



# Personal Wheelchair Budgets

## Patient Information

### NHS commissioning organisations:

NHS Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)  
NHS Guildford and Waverley CCG  
NHS North West Surrey CCG  
NHS East Surrey CCG  
NHS Surrey Heath CCG  
NHS North East Hampshire and Farnham CCG

virgin<sup>care</sup> 

**NHS**

## **Personal Wheelchair Budgets (PWB)**

This booklet has been jointly written by our Wheelchair Service providers, NHS commissioners and service users to help you understand Personal Wheelchair Budgets (PWB) and answer some frequently asked questions.

The PWB scheme was launched by NHS England in 2017 and is to be offered by all national wheelchair services to replace wheelchair vouchers.

The Personal Wheelchair Budget has been designed to provide you with greater choice regarding your wheelchair provision. This scheme has replaced the previous Wheelchair Voucher Scheme.

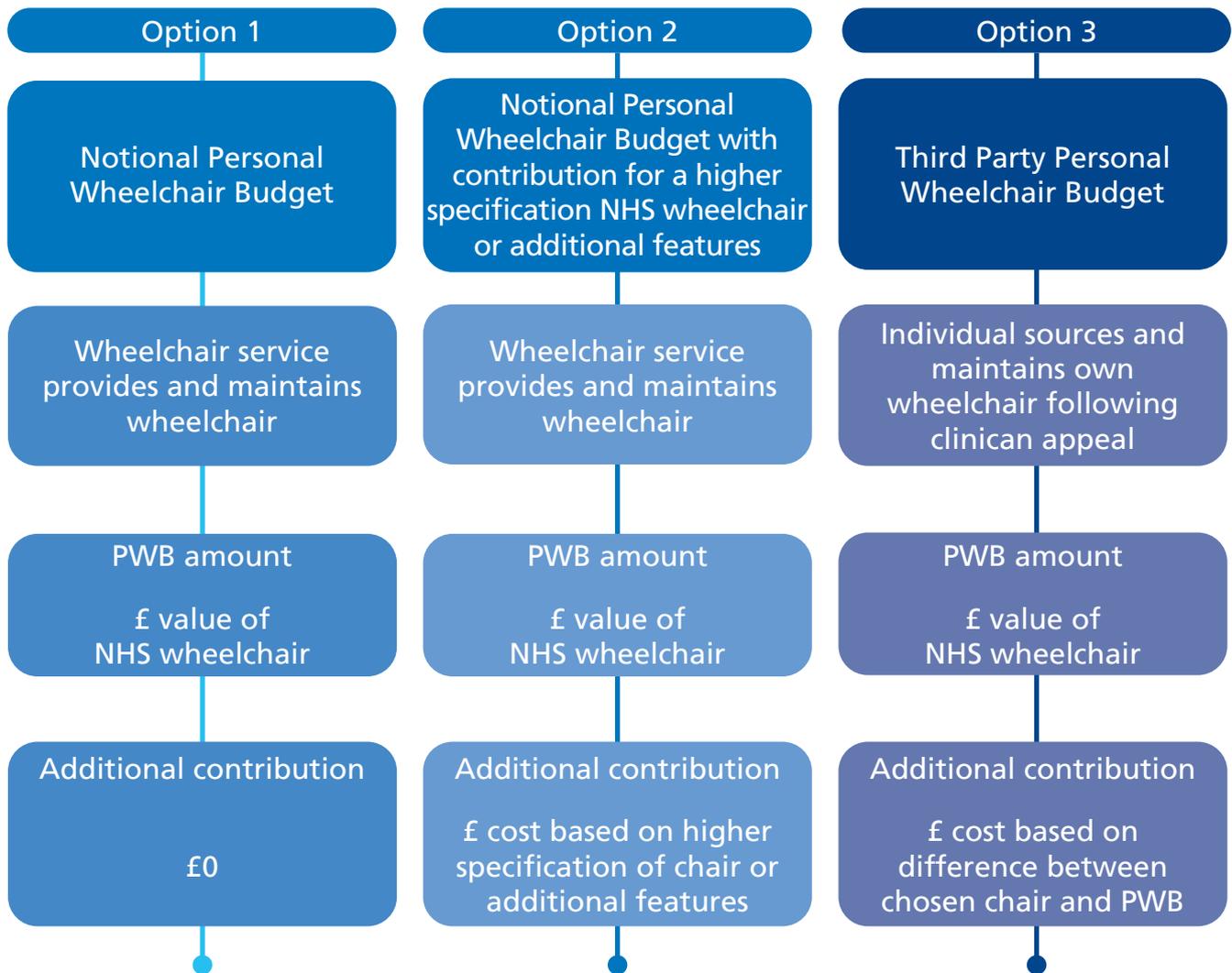
## **What is the aim of Personal Wheelchair Budgets?**

PWBs aim to provide wheelchair users of all ages with a wider choice regarding their wheelchair provision.

If you meet the eligibility criteria (see CCG and Wheelchair Service websites) for an NHS wheelchair package, you will be offered an assessment and your therapist will discuss the options with you, explaining what a PWB means and how it can be used to meet your needs.

Your PWB will be based on the cost to the NHS of providing a wheelchair that meets your needs. There is no increase in NHS funding but there are options about how you can use your PWB.

# What options can I choose from?



**1 Notional Personal Wheelchair Budget (standard NHS Provision).** This enables you to have a standard prescribed wheelchair which will meet your identified need at no cost to you. The wheelchair remains the property of the NHS and will be supplied, delivered, repaired and maintained by the NHS at no charge to you.

**2 Notional Personal Wheelchair Budget with contribution.** This option allows you to use option 1 plus add a contribution either personally or through another agency such as a council/voluntary/charitable organisation to either have a higher specification NHS wheelchair or add additional features. As with option 1 the wheelchair remains the property of the NHS and will be supplied, delivered, repaired and maintained by the NHS.

**3 Third Party Personal Wheelchair Budget.** In discussion with your wheelchair therapist, if it is clinically appropriate, you can choose to use your PWB as a contribution to buying a wheelchair from an independent retailer outside of the NHS. You will be responsible for all repairs and maintenance for the duration of the wheelchair ownership.

The amount of your budget will be equivalent to the cost to the NHS to provide a wheelchair that meets your needs plus a contribution towards the repair and maintenance of your chosen wheelchair.

If the wheelchair is more expensive than the value of your PWB you will have to make up the difference yourself. Other organisations or charities may be able to help you with this.



## **How are Personal Wheelchair Budgets different to the Wheelchair Voucher Scheme?**

PWBs aim to increase choice and control for people who access wheelchair services.

## **Does this mean I can change my wheelchair now that there is a new system?**

No, you can only change your wheelchair when it is no longer fit for purpose or your medical needs have significantly changed.

## **Will I need to be assessed if I would like a PWB?**

Yes. You will be invited to attend an appointment where your wheelchair therapist will assess your wheelchair clinical needs. You will only be invited for a re-assessment if your clinical needs have changed since the provision of your current wheelchair. Any questions you may have can be answered during this appointment.

## **How do I arrange to be assessed?**

If you do not currently have a wheelchair issued by the Wheelchair Service, your GP or healthcare professional can refer you for an assessment.

If you are known to and registered with the Wheelchair Service, you can call and request a reassessment but you will only be invited for a re-assessment if your clinical needs have changed since the provision of your current wheelchair.

## **What is the PWB Care and Support Plan?**

The Care and Support Plan comes in two parts. Before your assessment you will be asked to think about the things that are important to you. You will be asked to complete a short Personal Wheelchair Budget Care and Support Plan (Part 1) which will help you and the wheelchair therapist to find the most appropriate wheelchair for your needs.

When you attend your assessment, the wheelchair therapist will complete Part 2 of the Personal Wheelchair Budget Care and Support Plan jointly with you. This will include the option you have chosen and the value of the budget plus any contribution required.

## **Timescales**

It is important to note that a PWB offer will only remain valid for a period of 6 months. This is because the clinical recommendation/ prescription may change after this time period.

A typical adult wheelchair PWB should last 5 years (unless clinical reasoning for a shorter period dictates otherwise) but only 3 years for children as their needs have to be reassessed more regularly because of growth.

## What about maintenance and repair?

It is important to regularly maintain and repair your wheelchair. If you bought your wheelchair with a Notional PWB or Notional PWB with contribution you can contact the wheelchair provider for all repairs subject to service criteria. You may need to pay for repairs and maintenance for non-essential items. If you used the third party budget you are responsible for arranging and paying for all repairs and maintenance. A contribution for this is included in the budget value.

## What about insurance?

Public Liability Insurance is strongly recommended if you are using your wheelchair in a public place, particularly a powered wheelchair.

If you are intending to travel in a vehicle whilst seated in your wheelchair, please ensure that the wheelchair model you have chosen has been crash tested by the manufacturer and you are correctly and appropriately secured in the wheelchair.

## Can I just go ahead and buy the wheelchair using a third party PWB?

The Wheelchair Service needs to approve your choice of wheelchair before purchase. A PWB cannot be issued retrospectively i.e. you cannot buy a wheelchair and then ask for a PWB.

## How does the Third Party payment work?

When you choose your PWB outside of services paid for by the NHS an independent provider receives the personal budget via invoice sent to the NHS. If a Third Party PWB is authorised we will make a direct payment to the manufacturer or supplier that you are purchasing your wheelchair or buggy from. If the value of your PWB is greater than the cost of your equipment of choice, the manufacturer or supplier will only receive the amount covering the cost of the equipment.

## **How is the contribution for a Notional PWB with contribution paid?**

If you choose Option 2, Notional PWB with contribution, the Wheelchair Service will invoice you or the relevant organisation for the additional value and the goods will only be supplied once payment has been received.

## **What does Notional mean?**

This means that no actual money changes hands. You will be advised how much money is available for your assessed needs and decide jointly with the wheelchair therapist how to spend that money. The NHS is then responsible for holding the money and directly paying the manufacturer or supplier.

## **Will I be expected to return the NHS chair I have now?**

Yes, your NHS wheelchair will have to be returned to the Wheelchair Service for the period of the wheelchair budget.

## **Will you still provide a pressure relief cushion if I need one?**

We will still provide a pressure relief cushion if clinically required. This will not affect the type or the amount of your budget.

## **What is the expected timescale for receiving my new wheelchair?**

The PWB process should not increase the amount of time it takes for you to receive your new wheelchair, however for notional PWBs with a contribution the process may take slightly longer due to multi-agency provision.

**Further help available by contacting  
your service provider, Virgin Care.**



**[wheelchair.services@virginicare.co.uk](mailto:wheelchair.services@virginicare.co.uk)**



**0300 303 8539**

**More information about Personal Wheelchair Budgets is  
available on the NHS England website.**



**[www.personalhealthbudgets.england.nhs.uk](http://www.personalhealthbudgets.england.nhs.uk)**