

INFORMATION SHEET

# Assistive Technology / Equipment Joint Funding Ministries of Education and Health

## When should joint funding be considered?

Joint funding of high-cost (\$5000 including GST or more) assistive technology/equipment will be considered when one item of equipment helps the person live as safely and independently as possible, and also improves their access to the curriculum, removing barriers to educational achievement.

## What are benefits of considering one item of assistive technology/equipment that will support both the living and learning needs of the person?

The benefits of using one item rather than two include:

- the person and their family/whānau or support carer only having one item to learn to use
- better value for money.

In some cases two separate items may be more suitable.

## When is it appropriate to make a joint funding application?

Consider a joint funding application when:

- one piece of equipment will support both the living and learning needs of a person and the team agrees that this is the most appropriate option to meet identified needs
- the total value of the assistive technology/equipment is \$5,000 including GST or more
- health and education assessors have collaborated from the beginning of the assessment process.

## Examples of joint-funded assistive technology/equipment

- A power wheelchair with additional high/low or other features to enhance access to school environments and/or to support written communication
- A device that enables both written communication and face-to-face communication, reducing the need for multiple devices.

## What is each agency responsible for during the assessment, trial and funding process?

The responsibilities of each agency, as outlined in the Therapy and Assistive Technology/Equipment Operational Protocols, are shown in Table 10. Table 2 (in the Information Sheet) shows funding responsibilities using practical examples.

[Link to Therapy and Assistive Technology/Equipment Operational Protocols](#)

If funding is available, Ministry of Health assistive technology/equipment may be reissued (from Accessable, or Enable New Zealand) or Ministry of Education stores if available.

## How are joint funding applications completed?

The pathway for a joint funding application is outlined in diagram 1. A joint assessment with both health and education assessors is completed with one of the assessors typically taking the lead role.

The process will require completion of the joint funding application form and liaison with both agencies, including submitting relevant supporting information, such as pre- and post-trial outcomes or relevant equipment specification forms.

[Link to Joint Funding form](#)

### **How will the proportion of funding from each Ministry be calculated?**

The factors taken into account when determining the proportion of funding will include the:

- amount of time the person is going to use the item across all environments
- cost of alternative solutions such as support staff and other equipment
- cost of individual parts or components needed for each environment.

### **How are joint funded items prioritised?**

When joint funding is approved, the priority level of the item will be determined on a case by case basis considering the:

- individual needs of the person
- priority level recommended by the assessors
- availability of funding.

### **What happens to the assistive technology/equipment during a transition?**

Normal transition and asset transfer processes are applied for joint funded assistive technology/equipment when the person leaves

school or moves between schools. Please refer to respective agencies for assistance if required.

### **Who supports the ongoing maintenance and repair of assistive technology/equipment?**

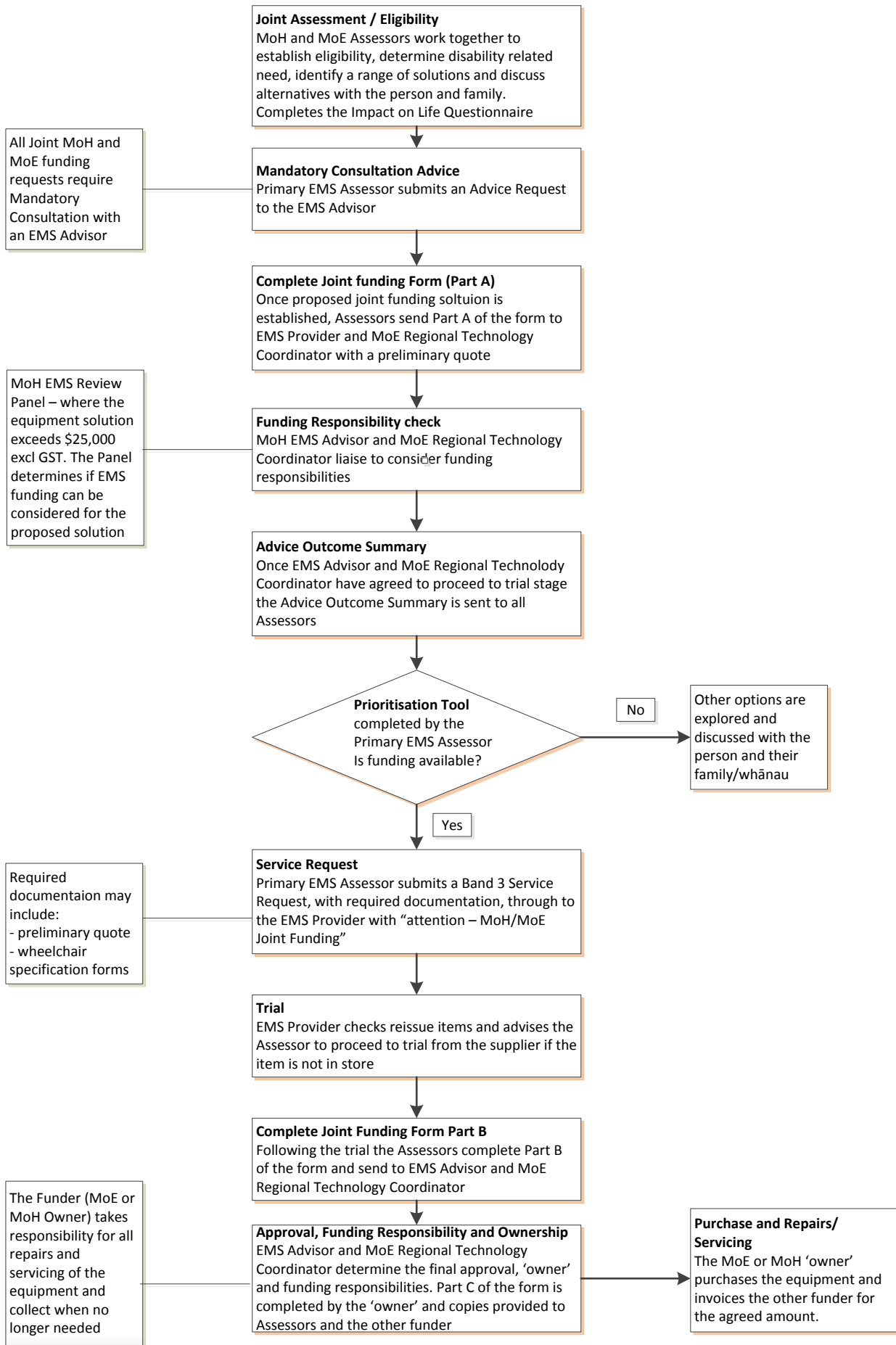
Generally, the agency making the greatest contribution to the purchase of the assistive technology/equipment will take responsibility for maintaining and repairing the equipment.

If you have any queries please contact:

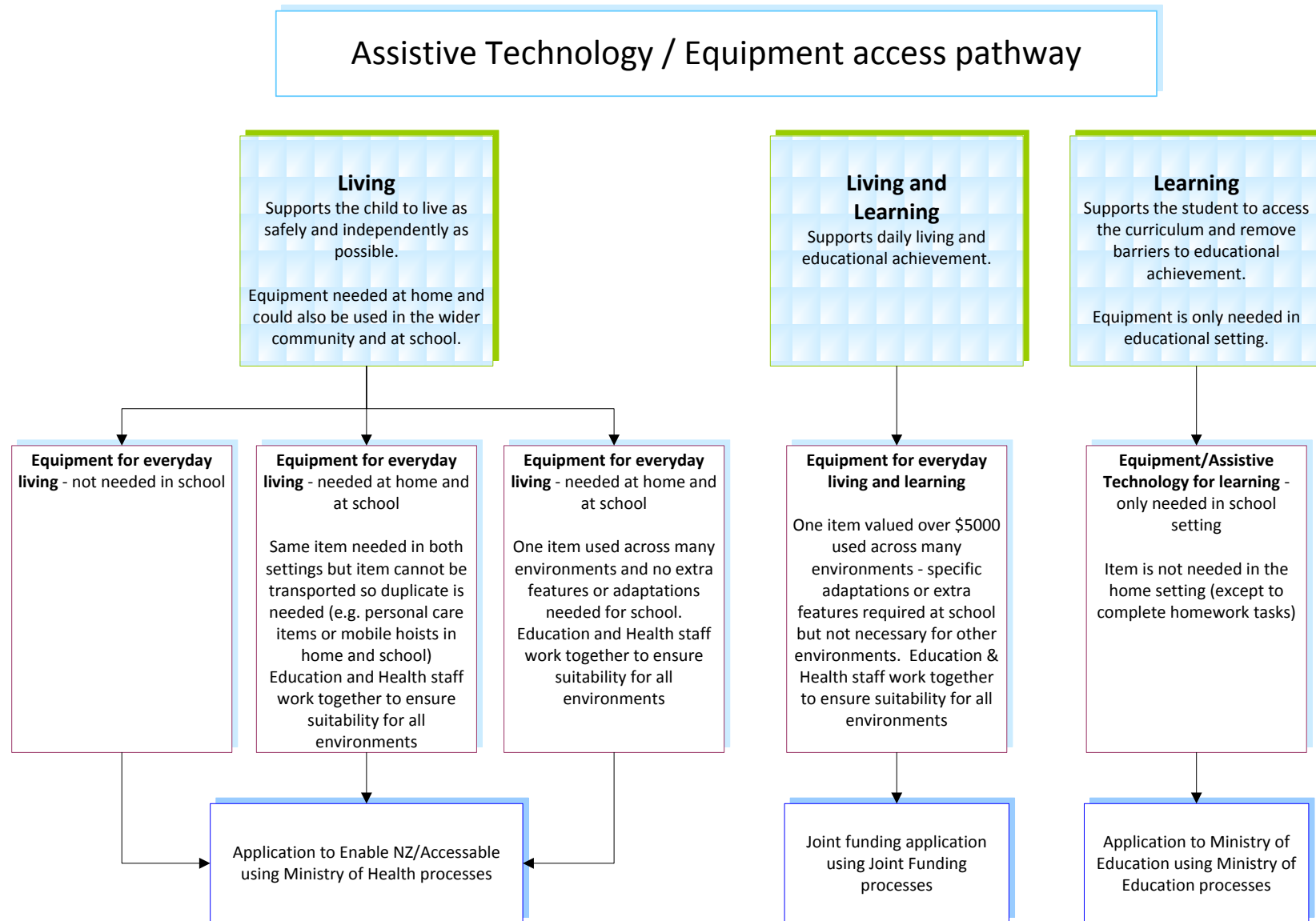
- District Assistive Technology Coordinator at your local Special Education office
- *Accessible* (Auckland, Northland) 0508 001 002
- Enable New Zealand (rest of New Zealand) 0800 171 995.

[Link to Special Education office contact list](#)

Diagram 1. Joint Funding Process MoH and MoE Equipment and Assistive Technology



**Diagram 2: Equipment/Assistive Technology Access Pathway**



**Table 1 - Assistive Technology/Equipment Funding Responsibilities**

Assistive technology/equipment - funding responsibilities				
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT		Ministry of Health	Ministry of Education	Joint Funding <b>Note: all joint applications must show collaboration from the outset</b>
	What is the primary need for the equipment?	To support the person in their daily living	To support the person in their learning	To support the person in both daily living and learning One equipment item with a total value of the item is \$5000 or more <sup>1</sup> , which will have different or additional features for use in both settings
	What will the equipment be used for?	To assist the person and/or their family or whānau to live as safely and independently as possible Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• face to face communication</li> <li>• personal care</li> <li>• wheelchair</li> <li>• standing frame</li> </ul>	To remove barriers to educational achievement Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written communication</li> <li>• physical access to classroom resources</li> <li>• alternative access to classroom resources</li> </ul>	To assist with independence and safety at home and in the community and accessing the curriculum Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• face to face and written communication</li> <li>• wheelchair with high/low features</li> </ul>
	Where will the equipment mainly be used?	All settings – at home, at school and, in some cases, in the community	Only in the school setting	All settings – at home, at school and in the community. Joint funding is defined by task, not setting.
	Who will undertake the assessment?	Equipment and Modification Service (EMS) Assessors	Education staff	Joint assessment with both health and education assessors and application to both agencies

<sup>1</sup> If the request meets the joint-funding criteria but the total value of the item is under \$5000 including GST, responsibility is determined by primary purpose. If the primary purpose is to remove barriers to educational achievement, the Ministry of Education retains responsibility. If the primary purpose is to help the person to live as safely and independently as possible, the Ministry of Health retains responsibility.

**Table 2- Assistive Technology/Equipment Funding Responsibilities**

This table provides examples based on the general principles of the operational protocols. However, all cases will be considered individually.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT		Ministry of Health is responsible for:	Ministry of Education is responsible for:	Joint funding Note: all joint applications must show collaboration from the outset
	Hoists	Personal care equipment at home and in the school (e.g. mobile hoist and sling to access toileting), unless the equipment is already available as part of the education property <sup>2</sup> Replacement slings for ceiling track hoist, if required for personal care due to a change of need or for use by additional students	Hoist (ceiling track or mobile) and sling as part of a school property modification if the person is eligible  Classroom hoists and sling in exceptional circumstances <sup>3</sup>  It is preferred that the person will have access to one hoist that can be moved throughout the school environment	n/a
	Wheelchairs	Home and daily living	In exceptional cases a power wheelchair for secondary students may be considered when needing to access difficult terrain. (It is expected that other management strategies are used for students in primary and intermediate schools)  Before starting an application, establish that this is not required as part of the person's general mobility needs	Power wheelchair with additional features to a base chair to meet school needs such as high/low features
	Seating	Home and daily living	Classroom seating when a normal seating system or normal classroom seating is inadequate	n/a
	Communication devices	Face-to-face communication	Written communication	Single device that meets both written and face-to-face communication needs <sup>4</sup>
	Standing Frames	One supplied for use at home or at school	n/a	n/a

<sup>2</sup> If the education property (e.g. hoist) is not appropriate, alternatives will need to be well justified.

<sup>3</sup> Where the person must be moved in and around the classroom AND where they can't be safely moved without a hoist due to factors such as weight (refer to ACC guidelines), or have a medical condition that means lifting isn't safe for the person (e.g. fragile bone conditions), tactile sensitivity or severe behaviour.

<sup>4</sup> This would only be joint funded when the single device was more appropriate for the person than two dedicated devices. Assessors should consider the person's need to communicate (face-to-face) when they are writing (versus the benefits and limitations of learning how to use two devices).