

CECOPS AND THE NEW CODE OF PRACTICE: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

The new revision to the CECOPS (Community Equipment Code of Practice Scheme) code of practice will now cover all disability equipment services across the UK, specifically including wheelchair and seating services. It is hoped the new code will be available early February 2015 as either an eBook or a hard copy.

ABOUT CECOPS CIC

CECOPS is a not for profit community interest company and is the responsible 'body' for administering the code of practice registration and accreditation scheme. CECOPS is completely independent from suppliers and central government. Currently, approximately 30 NHS organisations and local authorities are working with CECOPS, and many suppliers and independent therapists are CECOPS registered.

ABOUT THE CODE OF PRACTICE

The new code of practice covers the commissioning, provision, and clinical and technical aspects of services. It is made up of 47 measurable outcomes. The code covers everything relating to statutory provision of disability equipment and wheelchairs, including user involvement, governance, joint working, eligibility criteria, funding, operational management, performance, training, assessments, and risk management. It also includes peripheral issues like hospital discharges. It focuses on what needs to be done, with suggestions for how to do it.

HOW CECOPS WORKS

Organisations can register with CECOPS either voluntarily or as requested by commissioning authorities (in tenders, for example). Registration is an organisation's public declaration that it is adhering to the principles of our code of practice.

Organisations can also become accredited. This is via an external assessment by DNV-GL Healthcare (<http://www.dnv.co.uk/>), world leaders in quality and risk management. Again, this can be done voluntarily or in response to commissioning requests.

An approved training scheme is in place; you can become a CECOPS approved trainer yourself and train your staff or colleagues, or organisations can have their staff trained by another CECOPS approved trainer. All of this has been up and running for most disability equipment services, and will be extended to wheelchair and seating services from January/February 2015.

NEW SELF-EVALUATION SOFTWARE

CECOPS is supporting the development of self-evaluation software, iCOPS®, for commissioning, provision, and for clinical aspects of disability equipment, wheelchair, and seating services. This simple tool helps to measure and improve the overall effectiveness and performance of services. iCOPS® is a powerful tool for building on strengths and looking at why there might be weaknesses, therefore helping to drive continuous improvement. iCOPS® will be ready in February 2015 and will be available at: www.icops.co.uk or from the CECOPS website.

THE BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH CECOPS AND THE NEW CODE OF PRACTICE

Because the code covers the activities of commissioners, providers, and clinicians, the benefits are far reaching and include:

- ✓ Provides a common benchmark for all related services throughout the UK
- ✓ Allows quality, safety, and performance improvements to be driven at local level
- ✓ Supports seamless care pathways across equipment related services, breaking down artificial 'silos' and addressing age long inherent problems such as rigid eligibility criteria and restrictive assessments
- ✓ Generates efficiencies by avoiding costlier secondary episodes of care and promoting smarter procurement

For providers and commissioners:

- ✓ Enables legal, regulatory, and welfare obligations to be met in one place
- ✓ Provides a ready-made template for commissioners and providers, and a tool for tendering and managing contracts
- ✓ Helps to identify weaknesses within the system and drive improvements, e.g. links with public health to understand underlying need, funding matching activity, and joint working

For staff:

- ✓ Provides assurance that staff at all levels are competent
- ✓ Supports staff with the skills to deliver integrated equipment provision

For users

- ✓ Provides a standard service users can expect to receive
- ✓ Involves service users in decisions and service design
- ✓ Promotes a holistic and person-centred approach, and allows anticipatory, 'whole-life' needs to be met
- ✓ Provides a means of identifying good service providers

CECOPS aims to work with all organisations in the UK that commission, provide, or assess for disability equipment or wheelchairs in order to drive up standards and improve service user experiences nationally.

We are grateful to Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, who has written a foreword for the new code of practice.

The work of CECOPS has been supported by regulators, professional bodies, and associations.

"HSE recognises the need for guidance, and welcomes the Code of Practice..." Health and Safety Executive

"National Wheelchair Managers' Forum (NWMF) is very excited to be working with Brian to develop the Code of Practice for Wheelchair Services. This is long overdue and will further enhance the Healthcare Standards for NHS Commissioned Wheelchair Services developed by the NWMF,

creating a benchmark and evaluation process to ensure patients are receiving a good standard of care and service delivery.” Krys Jarvis, Chairperson, NWMF

I am pleased to have been personally involved in NHS England’s current wheelchair review; I am confident the work of CECOPS and the new code meet the objectives of this review and of all other relevant reviews carried out over recent times in other parts of the UK.

To find out more information and to keep up to date with developments, please contact CECOPS:

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Brian is the founder and chief executive of CECOPS CIC, and is a member of the PMG Education & Training Committee.