

## Transportation within a vehicle

When travelling, transfer to the car seat if possible, rather than staying in your wheelchair. If the wheelchair user is a child who weighs less than 22kg, the wheelchair **must not** be used as a seat in a vehicle. If transfer to a child's car seat is not possible, an individual risk assessment should be completed with the child's medical and transportation team. Where the wheelchair user IS going to stay in the wheelchair during transit, the wheelchair must be properly secured using the wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint straps, **WTORS**, by a qualified transport operator. It is recommended that the wheelchair has a headrest when used in transport (NB these are not generally supplied by EBSWS).

## Insurance

We advise you to insure your NHS wheelchair and accessories, as you may be liable for any costs incurred due to damage/loss/theft. You may be able to add this to your existing house and contents policy for little or no extra cost.

## General maintenance

For all repairs, faults and servicing please contact our approved repairer, currently Millbrook Healthcare,

Tel: 0333 234 0303



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**Berkshire Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Manual wheelchairs...

## Guidelines for safe use



## Types of manual wheelchair?

There are two main types of manual wheelchair, self-propelling and attendant pushed.

### Some general recommendations are:

- Before using your wheelchair, check its general condition is satisfactory with no obvious cracks to the frame, loose bolts, wobbly push handles, damage to the belt or harness, that the brakes are effective and that the wheels turn freely with no damaged spokes
- Clean your wheelchair regularly with a soft, damp cloth and ordinary household cleaning products. Ideally dry it if it gets wet
- It is not advisable to take your wheelchair across wet grass, muddy terrain, sand or deep gravel as your chair may get stuck and/or its component parts may be damaged. Also take extra care on slippery surfaces such as wet cobbles or icy pavements
- When transferring in or out of your wheelchair, be sure to put the brakes on. Do not stand on the footplates – these can usually be swung out of the way
- If your wheelchair has pneumatic tyres, ensure they are kept correctly inflated
- If your wheelchair has the smaller front castors fitted, be aware they are more likely to get stuck at kerbs, drain covers and in floor grooves
- The hanging of loads, such as bags, from the back-posts or push handles will affect the stability of your chair and may cause it to tip backwards. This is especially the case with reclining backrests

### Remember

You must read the whole of your wheelchair user manual and take note of the warnings and limitations.

- Extended elevating leg-rests will also affect the stability of the wheelchair
- When you are sitting in your wheelchair, do not try to reach to the floor to pick things up or lean back over the top of the backrest, or the chair may tip
- Do not leave a wheelchair on a slope, even with the brake on

### Negotiating kerbs and gradients –

Wherever possible, mount and dismount footpaths via ramps or lowered kerbs. The manual states the maximum step you should attempt is 2.5cms. You may need to deactivate the anti-tippers before negotiating a step or kerb. Always approach the kerb head on and not at an angle.

- Always refer to the **official user manual** supplied with your wheelchair for the maximum safe slope that your wheelchair is suited for, which is usually between 6-8 degrees. Do not attempt to climb or descend slopes in excess of these figures. Before negotiating a gradient, please ensure that you are wearing your seat belt and/or harness if you have one. If your backrest reclines, make sure it is upright before ascending a gradient. When descending a slope, it is okay to have a small amount of recline on your seat as it will help your balance but once you are on the level your seat needs to be made upright again



### CAUTION!

Never attempt to climb or descend an incline where the surface is rough, wet or slippery (gravel, loose chippings, grass, rain, black ice, snow etc.).