

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTINUING CARE BRANCH

Subject: Specialized Equipment Program Policy

Original Approved Date: January 1, 2005 Revised Date: July 10, 2009

Original Signed by Keith Menzies

Approved by: _____

Keith Menzies, Executive Director, Continuing Care Branch

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The Nova Scotia Department of Health (DoH), will provide access to resident specific equipment for eligible residents of long term care facilities under its mandate through a Specialized Equipment Program.

2.0 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to individuals who are regular bed residents of long term care facilities under the mandate of the Department of Health which exclusively admit individuals referred through the Department of Health's "Single Entry Access" process.

3.0 ADMINISTRATION OF SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

The Specialized Equipment Program shall be administered through the Canadian Red Cross, Nova Scotia Region in accordance with the criteria established in the *HELP-Specialized Equipment Program Guidelines*.

4.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

An individual is eligible to access specialized equipment through the HELP-Specialized Equipment Program when the following criteria have been met:

- is a regular bed resident of a DoH long term care facility;
- requires equipment which is on the Covered Equipment list;
- has been assessed by an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist as requiring the specified equipment;
- has the request reviewed and approved by Continuing Care.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Applicant is a resident of Department of Health long term care who applies for access to specialized equipment through the Continuing Care branch.

Approved Resident is an applicant who has an assessed need for the equipment, meets the program criteria and is approved by Continuing Care to receive specialized equipment through the Specialized Equipment Program.

DoH Long Term Care refers to licensed nursing homes or homes for the aged, licensed residential care facilities, small option homes and community residences (CBO's) which exclusively admit individuals through the Department of Health's "Single Entry Access" process.

HELP-Specialized Equipment Request and Authorization Form is a standard form provided by the Department of Health which is used to request specialized equipment for residents of DoH long term care.

Publicly Assisted resident refers to an applicant who is in a regular bed and who has resided in a long term care facility up to and including December 31, 2004 and received financial assistance from the Department of Health exceeding \$12.75 per day.

Specialized equipment is defined as medical equipment or devices that are used to facilitate and promote resident independence and to improve the quality of care.

6.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

The Nova Scotia Department of Health will ensure adherence to the following principles when funding a specialized equipment program:

- **accountability** - the responsibilities of the resident, facility, the Department of Health, and the Red Cross, Nova Scotia Region are clearly communicated;
- **appropriateness** - the specialized equipment provided is relevant to the resident's need, as determined by a professional assessment;
- **consistency** - the specialized equipment is available to DoH long term care residents throughout the province and is provided in accordance with Continuing Care's policies and processes;
- **cost effectiveness** - where available, equipment in the program inventory is used before new equipment is purchased.
- **safety** - the equipment provided is maintained, cleaned and disinfected to reduce or minimize risk for the resident and others.

7.0 COVERED EQUIPMENT

The following is a list of types of specialized equipment that is available through the Specialized Equipment Program to approved residents in DoH long term care facilities:

- specialized mattresses and accessories
- resident specific, specialized bariatric beds;
Note: The Specialized Equipment Program does not provide beds normally funded through the capital equipment process or small equipment budget.
- power and manual wheelchairs, plus accessories
- resident specific specialized transfer aids (e.g, sliding sheets, transfer boards);
- basic positioning chairs;
- customized 2 wheeled walkers with glide tips/skis and rollator walkers, plus accessories
- resident specific slings
- bariatric commodes

The specialized equipment provided will be the minimum required to meet the identified need. Residents choosing alternate or upgraded items are responsible for the full cost of the equipment.

8.0 SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT FEES

Approved residents may be required to pay a monthly income based fee for the equipment being provided through the Specialized Equipment Program. Fees are based the resident's assessed income used for the purpose of establishing an authorized accommodation charge and the type and quantity of the equipment provided.

The fee charged for specialized equipment is comprised of two elements, a monthly flat rate charge and an amount associated with the particular type of equipment provided. The flat rate charge is a standard amount which is charged to the resident once per month, regardless of the number of pieces of specialized equipment provided. The fee associated with each piece of equipment provided is added to the flat rate charge to determine the monthly specialized equipment fee. Specialized Equipment Program fees will be revised annually.

Specialized equipment fees are determined by the Continuing Care Specialized Equipment Program fee determination process. The fee is collected by the Red Cross. For full information on the determination and application of specialized equipment fees, refer to the *Specialized Equipment Program Guidelines, Appendix V*.

Note: Applicants who are publicly assisted residents of Department of Health long term care are exempt from payment of fees.

9.0 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Access to equipment through the Specialized Equipment Program is provided in accordance with the application and approval process established by the Department of Health's Continuing Care branch. For a complete description of the process, refer to the following document:

HELP- Specialized Equipment Program Guidelines