

# Equipment

EQUIPMENT

The right equipment can play a vital part in helping to maintain your independence. There is a wide range of different types of equipment available to you from many different suppliers. Finding the right equipment to meet your needs has the potential to be a challenging and time-consuming task.

## Who can help me find the right equipment?

A relevant health professional can help you identify the right equipment for you, discuss what your goals are, and what equipment may help you achieve those goals. The relevant health professional will depend upon the type of equipment needed. They can include occupational therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, respiratory physicians and/or speech pathologists. If you are applying for funding to help pay for any new equipment, the health professional who prescribes the equipment will usually help you complete the funding applications required.

Whether you trial equipment by yourself or you have a health professional involved, it is important, where possible, to trial the equipment for as long as you can. When you trial equipment, use it in all the places you frequently go, and perform all the tasks you usually do each day. The longer you are able to trial the equipment, the better understanding you will have of its benefits and drawbacks, and what changes may need to be made. It is best to trial before you order or purchase your equipment, as once equipment has been provided it is more costly (and in some cases not possible) to make modifications.

Equipment prescription can often be a compromise, as there will be limitations on what options and accessories are available. It is important to prioritise what is important to you, as it is not always possible to meet all of your goals with one piece of equipment.

Adjustments and changes, even minor changes, to a piece of equipment can have a big impact on

how successfully it will meet your needs. Incorrect or inappropriate equipment can restrict your independence and cause problems such as pain, discomfort or pressure ulcers.

## Maintenance and replacement of equipment

Generally, the more carefully your equipment is maintained and cared for, the better it will perform and the longer it will last. This is especially true for any equipment that has moving parts, motors or electronic components. Most equipment will come with care instructions and maintenance schedules to help guide you on how often the equipment should be serviced. If you are unsure, contact the health professional who prescribed your equipment or the distributor.

## Who do I contact for repairs?

If you purchased your equipment privately or through attendant care one-off funding, you should contact the retailer you bought the equipment from for assistance with maintenance and repairs.

If PADP or Enable NSW has supplied your equipment, Enable NSW will assist with organising repairs.

If your equipment was purchased through Lifetime Care and Support, contact the authority for assistance with organising repairs - usually through the retailer.

If you happen to be out and about and get stuck with either a flat tyre or battery, the NRMA currently assists with replacing both these items in an emergency. A surcharge may be payable if you are not a member. It is a good idea to keep a spare tyre and tube in case of an emergency.



## Who can help prescribe my equipment in the community?

Equipment type	Who can prescribe in the community
Wheelchairs and Wheelchair Cushions	Specialist Seating Services through your Spinal Unit, Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists
Commodes and Commode Seats	Occupational Therapists
Equipment for Activities of Daily Living (ADL)	Occupational Therapists
Tilt Table	Physiotherapists
Mobility Aids	Physiotherapists
Environmental Control Units	Occupational Therapists
Continence Equipment	Registered Nurses, Continence Nurses, or Spinal Nurses
Wound Care Products	Registered Nurses and GP
Graduated Compression Stockings	Registered Nurses
Bed and Pressure Reducing Mattresses	Occupational Therapists
Hoist and Sling	Occupational Therapists
Sliding Board or Transfer Aids	Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists
Exercise Equipment	Physiotherapists

### How often should my equipment be reviewed?

Equipment should be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet your needs. If you have any significant changes to your function, weight or are uncomfortable using your equipment, it is important to arrange a review of your equipment. It may be necessary to make changes to increase comfort, maintain your independence or prevent health complications.

If your equipment is purchased by PADP/Enable NSW or purchased using one-off funding, be mindful that there are often waiting times associated with these schemes. Although not always possible, it is a good idea to take these waiting times into consideration when planning the replacement of your equipment.

### References and Further Resources

ParaQuad NSW: [www.paraquad.org.au](http://www.paraquad.org.au)  
(02) 8741 5600

ParaQuad's Community Support and Well-being Service  
(02) 8741 5674

NSW Spinal Specialist Seating Services

- Assistive Technology and Seating Service  
(02) 9887 5055
- Prince of Wales Seating Service (02) 9382 5286

Independent Living Centre NSW:  
[www.ilcnsw.asn.au](http://www.ilcnsw.asn.au) 1300 885 886

BrightSky Australia for product and clinical services  
[www.brightsky.com.au](http://www.brightsky.com.au) 1300 886 601

PADP/Enable NSW  
[www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au) 1300 362 253

Your local community health service/local prescribing therapists