indoor Powered Wheelchair (EPIC) as follows:

Patient Criteria

1. for medical reasons, be severely and permanently restricted in mobility (see note 1)
2. be unable to walk; (see notes 1 and 2)
3. be unable to propel a manual wheelchair; (see notes 1 and 2)

NOTE 1: Inability to walk or propel a manual wheelchair relates to inability to walk / propel within a room and to access essential domestic home environments, e.g. bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, front door, communal dining etc.

This applies to domestic environments including sheltered housing for independent living but does not apply to Care Homes, where staff are available to assist this mobility,

NOTE 2: For a small number of patients, it may be inadvisable on medical grounds to manually propel a wheelchair, e.g. because of increased susceptibility of upper limbs to injury

4. have no cognitive, spatial, visual or similar impairment which would make their use of an EPIC a danger to themselves or other people indoors.
5. undergo training relevant to the use of an EPIC and have demonstrated in a practical assessment that they have the physical and intellectual capacity to control an EPIC safely and responsibly.
6. have a residential environment compatible with the use of an EPIC, and which includes a storage area with a power supply for a battery charger.
7. have a local outside environment which is accessible by an EPIOC and compatible with its use (including static and dynamic stability);
8. - be capable of ensuring that an EPIC is maintained adequately (charging on a daily basis, battery inspections etc.) either personally or by a carer.
9. will derive significant improvement in their independence and quality of life through the use of an EPIC.
10. agreed that the provision may be reviewed on a regular basis.

Attendant criteria

In addition, patients must have an attendant who meets the criteria of eligibility for Attendant controlled powered wheelchairs as follows:

For the purposes of this document, the attendant is defined as the one person identified as the primary carer responsible for carrying out the day to day care of the patient.

11. The attendant must be capable of walking whilst controlling a powered chair to local facilities to which the patient may reasonably expect to have access.
12. The attendant must be able to comply with DVLA requirements for motor vehicle drivers concerning epilepsy and other causes of loss of consciousness.
13. The attendant must have visual acuity of at least 6/24 (can read a car number plate at 40 feet) and have a field vision of 120° in a horizontal plane and 20° above and below this plane (equivalent to class 3 vehicle vision requirements of the Highway Code).
14. The attendant must be able to demonstrate that they have the insight, intellectual capacity and dexterity to be able to control an EPIOC Dual safely and responsibly. This will require a practical assessment.
15. The attendant must be able to ensure that the EPIOC Dual will be maintained adequately (charging, battery inspection etc).
16. The patient and attendant must agree that their needs and the wheelchair provided may be reviewed on a regular basis and that the EPIOC Dual may be withdrawn or changed if a review reveals changes in the patient's or attendant's ability to meet any of the above criteria.