



Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Policy

1. Purpose

The *Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Policy* sets out the mandatory requirements for Health Service Providers that provide clinical services inclusive of the provision of assistive technology for domestic use and home modifications to eligible patients.

The Policy ensures the consistent provision of assistive technology and home modifications in line with legislative requirements, the pursuit of equity, service based on assessed clinical need, and cost-effective use of resources.

The provision of assistive technology and home modifications must comply with relevant clinical and other standards/legislation, including Infection Control standards, the requirements of the [Therapeutic Goods Act 1989](#) and [Therapeutic Goods \(Medical Devices\) Regulations 2002](#) and the [Building Code of Australia](#).

This Policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Clinical Services Planning and Programs Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This Policy supersedes OD 0353/11 *WA Health – Provision of Aids, Equipment and Home Modifications Policy*.

2. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to all Health Service Providers that provide publicly funded clinical services.

To the extent that the requirements contained within this Policy are applicable to the services purchased from contracted health entities, Health Service Providers are responsible for ensuring these requirements are accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

3. Policy requirements

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the *Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Procedural Requirements* which outlines the mandatory procedures to be followed in assessment, prescription and provision of assistive technology and home modifications to eligible patients.

Health Service Providers must ensure that patients are provided with equitable access to assistive technology and home modifications on the basis of clinical need within an appropriate time frame, regardless of geographical location within WA.

3.1 Eligibility

In order to be considered eligible to receive assistive technology or home modifications, a patient must meet criteria 1 and 2.

1. Be a current or recently admitted or non-admitted public patient who receives services from a public or private hospital
2. Have been assessed by an appropriate Staff Member as requiring one or more items of assistive technology or home modifications in relation to the episode of care described in criteria 1, to:
 - aid recovery and/or achieve independence in activities of daily living
 - facilitate safe, effective and timely discharge
 - support the patient to continue living in the community.

Patients are not eligible to receive assistive technology or home modifications if they can obtain the required item from another service or program in an appropriate timeframe. Basic and essential assistive technology may be loaned for a negotiated period of time, until the required items are provided by another service or program.

Patients must meet residential circumstances eligibility criteria as outlined in section 3.2 of the [Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Procedural Requirements](#).

3.2 Categories of assistive technology and home modifications

This Policy applies to the following categories of assistive technology and home modifications.

Inclusions		
Bed assistive technology	Positioning and seating	Walking Aids
Communication aids	Personal hygiene	Wheeled mobility devices
Daily living	Transfer aids	Home modifications
Exclusions		
Consumable items	Continence Aids	Medical/biomedical equipment
Footwear	Implantable devices	Orthoses and prostheses

In addition to those considerations outlined in the *Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Procedural Requirements*, assistive technology and home modifications provided must meet the following criteria:

- be the most basic option that meets the assessed essential functional need of the patient
- be designed to meet the requirements of persons with a health need or disability and not widely used by persons without an illness or disability

3.3 Charges/fees

As per the [WA Health Patient Fees and Charges Manual](#), the following patients must not be charged for the provision of assistive technology and home modifications:

- Admitted patients
- Non-admitted patients

Health Service Providers will refer to the [WA Health Patient Fees and Charges Manual](#) for instruction regarding the recoup of costs associated with provision of assistive technology and home modifications from another service or program.

Retrospective funding or reimbursement must not be provided to patients, carers or a third party for assistive technology and home modifications purchased, hired or undertaken privately.

4. Compliance monitoring

Health Service Providers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy.

The System Manager will monitor compliance with this Policy by:

- Auditing Health Service Provider procedures as stipulated under the Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Procedural Requirements.
- Auditing Health Service Provider procedures within 12 months of any amendments to the Mandatory Policy or Procedural Requirements.

5. Related documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this Policy:

- [Provision of Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Procedural Requirements](#)

6. Supporting information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this Policy:

- [Assistive Technology Categories – example inclusions.](#)

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this Policy.

Term	Definition
Admitted patient	A patient who receives inpatient care as defined in the Admitted Patient Activity Data Business Rules July 2021 , Section 5.1 Admitted Activity.
Assistive Technology	Generally portable, movable or freestanding items that assist a person in maintaining or improving function or safety in activities of daily living.

	'Aids and equipment' may also be referred to as 'Assistive Technology'.
Basic	The most cost-effective option or the simplest solution required to address the clinical need whilst taking safety and standards into account.
Consumable items	Single use items such as wound care dressings and other items, bandages, needles, syringes, items for monitors or devices and which are not covered under other categories.
Continence aids	Products and/or items which assist a person to manage continence problems.
Domestic use	For use predominantly in the home and community environment. Assistive technology may be issued for trial and/or use in hospital prior to discharge.
Essential	The minimum required to address the functional needs of the patient within their home.
Footwear	Standard, specialised or customised shoes, shoe modifications or shoe inserts.
Home modification	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home installations - Items that generally require to be fixed in place to a wall, floor or other surface • Structural modifications - Structural changes to the layout or fixtures of a home.
Implantable devices	Items implanted with the intention to either reconstruct facial or body contours which have been damaged by trauma or disease or to correct a deformity which has been pathologically caused.
Medical/biomedical equipment	Items which are used to deliver medical or therapeutic treatment, or support physiological functions, such as nebulisers, ventilators, CPAP machines, renal dialysis machines, electrical stimulation and ultrasound.
Non-admitted patient	As defined in the Non-Admitted Patient Activity Data Business Rules July 2021 , section 5.7 Non-admitted patient.
Orthoses	An externally applied device used to modify the structural and/or functional characteristics of the neuromuscular skeletal systems, such as splints, braces, calipers, supports and compression garments. May be off-the shelf or customised.
Prostheses	An item that replaces or partially replaces a body part. It may or may not require surgical implantation. Examples include joint prostheses, artificial limbs, eye prosthesis, ear prosthesis, breast prosthesis and wigs. May be off-the-shelf or customised.

Provision	In the context of the Policy, provision of assistive technology refers to issuing an item/s on loan. The length of loan is determined by the HSP as per Mandatory Procedural Requirements section 3.4. Non-returnable assistive technology and home modifications are provided on a permanent basis and do not need to be returned, as per Mandatory Procedural Requirements section 3.4.
Recently admitted or non-admitted patient	A person is considered to be a recent patient in the period 3 months or less from the conclusion of their last relevant episode of care.
Staff Member	Staff Member has the same meaning as provided for in Part 1 section 6 of the <i>Health Services Act 2016</i> (a) an employee in the Health Service Provider; (b) a person engaged under a contract for services by the Health Service Provider.

8. Policy contact

Enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to:

Title: Chief Allied Health Officer
 Directorate: Clinical Excellence
 Email: CAHO.CED@health.wa.gov.au

9. Document control

Version	Published date	Effective from	Review date	Effective to	Amendment (s)
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10. Approval

Approval by	Nicole O'Keefe, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Governance, Department of Health
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