

Joint Funded Seating

Alex Hadayah

Barts Health NHS Trust, London

Summary

Whizz-Kidz, in collaboration with Barts Health NHS Trust and Tower Hamlets Health and Social Care and Educational Services, is proposing setting up a project to jointly fund seating equipment and related accessories. The beneficiaries will be children and adults with a permanent disability or medical condition that significantly impacts on their mobility, their activity levels and participation. Potential beneficiaries must meet the criteria for provision from more than one of the participating organisations, and must be resident in the borough of Tower Hamlets or registered with a GP in the borough.

Aims & Objectives

The project will include:

- Where indicated, joint seating assessments by Whizz-Kidz Tower Hamlets wheelchair service therapists, Barts Health community therapists and/or Tower Hamlets Council therapists
- Joint funding, repair and maintenance of recommended equipment according to agreed criteria and product matrix
- Joint co-ordination and management of the overall process, including administration, monitoring, review and evaluation

Background

The Tower Hamlets wheelchair service is currently delivered by Whizz-Mobility Community Interest Company (CIC) - Whizz-Kidz. Whizz-Kidz, on behalf of Barts Health NHS Trust, serves around 4,500 children and adults with permanent disabilities or health conditions resulting in mobility impairments and requiring a wheelchair for daily mobility. Many of the clients will receive services from multiple teams, such as Social Services, Education, Long Term Conditions, Neurology, resulting in a multitude of assessments and provision of several pieces of equipment to meet their needs.

The borough of Tower Hamlets is the second most densely populated borough in London (Tower Hamlets Council 2013) with often very confined housing/limited storage, and difficulties in accommodating the required assistive devices, such as wheelchairs and/or static supportive seating. In addition, multiple seating solutions result in increased transfers and manual handling, posing an additional burden on the client and carers. For clients requiring a more specialist solution, there is also a risk of secondary complications such as pressure ulcers, discomfort, breathing and/or eating and drinking difficulties, as well as contractures and deformities if their postural/seating needs are not met appropriately.

Discussion

- Pooled resources in order to identify and provide single seating solutions and related accessories where appropriate and beneficial for the client
- Increased information sharing, minimizing repetition of assessments and improving person centred care/education and healthcare plans
- Improved quality of care due to pooled knowledge and resources, maximizing independence, health and wellbeing of clients and minimising further secondary complications

References

Population Key Facts, a profile of the population of Tower Hamlets (Tower Hamlets Council, 2013)