

Request for secondary mobility bases and/or seating options – Assessor information

This document relates to Ministry of Health funded solutions.

*‘Generally, only **one option** to enable a person to sit safely and comfortably is provided. Consideration may be given for a dedicated seating option to enable a person to eat and drink safely if these activities are not possible within their everyday seating.’* (Equipment and Modification Services Equipment Manual, 2014, 11.5.10).

‘A standard manual backup wheelchair can be considered for use by a person who has received a power wheelchair when the power wheelchair is not available’. (Equipment and Modifications Services Equipment Manual, 2014, 11.5.3).

- Provision of a standard manual back up chair is subject to MoH EMS criteria for essential need having been met.
- A standard manual back up chair is provided to be used when the power wheelchair has broken down and/or is with the technician for repairs and maintenance, it is not expected that a person will be independently mobile in this chair. It is anticipated that the manual back up chair is used infrequently and will meet the mobility and postural support needs of the person for a short duration of time.

It is anticipated that a Request for EMS Advice is submitted when a higher specification second mobility base and/or seating solution is being sought.

Consideration for provision of two mobility bases or a higher spec standard manual back up chair

Please consider:

- A scripted manual wheelchair **or** a power wheelchair is intended to be a person's primary means of mobility.
- When recommending a wheelchair for a person, factors like transport and access in and around the home need to be discussed and a plan implemented (if needed) before the wheelchair is issued to the person. The solution provided by EMS funding needs to meet MoH eligibility, access criteria and the person's primary mobility needs. This solution may not meet a person's entire mobility needs e.g. the solution provided may not meet their recreational mobility needs.
- When a person has mobility needs that do not meet MoH EMS eligibility and access criteria, alternative sources of funding need to be considered.
- For power wheelchair users, a plan needs to be discussed for when the power wheelchair is unavailable (e.g. is being serviced or repaired by the technician), particularly if the user is unable to self propel their back up manual chair.
- If a MoH funded power wheelchair is being used at school only, a standard back up manual chair can be provided for at use home and in the community.
- For people learning to independently drive a power wheelchair, consideration needs to be given to whether the power wheelchair is suitable as a primary chair. MoH EMS funding is to provide a person with functional mobility; it is not intended to provide 'training chairs' for therapy purposes or for people where independent driving is a long term goal.

Before consulting an EMS Advisor:

- The primary wheelchair needs to be reviewed in the first instance. Can the issues be managed with a change of seating, configuration or chair features?
- For example: can the set-up of a standard manual chair meet the specifications requested e.g. use of inclined seat/dump/rake vs. tilt in space?
- Is a referral to a vehicle assessor appropriate and/or has vehicle accessibility / transportation been considered?

Consideration of provision of a second seating system for use on the manual standard back up wheelchair

Before consulting an EMS Advisor:

- It is accepted that where able, the client or caregivers will swap the seating from the primary wheelchair to the standard manual back up wheelchair.
- Please consider how the seating is to be transferred between chairs (e.g. provision of additional brackets for back supports, additional Velcro).
- Please consider the frequency the manual standard back up wheelchair is used and/or the length of time the person needs to sit in the chair to ensure a cost effective solution is sourced. E.g. would adjustable back upholstery meet the clients need versus off the shelf back for this length of time?

Consideration of static positioning chair and/or indoor seating systems (e.g. fall out style chairs, lift out chairs)

- An indoor chair may be considered a person's 'primary' chair and they receive a standard manual wheelchair to access a 'reasonably parked' vehicle.
- Where a person is unable to be left unsupervised in bed due to their disability related need, or length of time in bed is not practical/reasonable.
- People who have limited sitting tolerance due to extremely high tone, where multiple configurations have been tried with the primary seating system and extenuating social circumstances exist.

Before consulting an EMS Advisor:

- Has the primary wheelchair been reviewed? Can the issues be managed with a change of seating, configuration or wheelchair features?
- Is there furniture already available in the home that may meet the need? (E.g. standard lazy boy style chair), this may be complemented with the use of a cushion (e.g. Roho transferred from manual chair) or by use of lying supports.
- Can the person spend some time on their bed?
- If a person is needing to spend a significant amount of time in bed for management of a pressure injury, can the bed be moved to allow for the person to be part of daily life e.g. in the lounge.

Ministry of Health. (2014). *Equipment and Modification Services Equipment Manual*.