



wheelchair user guide

VERSION FOR RELATIVES AND VISITORS

1 CHECK THE CHAIR

Before the resident gets into the chair check the following:

- Tyres are in good order
- Brakes are working
- The legs rest are swung to the side with foot plates facing up
- The seats is fully opened up
- Ensure a cushion is always be used in a wheelchair to aid comfort, pressure relief and to aid shock absorption.
- Is a pressure relieving cushion used? Ensure it is the right way round
- Check any other supports are in place e.g. side supports, non-slip mats placed the right way round
- Is the chair approximately the correct width i.e. not too tight and not too wide that the arm rests are not too far out

Width: Distance between armrests of the chair

Depth: is the dimension from the edge of the front of the seat to the front of the back cushion.

2 GETTING INTO THE CHAIR

- Check with staff the correct means of transfer i.e. hoist, use of a walking aid, with the help of one or two staff, independent, etc.
- Inform the resident what you are doing and how you will do it
- Position the wheelchair at the correct angle to transfer. This is usually at 90 degrees to the other chair or bed but sometimes it is alongside or opposite. If unsure ask staff
- Put the brakes on
- Transfer the resident and make sure they are sitting fully back in the chair
- Assist in rearranging clothes if necessary
- Ensure side supports are the right way around and positioned correctly
- Swing forward the leg rests and “click” them into place. Ensure feet are positioned correctly and that heel loops are in place / pushed back if present. Ensure the calf strap is at right height if used

3 MOVING OFF

- Check that the residents arms are positioned on or within the armrests
- Inform the resident what you are doing/ where you are going
- For safety but not to stop someone getting out of the chair always apply the lap strap if you are moving the resident in the wheelchair
- Ensure the lap strap is undone when stopped, unless an assessment has been done by staff too say it should stay done up
- Release the brakes. Proceed to push the wheelchair with care and consideration for the resident and those around you. Do not walk too fast



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#4 PUSHING THE CHAIR

- When pushing the wheelchair take the effort through your legs and arms not through your back
- Be cautious if you have back/abdominal condition
- Most people find it best to keep the chair close to their body when pushing
- If going outside keep to the middle of the path
- If going up a kerb, put your foot on the lever at the back base of the chair to help with tilting the chair, then **push** it forwards rather than lifting it
- If going down a kerb, or a steep slope, it is preferable to go backwards. Be careful not to twist your back and be very cautious on or near roads

5 GETTING OUT OF THE CHAIR

- Check with staff the best means of transfer, as in #2
- Inform the resident what is happening
- Position the wheelchair as in #2
- Put breaks on
- Swing away the leg rests and flip up the foot plates
- Transfer the resident
- Ensure all belongings are taken from the chair

The following guidelines are to ensure the safety of residents, staff, relatives, volunteers and other users of manual wheelchairs at Nightingale.

Additional considerations may apply to customised private wheelchairs and powered wheelchairs.



If you need further advice, or there are any faults with the chair please ask the staff on the unit or contact Nightingale Occupational Therapy on:

Phone: 020 8673 3495

Extension: 2307

Email: therapyunit@nightingale.org.uk