

CHAIR OR PLATFORM STAIR LIFT Information Sheet for EMS Assessors

The following information provides design/technical points, relevant aspects of Ministry of Health EMS funding and clinical considerations to think about during the assessment and modification process.

The EMS Assessor's role is to ensure that the person, family/whanau and caregivers are fully informed. This can be done either by providing the information yourself, or by directing the equipment supplier and/or List Contractor/Builder to assist with technical or installation details.

Types of Stair lifts

A Chair Stair lift:

- Consists of a chair which travels up and down a track which is fixed either to the stairs or to the wall alongside the stairway
- It may include a turn at the top and/or bottom of the stairs so that the person can get on or off the chair safely
- Check what features are standard, or optional with the lift you are considering. Optional features will need to be specified as an additional need, e.g. seat belt. Also whether the chair stair lift is designed for internal or external use.

A Platform Stair lift:

- Consists of a platform that travels up and down a track which is fixed to the wall alongside the stairway. The platform is designed to transport a person sitting in a wheelchair and/or carer.
- Folds up against the wall so that others can use the stairs when it is not in use
- The platform needs to make a 180° turn at the top and at the bottom of the stairs so that there is enough space to get on and off the platform safely.
- Check what features are standard and what are optional features, e.g. a barrier gate/arm is an optional extra. Also whether the platform stair lift is designed for internal or external use.

Care, Use and Maintenance

1. It is important that everyone using the lift understands how to use it safely.
2. A chair stair or a platform stair lift is a mechanical item and needs to be protected from tampering and/or vandalism.



3. Lifts exposed to weather conditions may need extra maintenance and cleaning to ensure safety.
4. Check with the EMS Provider regarding ownership. Where the chair stair or platform stair lift becomes the home owner's property. All repairs, maintenance, servicing, replacement or removal of the chair or platform stair lift becomes the responsibility of the home owner. A maintenance or servicing checklist and programme will be provided by the stair lift supplier/installer.

Design/Technical Points about Chair or Platform Stair Lifts

1. Chair lifts are only suitable for people who can transfer on and off the chair, so are not likely to be a suitable long term option for people with deteriorating conditions.
2. Check the weight limit of the chair stair lift or a platform stair lift as they vary depending on the model.
3. Typically a flight of stairs needs to be 1 metre wide to provide sufficient space for other members of the household to use the stairs safely.
4. For curved staircases or multiple flights – the chair stair lift or platform stair lift needs to travel the whole length of the staircase, rather than just the straight parts.
5. A building consent is required when the chair or the platform rises over 1 metre above the ground. If a building consent is required, the cost of the consent is included in the total cost of the modification. Check if the supplier has a Council Consent Waiver.

When Considering Installing a Chair or Platform Stair Lift think about:

1. Which entrance is the most practical and cost effective entrance to modify, things like:
2. the least number of or design of the steps
3. the most commonly used entrance to where a vehicle can be parked
4. any environmental features such as the slope of the land.
5. The requirements that will influence the type of chair stair lift or a platform stair lift that could be used such as:
 - the weight and size of the equipment the person uses for a platform lift. the size and features of the mobility equipment the person uses. Allow for length of chair with footplates plus the overhang of the persons foot on the footplate. Consider the impact of elevating legrests, tilt'in'space and alternative power wheelchair driving functions. Consider the height of the push handles on the wheelchair in relation to the position of the safety arm when it is lowered. The number of people using the lift at the same time



eg wheelchair user plus carer.

- weight of the person using the chair lift
- sufficient space for the stair lift to make a turn at the top and/or bottom of the stairs
- sufficient 'head room' as the stair lift travels
- how the stair lift will be operated
- who needs to operate the stair lift
- if the person is able to transfer and safely sit on the chair now and long term

Note: You will need to specify the platform size (for a platform lift), operating requirements and lifting capacity to ensure a match is achieved between the needs and the features required.

6. If a Consultant is required to assist with design features of the lift where it is difficult to establish a match between the needs and the features of the lift required. A consultant may be required to work out what can be achieved and the use of a consultant needs to be approved by the EMS Provider. Any consultant fees and installation costs are included in the amount for the purposes of Income and Asset testing
7. The impact of the installation on access to existing steps, will people need to use the lift or another entrance?
8. Safety for children and pets in relation to moving parts and spaces under the chair stair or platform stair lift.

Ministry of Health EMS Funding Considerations

1. Funding is only available once for the same type of modification, therefore the modification recommended needs to meet the person's needs now and in the long term:
2. The person will need to be fully informed and agree that in accepting funding towards the access modification in this home they will not be eligible for funding for the same type of modification again in this or any other home.
3. It is helpful to understand from an EMS perspective when funding is being sought for modifying access to the home only (such as a chair or platform lift) consideration must also be given to the suitability of the inside of the home to meet the needs of the person now or in the long term (next 2 – 3 years):
4. Where potential internal modifications are:



- Non-complex – this is a straight forward situation
 - Complex (i.e. extensive internal modifications required to make it suitable) you will need to talk about this with the EMS Provider and the person to consider carefully if this home is suitable to meet their long term needs.
5. It is helpful to understand the difference between a housing modification vs. equipment vs. equipment included in a housing modification vs. housing equipment:
- A housing modification is a permanent / fixed alteration to the home. The housing modification becomes the home owner's property.
 - Equipment which is portable (able to be easily picked up and moved) and is not fixed to the home (and is applied for via an Equipment Application) and is owned by the Ministry of Health.
 - Equipment included in a housing modification is an item that is fixed to the home.
 - Housing equipment is equipment that is included in a housing modification that is removable and able to be refurbished for reissue to another person. The use of reissue housing equipment provides considerable savings to the Ministry of Health EMS budget.
- Note:** Generally housing equipment includes: 1m low rise platform lifts and modular ramps. The EMS Provider identifies if the equipment included in the housing modification application is considered as 'housing equipment' and will remain the property of the Ministry of Health or becomes the property of the home owner. Check with the EMS Provider for equipment such as stair chair lifts, stair platform lifts, 1.5m lifts, multi-floor lifts, ceiling track hoists, bidets, shower beds etc.
6. Funding can only cover one entrance to the home.
7. Funding is not available to provide covered protection from the weather. The cost of this will be the responsibility of the home owner.
8. The cost of a lift plus the installation costs (and any consent costs required) may mean that the lift is likely to cost over \$15,000.00 including GST. In these circumstances the criteria of a maximum \$15,000.00 including GST threshold for access modification into and between levels of the home will apply and a Cost Contribution process is required.

