

Community Occupational Therapy Our guidelines in Moray 2024 for Home Adaptations and Specialist Equipment



Adapted from Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership

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INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are based on the recommendations made in the Scottish Government 'Guidance on the Provision of Equipment and Adaptations', which is a statutory guidance under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.

The guidelines aim to support people who need advice, equipment or changes to their home to be able to live independently.

They aim to:

- Make the process of providing equipment and adaptations consistent and equitable.
- Ensure you, your family and carers are at the centre of provision.
- Enable you, your family and carers to have choice and control in the process of assessment and support planning and have up to date and relevant information.

This document explains who we support and what types of equipment and adaptations we provide.

Who we support

We provide equipment and adaptations for people at risk who meet the following criteria.

- You are disabled as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act.
- You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.
- You live in Moray as defined in Moray's Policy Statement, Ordinary Residence. Care Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)
- You are struggling with everyday tasks and without this support there is a 'critical' or 'substantial' risk to your safety, health and independence.

This means one of our staff have assessed that you need intervention and without this input there is a high risk that you will come to harm and won't be able to do essential everyday tasks. This could mean you might not be able to go to the toilet, wash or dress yourself or access your home.

A full definition of 'critical' or 'substantial' risk is in Moray Council's Eligibility Criteria for service provision.

What happens when you contact us?

- If you feel that equipment or an adaptation to your home could help, you can refer to the service by contacting the Access Team
- One of the team may call to ask you some questions to find out how we can help.
- If you are eligible for support, you will be added to a waiting list - how long you will have to wait depends on how urgent your need is and how many other people are waiting.
- If your situation changes while you are waiting, please call us again.
- Once you get allocated a worker, they will arrange a time to come and visit you at home. If they think that an adaptation to your house or some equipment could help you, they will talk you through the next steps.

Choice and Self-Directed Support

You should be given as much choice as possible about your preferred solution as long as it is feasible, does not add to the cost and meets the outcomes identified by our assessment.

Self Directed Support options may be available in some circumstances; cases will be considered on an individual basis

Understanding your needs now and in the future

An important part of our assessment is understanding what is important to you and how you support yourself in your day-to-day life. This is known as self-management, and it is one of the Scottish Government's Health and Wellbeing priorities.

We will look at ways to help you help yourself as much as you can, supporting you to maintain or improve your abilities. This means that sometimes we will recommend exercise as well as lifestyle changes or refer you on to other services who can support you.

We will aim to provide equipment that supports you to maintain the physical ability you have rather than equipment that might reduce your levels of physical activity.

We may talk to you about:

- What's important to you, your family and your carers.
- What you are able to do and what you are struggling to do.
- Any risks to you being able to live independently both now and in the future.
- Any support you have (both paid and unpaid).

We may need to speak to your medical professional, with your permission, to help us understand your long-term needs, and those of your carer.

Life limiting illness: We would not generally recommend an adaptation if we will not be able to complete it in time to provide you with significant benefit.

Short-term condition: We will not fund an adaptation if your symptoms are likely to improve in less than 12 months. If you have a short-term condition that is likely to continue for more than 12 months we will usually only provide advice or equipment.

Recovery after surgery: We will not fund an adaptation if you are due to have surgery or are in an active rehabilitation programme as your function should hopefully improve. We may review your situation following your surgery and post-operative recovery period.

Changes in circumstance: We will recommend removing any equipment and adaptations if, following a re-assessment, there is considerable risk to you and/or your carers.

Going on holiday: We will not provide equipment as we are unable to safely assess the environment.

Unsafe use: Though OT input will be aimed at increasing independence and facilitate positive risk taking, an OT will not knowingly prescribe a piece of equipment or adaptation when they know that this may cause harm, increase risk or be used in an unsafe way.

Carers: If you receive care and support from another person, their views and needs will be taken into account during the assessment process

Assessing your home

The Scottish Government requires us to discuss alternative housing options at the earliest possible opportunity. If your home is not going to be suitable to meet your long-term needs, you may need to look at alternative housing as we will NOT adapt your home.

We will NOT adapt your home:

If health and safety regulations mean we cannot do this safely;

- If we cannot find a cost-effective solution when compared with other options that are available
- If your home is scheduled for demolition or in a state of serious disrepair;
- If you live in a static caravan;
- If you are looking to move home;
- If you move from a home which has been adapted for you to a home which needs to be adapted unless there is a reasonable rationale behind the move;
- If you move into a home that has been adapted for someone else, we will not remove the adaptation unless previously agreed;
- If you don't have basic amenities (e.g. toilets or sinks) we will not provide these;
- If you live in a housing association home and your landlord can offer an alternative home that meets your needs;
- We will not provide alternative heating or alterations to heating systems.
- Additional rooms & extensions

We will always consider other options before recommending an additional room or extension.

These might include:

- Moving to a more suitable home.
- Stair lifts or through floor lifts.

If an additional room or extension is recommended, we will work with the architect and the Housing Team (for Council tenants), the Housing Association (for Housing Association tenants) and Environmental Health (if you own your home).

If you live in more than one home

- If you are cared for permanently in two settings on a regular basis, and you are a resident in Moray for a substantial part of each year, we will consider adapting your property in Moray.
- If you make significant use of two properties in Moray, we will consider adaptations for your own home first. We will not recommend major adaptations for your second property.
- If the service user is a child who has a Court ordered Dual Parental Responsibility in place and requires adaptation to both properties.

Getting help moving

If you live in a council house you can contact the Housing Services Team who can help you find a suitable house.

0300 123 4566

housing@moray.gov.uk

You may also find our online housing guide useful.

Permissions, Maintenance & Decorating

The homeowner/landlord must give permission for any adaptation, and if it is for a communal area we have a majority consent of those affected. Adaptations in communal areas should not affect other's use of the area or add hazards. For example, a Stairlift in a communal staircase would affect people using the area in an emergency and be a trip hazard.

Maintenance and removal of all equipment and/or adaptations are the responsibility of the home owner/landlord - this includes any associated decorating.

The exception to this is Straight Stair lifts and Ceiling Track Hoist systems - see relevant section.

Funding

Funding for major adaptations depends on who owns your home.

- If you own your home or rent a home privately, we may be able to support you to apply for a Home Improvement Grant.
- To apply, an Occupational Therapist from Health and Social Care must agree the work in writing.
- If you live in a Council or Housing Association property the landlord will normally fund the adaptation.
- The final decision on whether an adaptation takes place will lie with owners of the property.

We will always recommend the most cost-effective solution. If you would like a more expensive option, you are responsible for paying for the extra cost. This must still be a safe and functionally appropriate option that is agreed by the assessing Occupational Therapist.

We generally do not provide small equipment which is widely available to purchase such as small kitchen aids, bathing aids or shoehorns. However these may be provided in exceptional circumstance to aid acute recovery or reduce care needs.

You can also contact 0300 123 45 63 and ask to be referred to our Welfare Benefits Team to ensure you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

OUTSIDE

Paths

- ✓ If you use a wheelchair and a path in your property is unsafe for you to use we will make the path safe so you can access the community.
- ✗ We will not fit rails along paths as it is expected you will use mobility equipment if you have difficulty walking along the path. It is the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord to provide, repair or replace existing rails.
- ✗ We will not create a path or provide rails to access features in the garden such as a washing line.

Driveways & driving

- ✗ We do not adapt or create driveways
- ✗ If you require to drop a kerb the homeowner/landlord will need to seek permission from Roads Permits and Permissions Services to drop the kerb for you.
- ✗ We will not provide painted road markings (disabled parking bay).
- ✗ We will not provide adaptations to cars, provide car seats and/or car harnesses
- ✗ We will not provide storage for wheelchairs and scooters.
- ✗ We will not provide access solutions for privately purchased mobility scooters.

Access

Steps

- ✓ We will alter steps at ONE access point to your house. This will be the access point which is the most cost-effective solution to allow you to access the community.
- ✓ We will make steps wider or shallower to make them easier to use. We will need written permission from other owners if the steps provide access to a communal area.
- ✓ We will not modify steps if you have a medical condition which is likely to deteriorate.
Rails at the door
- ✓ We will ensure you have one accessible access point to your home if its feasibly possible to do so. We may consider installing a second rail to the back door in exceptional circumstances where there is a safety risk which cannot be reasonably avoided.
- ✓ We will fit two rails if you are at significant risk without support on both sides

Ramps

- ✓ We will only consider a ramp if you meet the criteria for a wheelchair from the NHS and all the main areas of your house (i.e. bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and living room) are wheelchair accessible or can be made accessible.
- ✓ We will ensure you have one accessible access point to your home if its feasibly possible to do so. This will be the access point which is the most cost-effective solution to allow you to access the community. We will aim to support you to access the property independently, however this might not be feasible in all situations. In these situations, we will then aim to support you to access the property with assistance.
- ✗ We will not fit a ramp, shelter, or charging facilities for a battery powered scooter which has been purchased privately.

A building warrant may be needed to fix or remove a ramp. The homeowner/landlord is responsible for getting this.

Gates

- ✗ We will not fit external fences and/or external gates

FRONT DOOR

Keysafe & Locks

- ✘ We will not provide or fit a keysafe (a secure storage box for keys accessed via a keypad).
- ✘ We will not change or provide locks to doors - this is the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord
- ✘ We will not provide window restrictors - this is the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord

Door Entry phone

- ✘ We do not fit Door Entry Phones (an intercom system to speak to visitors at the door and remotely open an external door and/or door to an apartment). We would advise a key safe is fitted for care staff to use.

Door opening device

- ✔ We will fit a door opening device (a radio controlled device that can unlock, open and close a door) if you are physically unable to open or close a door and can operate the device safely.
- ✔ We will fit a door opening device if you are alone for long periods each day and need to come and go into your property independently.

STAIRS

Bannisters

- ✓ The homeowner/landlord is responsible for ensuring internal stairs have one bannister.
- ✓ We will replace a bannister if there is only one and it does not offer suitable support.
- ✓ We will add a bannister if you need support on both sides.

Stairlift

- ✓ We will fit a stairlift (a powered lift that transports you over a set of stairs in a seated or supported position) if you cannot use stairs, even with a walking aid or additional bannister or if your carer is at risk due to the amount of help you need to use the stairs.
- ✓ We will fit a stairlift if you can use it safely on your own or with a carer who lives with you.
- ✓ We will fit a stairlift if it is an appropriate and cost-effective way to access your bedroom and bathroom upstairs.
- ✓ We will fit a stairlift if, according to health and safety standards, there is enough space at the top and bottom of the stairs for you to get on and off the lift, either on your own or with support.

Straight stairlifts remain the property of Moray Council, and require a signed service agreement for maintenance (DS1500 exempt). When no longer required, Moray Council will arrange for uplift of this equipment.

Curved stairlifts are installed via Grant funding, and maintenance, repair and removal is the homeowner/landlords responsibility.

- ✗ We will not fit a stairlift if you can use a downstairs room as a bedroom and have access to a downstairs bathroom.
- ✗ We will not fit a stairlift on a communal stair.

If we have to move or remove a radiator, bannister or other items to fit a Stairlift, the cost of redecoration will not be supported where these items were originally placed. This remains the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord.

If the stairlift is subsequently removed, the items will not be re-sited to its original position. Provision for replacing floor coverings or redecoration will remain the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord.

Any costs incurred due to redecoration or replacing carpet on the stairs while the stairlift is in situ will be the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord.

BATHROOMS

Toilet Seat or Frame

- ✓ We will provide equipment such as a toilet seat or frame to maintain your safety and independence.

Rails

- ✓ We will fit a rail beside a toilet if a toilet seat or frame is not suitable or we assess that this is required for your safety.

Specialist Toilet

- ✓ We will fit a specialist toilet if you are unable to maintain hygiene independently after toileting due to your functional loss and further equipment is inappropriate.
- ✓ We will fit a specialist toilet if assistance from carers is unavailable or inappropriate and provision of the toilet will give the client an appreciable degree of independent in toileting.

Overbath Showers

- ✓ We will fit an overbath shower if your carer is at risk when helping you in the bath
- ✓ We will fit an overbath shower if other members of the household need to use a bath.
- ✗ We will not fit an overbath shower if there is a significant risk associated with bathing and submersion in water.

Level Access Showers

This is when the floor in your bathroom is formed to slope towards a drain and covered in non-slip flooring. The area can be surrounded by a full-length shower curtain or half height doors if assessed as suitable and safe by a professional.

- ✓ We will provide a Level access shower adaptation if you are unable to transfer safely in/out of the existing bath/shower.
- ✓ We will provide a Level Access Shower if equipment has been trialled and deemed as unsuccessful by the assessing professional.
- ✗ We will not provide a Level Access Shower Adaptation if the property is otherwise unsuitable for long term needs or there is an active application for rehousing.
- ✗ We will not cover or redecorate areas outwith the immediate shower area.

Specialist bath

- ✓ We do not provide specialist baths.

HOISTS & FURNITURE

Hoists

- ✓ We will only fit a ceiling track hoist or a gantry hoist if a mobile hoist or other moving and handling equipment is deemed unsuitable.
- ✓ Moray Council provide ceiling track hoists for council, private and housing association properties. In private rented and housing association properties written permission from the landlord is required.
- ✗ We will not fit a ceiling track hoist if there is not adequate space to safely do so. There must be sufficient circulation space for carers to safely support as and when required.
- ✓ Moray Council will service and maintain Ceiling Track Hoists for free every 6 months.
- ✗ Moray council are responsible for removing ceiling track hoists, but the homeowner/ landlord are responsible for redecorating as there will be residual marks.

Specialist Chairs

- ✓ We will only provide a specialist chair if a rise/recline chair is unsuitable.
- ✓ We will provide a specialist chair to provide postural support and if you require maximum assistance or hoisting to transfer from the chair.
- ✓ We will also provide one if nursing needs such as pressure care cannot be met using a rise recliner chair
- ✓ We only provide rise recline chairs for people who are end of life care or when formal care needs can be decreased by this equipment.
- ✗ We do not provide floor fixing furniture or robust specialist chairs for those with challenging behaviour.

KITCHENS

- ✓ We will modify your kitchen if you are a wheelchair user and/or have substantial and permanent mobility problems and your kitchen is not suitable for your needs and your property is otherwise long term suitable.
- ✓ We will reuse/adapt existing kitchen units where possible.
- ✓ We will fit accessible overhead units if we cannot re-site white goods or utensils lower down.
- ✓ The extent of the adaptation will depend on who is the predominant user of the kitchen. If you only use the kitchen minimally, we may only support access to the kitchen, and a single accessible work surface. If you are the predominant user of the kitchen, we will support access to the sink, oven, hob and one work surface. The provision of this adaptation would need to facilitate independence with meal preparation, without carer support. We will support mechanical devices to raise and lower kitchen surfaces only when all other options have been explored and there are other people, who are predominant users of the kitchen, that require a different height of kitchen surface.
- ✓ We will fit a splash back around the sink and cooker using the most cost-effective option. If you would like a more expensive solution or other decorative options, you will be required to pay the difference in cost.
- ✗ We will not cover the cost of replacement white goods or domestic appliances - only the cost of the alterations.
- ✗ We will not support a kitchen adaptation to manage safety or behavioural needs.

SAFETY

Internal gates (wood/metal)

- ✘ We will not provide safety gates

Fire/Radiator Guards

- ✘ We will not provide fire/radiator guards.
- ✘ We will not complete adaptations or provide equipment for the sole purpose to support fire evacuation.
The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are able to offer a free home safety check and consultation.

Locks

- ✘ We will not provide locks; this is the responsibility of the homeowner/landlord.
Cars
- ✘ We will not provide adaptations to cars, car seats or harnesses.
Safe spaces
- ✘ We will not provide robust furniture, alternative flooring or safe spaces.