

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Powered Wheelchair & Scooter Use Draft Guidelines September 2021

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Introduction

“A Fairer NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde 2020 - 2024”¹ details the ways in which NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde (NHSGGC) is fully committed to ensuring issues relating to equalities get addressed regardless of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socio-economic status and/or social class.

The legislative basis for this is The Equality Act 2010 which states that it is illegal to treat disabled people less favourably than anyone else in areas such as service provision and access. Public bodies, including NHS Boards must have;

“Due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities...The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities.”

(Equalities & Human Rights Commission [EHRC] 2016)

Having “due regard” for circumstances where a person requires to use a scooter to ease their access to NHSGGC buildings and services must be considered in relation to the broad purpose of the equality duty i.e. ease of access should only be promoted in direct connection to their safe and responsible use by scooter owners and, therefore, to the assurance of a safe environment for all users of NHSGGC buildings and services.

Scope

This guidance is intended for use across all of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde’s (NHSGGC) buildings and services by all powered wheelchair or scooter users. It is also intended for use by staff and members of the public who may be supporting a powered wheelchair or scooter user in relation to accessing NHSGGC buildings and services.

These guidelines are also not only intended to ensure the safe and accessible delivery of services for all those who require to use them (scooter users and non-

¹ <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/260193/eih-a-fairer-nhs-accessible.pdf>

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scooter users) but they are also intended to provide power wheelchair and scooter users with guidelines as to what NHSGGC considers responsible use of scooters within their premises.

Risk

Organisational risk associated with the use of powered wheelchair/scooters can be broken into 3 principle areas and their associated controls:

RISK	CONTROL
Reduced patient/public/employee access and non-compliance with legislation	Compliance with content of this policy including referring to and applying principle of The Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant policies (see appendix 1).
Impact of powered wheelchair/scooter use and its potential effect on others-	Safe and considered conduct by powered wheelchair/ scooter users (patients, public or members of staff) as set out within this policy.
Infection control	<p>Safe and considered conduct by powered wheelchair/scooter users (patients, public or members of staff) as set out within this policy.</p> <p>Due regard should be paid by powered wheelchair/scooter users to check cleanliness of their vehicle prior to entering premises/services[NHSGGC should make cleaning materials available as necessary] and NHSGGC should ensure application of infection control procedures where necessary.</p>

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General Information (Gov.UK 2019)

- Vehicle Classes (See Appendix 1)

Wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and scooters are split into three classes (this policy is concerned with vehicles in Class 2/Class 3);

Class 1 – Manual Wheelchairs

Class 2 - Powered Wheelchairs and Scooters

Legally these vehicles cannot be used on the road (except where there is not a pavement or to cross from one side to another) and have a maximum speed of 6.4 kph or 4mph. Within this category there is some variability of size with some wheelchairs/scooters being smaller and more compact than others.

Class 3 – Powered Wheelchairs and Other Outdoor Powered Vehicles Including Scooters

These can be used on the road, and have a maximum speed of 6.4 kph or 4mph off road, and 12.8 kph or 8mph on the road. They generally have features similar to Class 2 vehicles but tend to be larger and can be used on the roads, although they do not require a driving licence. They do, however, required to be registered with the DVLA and users are required to obey the Highway Code.

- Who Can Use Mobility Scooters/Powered Wheelchairs

Mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs should only be used if an individual has/is;

- ✓ trouble walking because of an injury, physical disability or medical condition
- ✓ demonstrating the vehicle before it's sold
- ✓ training a disabled user
- ✓ taking the vehicle to be or from maintenance/repair

- Eyesight Requirements For Driving Mobility Scooters Or Powered Wheelchairs

Legally, there is no eyesight requirement to drive mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs, but you should be able to read a car's registration number from a distance of 12.3 metres (40 feet) and users must check that they can do this on a regular basis. If this responsibility is not taken seriously, it is possible compensation would have to be paid in the event of an accident and poor eyesight was proven to be part of the cause.

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NHS Settings/Access

- Inpatient Services

As a matter of routine, patients who use powered wheelchairs and/or mobility scooters should be permitted and/or supported to use them during their hospital stays. If, however, the patient requires tests/treatments or requires to be in an area where the use of a larger vehicle inhibits their treatment and/or the use of that part of the building or service by other patients then alternative arrangements need to be made by negotiation with the patient concerned.

- Outpatient Area Or Primary Care

Generally, the use of powered wheelchairs and/or mobility scooters should be permitted and/or supported for a patient on their outpatient or primary care visits. If, however, the patient requires tests/treatment or requires to be in an area where the use of a larger vehicle inhibits their treatment or the use of that part of the building or service by other patients then alternative arrangements need to be made by negotiating with the patient concerned.

- Access

The Person in Charge (who this is will depend upon service and or buildings to be accessed) will decide if it is appropriate or not for a patient/visitor to be permitted and/or supported to use their powered wheelchair or scooter within a particular area. In making this decision, all Persons in Charge are expected to carefully consider the guidance set out below:

The Person in Charge needs to take account of the person's individual circumstances/reliance upon their powered wheelchair or scooter and the treatment they are there to have. This includes considering whether it is possible or not to provide that treatment whilst a powered wheelchair or scooter is in use.

Infection control and patient safety remain paramount. Full account needs to be taken of the impact use of such vehicles would have on the service area and other patients in relation to such issues.

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Any denial of a patient's use of their powered wheelchair or scooter needs to be accompanied by an appropriate plan of support to enable that person full access to their treatment and/or service (see section VI, below).

Responsibilities of NHSGGC Staff to Enable Access

If it is assessed as appropriate to enable a patient and/or visitor to use their powered wheelchair or scooter within NHSGGC premises, it is staff responsibility to ensure that ongoing account is taken of the impact use of the vehicle is having on the service area and other patients/visitors therein. Where it is considered necessary, staff are asked to remind users of powered wheelchairs or scooters of their responsibilities in relation to their use on NHSGGC premises (See Section VII below).

As previously indicated, any denial of a patient's use of their powered wheelchair or scooter needs to be accompanied by an appropriate plan of support to enable that person full access to their treatment and/or service. This may include offering the use of a manual wheelchair and assistance and also guidance on where a patient or visitor can park/leave their powered wheelchair or scooter whilst in NHSGGC premises. The circumstances of each site/service will need to be considered in relation to what can be arranged, therefore, plans of support will vary.

Responsibilities of Powered Wheelchair & Scooter Owners

Users of powered wheelchairs or scooters are advised that whilst in NHSGGC premises;

- The maximum speed at which mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can legally travel on footpaths/pedestrian areas is 4mph or 6.4 kph (average human walking speed is 3 to 4 mph or 4.8kph to 6.4 kph Healthline 2019). This speed is not appropriate within NHSGGC buildings and services, however and users of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs are requested to travel at a speed considerate of their surroundings i.e. approximately 2mph or 3kph.
- If in a space which requires reversing (e.g. out of a smaller lift), users of powered wheelchairs and/or scooters are required to use warning alarms [where fitted] or request assistance to ensure the safety of themselves and other users of NHSGGC buildings.

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- Users of powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters are required, at all times when within NHSGGC premises to be mindful of other patients, visitors and staff who need to be able to safely move about the premises.

N.B If a powered wheelchair or scooter user is considered to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (to the extent that they cannot comply with the behaviour of scooter/ motorised wheelchair users, as laid out in this guidance) they may be requested to leave NHSGGC premises.

Communication and Implementation Plan

A communication plan will be developed to support the launch and the promotion of these guidelines, targeting key staff members including:

- Frontline staff across all services
- Facilities Managers
- Practice Managers
- Person[s] in Charge
- Reception Staff
- H.R Staff
- Staff Disability Forum

Monitoring

Monitoring of this guidance will, generally, be by the routine monitoring of complaints via existing arrangements within Directorates or Partnerships.

Equality Impact Assessment

The final guidelines will be Equality Impact Assessed.

Review

These guidelines will be reviewed in three years or sooner if required.

Further advice regarding the application of these guidelines is available from the Equalities & Human Rights Manager:

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References

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<https://www.healthline.com/health/exercise-fitness/average-walking-speed>

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<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

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<https://www.wirralct.nhs.uk/attachments/article/158/Mobile%20Scooters%20Policy%20Version%201.pdf>

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Appendix 1

Motor Scooter Subsections

(Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust 2018)

Class 2 vehicles can be divided into subsections:

A. Micro scooters;

- Small and compact
- Designed to fit easily into a car boot
- Indoor and outdoor use
- Short distance range

B. Indoor/Outdoor Scooters;

- Three or four wheeled vehicles
- Indoor use
- Limited outdoor use on even surfaces
- Short/medium distance range
- Can be collapsed/dismantled for transporting

C. Outdoor Scooters

- Three or four wheeled vehicles
- Not for domestic use
- Outdoor use on uneven ground
- Medium/long distance range
- Can be dismantled for transporting

D. Buggies

- Four wheeled vehicles (car shaped)
- No indoor use
- Outdoor use including rough ground
- Medium/long distance range

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- Cannot be dismantled

E. Class 3 vehicles can be divided into:

Scooters;

- Three and four wheeled vehicles
- Not for domestic and indoor use
- Outdoor use including uneven ground
- Covers long distances

Buggies;

- Four wheeled vehicles (car shaped)
- Covers long distances
- Cannot be dismantled