

# Guideline - Request for secondary mobility bases and/or seating options

Useful information to consider when completing a Request for Advice - this document relates to Ministry of Health (MOH) funded solutions

It is anticipated that a Request for EMS Advice is submitted when a higher specification configurable second mobility base and/or seating solution is being sought. This is required in relation to Clarification of the Ministry's Policy – where the EMS assessor is uncertain as to whether the person meets the Ministry of Health eligibility requirements or the specific EMS access criteria.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/consultation-with-ems-advisor-v2-aug14.pdf>

## Consideration for provision of two mobility bases or a higher spec/configurable standard backup manual chair (MWC)

(A standard backup MWC is generally a basic chair with no or minimal adjustment within the frame i.e. not a replication of the primary chair)

*'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 (EMS) Manual, 2014, 11.5.10).*

*'A standard manual backup wheelchair can be considered for use by a person who has received a power wheelchair or when the is power wheelchair not available' (EMS Equipment Manual, 2014, 11.5.3).*

- A standard manual backup wheelchair (MWC) is provided and can be used when the power wheelchair (PWC) 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 standard backup MWC is used infrequently and will meet the mobility and postural support needs of the person for a short duration of time.
- Provision of a standard backup MWC is subject to MOH essential access criteria having been met.

### Before consulting an EMS Advisor, please consider:

- If a scripted MWC or a PWC is intended to be a person's primary means of mobility and does meet MOH eligibility and access criteria.
- 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.

- It is noted that this solution may not meet a person's entire mobility needs, e.g. the solution provided may not meet their recreational mobility needs.
- For PWC users, a plan needs to be discussed for when the PWC is unavailable (e.g. is being serviced or repaired by the technician), particularly if the user is unable to self-propel their standard backup MWC and/or is home alone for a significant period of time.
- If a MOH funded PWC is being used at school only, a standard backup MWC can be provided for at use home and in the community.
- For people learning to independently drive a PWC, consideration needs to be given to whether the PWC is suitable as a primary chair. MOH EMS funding is to provide a person with functional independent mobility; it is not intended to provide 'training chairs' for therapy purposes or for people where independent driving is a long-term goal.
- When a person has mobility needs that do not meet MOH EMS eligibility and access criteria, alternative sources of funding will need to be considered.

## **Consideration of provision of a second seating system for use on the standard backup MWC**

### **Before consulting an EMS Advisor, consider:**

- It is accepted that where able, the client or caregivers will swap the seating from the primary wheelchair to the standard backup MWC.
- Consider how the seating is to be transferred between chairs (e.g. provision of additional mounting hardware or back supports, additional Velcro).
- Consider the frequency the standard backup MWC 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 backup MWC 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, consider:

- 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 MWC) or by use of lying supports.
- Can the person spend some time on their bed as an alternative position?
- 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 main living area)

### Consideration of high low bases/ feeding chairs where a MWC is in place

*'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.**' (EMS Manual, 2014, 11.5.10).*

- Some buggies have the option of an indoor high/low base.
- Once the child reaches school age and/or a MWC is provided there is an expectation that the MWC would be used for indoor mobility and this would provide positioning for feeding.

### Before consulting an EMS Advisor, consider:

- Configuration of the MWC to ensure optimal positioning for feeding
- Transport to/from and access into the home to ensure the MWC can be used inside
- Transfers between the two seating systems and how this will be managed
- The time spent in the second seating solution and the impact this will have on positioning needs

Requests for advice are all reviewed on an individual, case by case basis. Genuine and exceptional circumstances need to exist for any second seating to be considered.

Cost effective equipment need to be considered in the first instance. This includes refurbished equipment or a band 1 or 2 MWC, seating or equipment solution (EMS Manual, 2014, 2.1). This might result in a refurbished solution similar to the chair or base that was requested.