



Disability Aids and Equipment

Introduction

Disability equipment can range from simple aids such as cordless kettle tippers and easy grip cutlery, through to more complex items such as specialist beds and stair lifts. Mobility aids and equipment can include items like walking sticks, wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

This guide provides information on how to get disability equipment for free from your local Health and Social Care Partnership, as well as buying, selling, hiring and donating equipment. It also explains where you can get advice on different equipment types.

If you are looking for information on how to adapt your home to make it more accessible, see our **Disabled Home Adaptations information guide** here (<https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/info-guide/disabled-home-adaptations/>)

Getting equipment from your local council or NHS

Your local council's Social Work department can provide equipment to individuals, following a care needs assessment.

An assessment must be carried out for anyone who appears to need a social care service, for example, if you are disabled, an older person, or have a long-term health condition. You can contact your council's Social Work department and ask for an assessment yourself, or you can ask someone like a relative or carer to ask for you.

To find the telephone number for your Social Work department, either contact our helpline or check online at: <https://www.mygov.scot/find-your-local-council>

The assessment is usually carried out by a care professional such as an Occupational Therapist and normally takes place in your own home. They will ask you about your circumstances and will look at how you manage day-to-day. They may recommend equipment to make life easier for you.

You may have to wait to be seen as waiting lists can be long and assessments are carried out depending on how urgently you need help.

If it counts as "free personal and nursing care" any equipment is free. Usually councils are unlikely to provide mobility scooters or stair lifts. We have a **guide on grant funding** here <https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/info-guide/grants-and-support/#overview> which may be useful if you need these items.

NHS wheelchairs

The NHS may provide you with a wheelchair, for example when you leave hospital. You can ask your GP or hospital consultant, NHS physiotherapist or occupational therapist to refer you for a wheelchair assessment. Each area has their own procedures and eligibility criteria to help them decide what type of wheelchair you'll receive and how quickly you receive it.



Buying new disability equipment

There are many local shops in Scotland where you can purchase specialist disability equipment. There are also lots of online shops where you can purchase equipment. To find a local supplier, either call us or search our **Scottish Disability Directory** here <https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/information-help-advice/scottish-disability-directory/> you may be entitled to VAT relief when buying disability equipment. For more information see our **VAT Exemption Guide** here <https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/info-guide/vat-exemption-on-disability-products/#overview>

If you're looking for a specialist piece of equipment that's not on the market, **REMAP** (<https://remap.org.uk/>) is a charity that designs, manufactures and supply individual equipment and adaptation solutions for disabled people where no commercial solutions currently exist.

Buying and selling secondhand equipment

There are a few ways to buy or sell secondhand disability equipment:

- check with your local disability supplier if they sell second hand or reconditioned equipment.
- ask a local disability organisation or club if they know of any local people or organisations looking to buy or sell equipment
- advertise locally through a newspaper, community centre or local library.
- buy or sell online; there are a number of websites where you can advertise or buy secondhand disability equipment such as:
 - **Disability Equipment Service** (<http://disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk/>) – listing equipment for sale is free of charge.
 - **Mobility Market**–(<http://www.themobilitymarket.co.uk/>) There is a fee to sell equipment.
 - **MobilityBuyers**– this company will buy secondhand disability equipment from you. Simply fill in their online form for a quote. Due to pickup costs from their premises in Preston, they tend to only buy Scooters and Power Chairs in Scotland.
 - General websites for advertising or buying products:
 - Gumtree** (<http://www.gumtree.com/>)
 - Ebay** (www.ebay.co.uk)
 - Facebook Marketplace** (<https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/>)
 - Preloved** (<https://www.preloved.co.uk/>)
 - **Freecycle**–(<http://groups.freecycle.org/>) This is a website where you can donate items for free/receive items for free.

Always be careful when buying or selling online. Buying privately does not give you as many consumer rights as buying from a trader. The product and service review



website 'Which?' have provided information about your shopping rights on an online marketplace **here**. <https://www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/advice/what-are-my-shopping-rights-on-an-online-marketplace-aJYw74W0H5fl>

Hiring disability equipment

Shopmobility

If you are going shopping or visiting local leisure facilities, you may be able to borrow or hire a wheelchair from the **Shopmobility Scheme** **here** <https://www.nfsuk.org/> There are Shopmobility outlets at locations throughout Scotland, often in shopping centres. You can hire manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs or powered scooters. Anyone with mobility problems can use the service- whether you have a long term disability or a broken leg.

Some shopmobility branches have also started hiring out wheelchairs for wider use than just in shopping centres.

To find Shopmobility schemes in your area, you can search on the **Shopmobility website** **here** <https://www.nfsuk.org/>

Hiring from disability equipment stores

Some disability equipment stores and online retailers also hire out wheelchairs and other disability equipment. If you are struggling to find a store local to you, you can call our helpline on 0300 323 9961 or email us at info@disabilityscot.org.uk

Equipment advice

If purchasing equipment independently, it is always best to get advice from a professional.

Lothian Disabled Living Centre (<https://www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/disabled-living-centre/>) based at the Astley Ainslie Hospital in Edinburgh, has a permanent exhibition of products and equipment with professional staff on hand to offer advice. Other independent living services across the country are available if you are referred by a health or care professional, and many professionals can provide advice.

The **Disabled Living Foundation** (<http://www.dlf.org.uk/>) run a website called **Living Made Easy** (<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/>) which provides free, impartial information on disability aids and equipment.

Care Information Scotland (<https://careinfoscotland.scot/>) has a telephone and website service providing information about care services, which includes equipment and home adaptations, for people living in Scotland. Their telephone number is **0800 011 3200**.

Rica produces a range of consumer reports to help when purchasing equipment such as bathing and daily living aids, mobility aids and cars.



Donating secondhand mobility aids and equipment

Do you want to donate a piece of disability equipment that you or your family no longer need? Due to health and safety regulations, it can be challenging to find organisations which will accept donations of secondhand equipment. We will list below some organisations which do take donations.

Before you donate, check whether you received the equipment from the NHS or your local council: they may want it back!

Organisations which will accept donations:

Wheels to Heal <https://www.wheelstoheal.org.uk/>

Wheels to Heal are a charity based in Glasgow which sends disability equipment to people in need, abroad. The equipment is mostly sent to countries in Asia and the Middle East such as Lebanon, Iraq and Bangladesh. Although they are based in Glasgow, they collect equipment from most areas in Scotland on a quarterly basis, and have locations where you can drop off equipment too.

You can donate items such as wheelchairs (manual and electric), zimmer frames, rollators, commodes, walking sticks, hoists, medical beds, shower chairs, and disability furniture.

To donate, contact them on:

Telephone Number: 03333 446259

Email: info@wheelstoheal.org.uk

Or fill in the online Equipment Donation form here

<https://www.wheelstoheal.org.uk/donate-equipment/>

Stairlift and mobility recycling here <https://stairliftrecycling.co.uk/>

Stairlift and Mobility Recycling is an organisation which takes donations of used stairlifts and mobility scooters, and sells them on at a reduced price. They will uninstall and uplift your stairlift or mobility scooter for free. However if you have a straight stairlift more than 7 years old or a curved stairlift over 3 years old, there will be a charge for the service. The organisation operates across all of mainland Scotland.

Telephone- 01535 612167

Email – info@stairliftrecycling.co.uk

Website- <https://stairliftrecycling.co.uk>

Freecycle <https://www.freecycle.org/>

This is a website where you can give items to individuals for free, and also receive items for free.

Medical beds and electrical rise/recliner Chairs

Wheels to Heal here <https://www.wheelstoheal.org.uk/> will take donations of Medical beds.

However, furniture items including beds and chairs can also be donated to charities specializing in used furniture. Not all organisations can take electrical equipment



such as Rise and Recliners, so be sure to check before dropping off any equipment.

Some examples of charities taking furniture include:

- **DEBRA** – <https://www.debra.org.uk/shop/list-of-fe-shops> British Skin Condition charity with furniture stores to donate to, as well as a home collection service.
- **Society of St Vincent de Paul** – <https://www.ssvpscotland.com/how-you-can-help/donate/> Scroll to the bottom of the page linked to download information on donating furniture to this Christian charity in the central belt.
- There are also many local projects such as:
- **The Edinburgh Furniture Initiative** <https://www.foursquare.org.uk/> run by the Homelessness Charity Four Square
Phone number: 0131 557 7900
Email: donations@foursquare.org.uk
- **Furniture Reuse Project**– <https://www.castlefurniture.org/furniture> Fife's Second Hand Furniture Charity
- Phone numbers: 01334 654445 (Cupar) or 01592 501068 (Glenrothes)
Email: enquiries@castlefurniture.org
- For help finding a local furniture project in your area, please call our helpline on **0300 323 9961**.

Walking sticks and crutches

Walking sticks and crutches will be accepted by many high street charity shops. Always check with a store before dropping off items.

For example, many **Red Cross Charity Shops**, (<https://www.redcross.org.uk/shop/find-a-charity-shop#%23>) will take these items.

Personal and home alarms

For information on alarms and monitors please call our helpline on 0300 323 9961.

Information last updated on **1 August 2024**. Please note that information may be subject to change. All information is provided in good faith but Disability Information Scotland does not endorse any product or service referred to within this resource.