To view any policy document as published on the Policy Distribution System click the link on the policy number in the table below.

Patient Matters Manual

CHAPTER 23 – AIDS AND APPLIANCES

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PD/IB/GL NUMBER</th>
<th>PD2011_027</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Care of the Person following Amputation: Minimum Standards of Care</td>
<td>ACI Guideline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EnableNSW – Assistive Technology for Communication, Mobility, Respiratory Function &amp; Self-Care</td>
<td>PD2011_027</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CARE OF THE PERSON FOLLOWING AMPUTATION: MINIMUM STANDARDS OF CARE

(Advised under IB2017_030) (Rescinds PD2008_015 and GL2008_006)

The NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) now has responsibility for clinical matters related to amputee care. Guidance should now be sought from the updated Care of the Person following Amputation: Minimum Standards of Care produced by the ACI Rehabilitation Network, available on the ACI’s website at:


The person with an amputation may present to the NSW Health System across the care continuum and require support on their lifelong care journey. The document outlines the minimum standards that are expected of services in NSW in the provision of care to the person with an amputation or limb loss.
PD2011_027 rescinds PD2011_023.

PURPOSE

EnableNSW provides appropriate assistive technology devices and specialised support services to assist eligible residents of NSW with a permanent or long-term disability to live and participate in their family and community.

EnableNSW is a unit within Health Support Services, NSW Health, which was established to provide central administration of the services previously administered through the following NSW Health disability support programs:

- Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP).
- Home Respiratory Program (HRP).
- Adult Home Ventilation Program (AHVP).
- Children’s Home Ventilation Program (CHVP).
- Prosthetic Limb Service (PLS).

This policy has been developed in the context of the transition of the NSW Health disability support programs from administration by the former Area Health Services to consolidated state-wide administration under EnableNSW.

This policy introduces the role of EnableNSW and the establishment of the EnableNSW Advisory Council; updates terminology, organisational arrangements and financial eligibility criteria; and refers to new Prescription and Provision Guidelines for different categories of assistive technology.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

All EnableNSW staff and other relevant NSW Health staff must comply with this policy directive and apply the updated financial eligibility criteria, except where stated otherwise in the policy directive.

IMPLEMENTATION

The attached policy procedures provide guidance to assist in processing applications and determining requests for EnableNSW services for people with permanent or long-term disability.

The Chief Executive, Health Support Services is to ensure that the requirements of this policy are communicated to all EnableNSW staff that have responsibility for implementing this policy.

The Local Health Network Chief Executives are responsible for ensuring that this policy is circulated to all clinical staff that need to be aware of the policy content (this includes allied health, medical and nursing staff).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This policy provides direction for staff of Health Support Services and other relevant staff for the effective management of EnableNSW services. This policy applies to all consumers of EnableNSW services, from the date of issue.
EnableNSW is a division of Health Support Services, NSW Health which was established to administer the NSW Health support programs for people with disability.

The services provided through EnableNSW were previously provided through the following five programs:
- Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP), including Specialised Equipment Essential for Discharge (SEED).
- Home Respiratory program (HRP).
- Adult Home Ventilation Program (AHVP).
- Children’s Home Ventilation Program (CHVP); and
- Prosthetic Limb Service (PLS).

These programs, now known collectively as the EnableNSW services, have been transitioned from administration by the former Area Health Services to central administration under EnableNSW.

1.2 Objectives of EnableNSW Services

The primary objectives of the EnableNSW services are:
a) to assist eligible residents of NSW, who have a permanent or long-term disability, to live and participate in their family and community, by providing appropriate assistive technology and specialised support services in the areas of core communication, mobility, respiratory function and self-care;
b) to ensure equity of access to assistive technology based on individual needs;
c) to provide effective management of available resources by providing devices or support that are cost-effective and meet the assessed functional need;
d) to provide timely, courteous and efficient service to consumers; and

e) to work in collaboration, wherever possible, with other State and Commonwealth government services and non-government organisations to promote continuity of care.

1.3 Information about EnableNSW

EnableNSW is responsible for disseminating information about its services on a state-wide basis.

EnableNSW utilises a variety of media to raise public awareness of its services, including posters, website details, fact sheets and cards.

Information regarding operational aspects of the EnableNSW services is available on the EnableNSW website: www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au. This includes information on topics such as what devices are provided through EnableNSW, how to submit an application through to how to provide feedback or lodge a complaint.

Consumers who do not have access to the internet can contact the Service Centre by phone and request that copies of this information be sent to them.

A free call information service is available on 1800 ENABLE (1800 362 253). People of linguistically diverse backgrounds may utilise the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 when making inquiries to the EnableNSW free call service.

Fact sheets are available in common community languages for consumers from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. They are also available in HTML for consumers who use screen reader software.
2. **ELIGIBILITY**

2.1 **Eligibility Criteria**

The following criteria apply to all applications for EnableNSW services:

- the person is a permanent resident of NSW, or a refugee residing in NSW;
- the person has a permanent or long-term disability (i.e. a disability likely to last more than 12 months regardless of the cause of the disability);
- the person has long-term assistive technology needs that have stabilised and allow them to remain in a community setting;
- the person has not received compensation or damages in respect of the disability for which the assistive technology device or support is required; and
- the person is not eligible to receive the assistive technology under any other government-funded program.

2.2 **Ineligible Groups**

EnableNSW excludes the provision of assistive technology and specialised support services that can be funded from other government programs or from other sources.

The following groups are ineligible to receive assistance under EnableNSW:

- People who are resident in a group home operated by Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) as the Department of Family and Community Services is responsible for the provision of assistive technology for clients living in the accommodation services it operates. This is done through the program known as Aids for Individuals in DADHC Accommodation Services (AIDAS).
23. AIDS AND APPLIANCES

- Patients who require assistive technology on a temporary or short-term basis either as part of a treatment intervention for an acute or chronic care episode, or whilst an acute illness or injury is resolving. This assistance is provided by the treating hospital or Local Health Network Equipment Loan Pool. Exceptions to this are oxygen and some respiratory devices, however, in the case of patients who need oxygen equipment, the discharging hospital is required to supply the first month of oxygen supply post-discharge.

- Patients with far advanced progressive disease, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, end stage respiratory disease, cardiac and liver disease, or any other palliative care group, as hospitals are required to provide equipment for palliative care on loan for short-term use (approximately three months).

- People who have received compensation or damages in respect of the disability for which the assistive technology has been prescribed. In exceptional circumstances where an applicant has received a compensation payment, some years have elapsed since receipt of the payment, and the applicant is able to demonstrate financial hardship, discretion may be exercised to provide assistance under EnableNSW.

- People receiving Commonwealth-funded aged care services: People who live in a residential aged care facility (RACF) or who qualify for an Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) or Extended Aged Care at Home - Dementia (EACH-D) package. This group may be eligible for devices such as prosthetic limbs and power wheelchairs through EnableNSW.

- Younger people with disability who are approved for assistance under the Younger People in Residential Aged Care program (YPIRAC) should apply to Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), Department of Family and Community Services, to establish their eligibility for assistive technology under that program. Under an internal agreement between ADHC and NSW Health, EnableNSW administers the equipment provision for approved YPIRAC clients after their equipment needs have been assessed and recommended.

In exceptional circumstances, discretion may be exercised by the Manager, EnableNSW to approve an application that otherwise does not meet the eligibility criteria.

Consumers with private health insurance are required to ascertain whether their health fund will cover all, or part, of the cost of the prescribed device, before they apply to EnableNSW, in which case EnableNSW will fund the gap.

2.3 Equitable Access

Eligible consumers of EnableNSW services can expect fair and equitable access, wherever they live in NSW and regardless of their cultural or linguistic background.

EnableNSW needs to be aware of the barriers that may impede access to services for Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This is particularly important in rural areas of NSW where communities may be small and isolated from other community support structures.

The EnableNSW Service Centre will take a pro-active and collaborative approach to the delivery of services to Aboriginal and multicultural communities. Statistics on the extent to which EnableNSW services are utilised by these target groups will be collected and used to guide the development of future strategies designed to improve access for these communities. Multicultural Health Managers, Aboriginal Health Managers and Aboriginal Medical Services may be of assistance in the development of strategies designed to improve access to EnableNSW services.
2.4 Financial Criteria

As a service directed to people who are financially disadvantaged, access to EnableNSW is means tested for adults for most categories of assistive technology. Children up to the age of 16 years with a long-term disability are eligible for EnableNSW, regardless of parental income.

The EnableNSW income bands for all assistive technology devices, except prosthetic limbs, are based on the former PADP income bands and allowances, with adjustments for increases in the Australian Consumer Price Index since December 1998. No changes have been made to the level of consumer co-payments.

The EnableNSW income bands for prosthetic limbs remain the same as the previous criteria for the Prosthetic Limb Service.

2.5 Income Bands and Consumer Co-payments

Table 1: EnableNSW Income Bands for all assistive technology devices except for prosthetic limbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 1</th>
<th>Adults on full pension and children under 16 years</th>
<th>Consumer co-payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 2</td>
<td>up to $42,000 (single) or $70,000 (couple) + $2,100 per dependent</td>
<td>$100 each year accessing services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3</td>
<td>above $42,000 (single) or $70,000 (couple) + $2,100 per dependent</td>
<td>20% of devices costing $800 and above. N.B. Consumers in Band 3 are not eligible for devices under $800.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Band 1:
Adults in receipt of a full pension from Centrelink and all children aged up to 16 years of age are eligible as Band 1 consumers.

For the purpose of establishing financial eligibility for Band 1, a pensioner is defined as a person who holds a Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card. Other concession cards, such as the Commonwealth Seniors Health Care Card, or the NSW Seniors Card, are not sufficient. Receipt of Mobility Allowance alone will not qualify a person for Band 1.

In the case of refugees, an interim concession card or a letter issued by Centrelink must be produced.
In the case of people receiving an overseas pension, evidence of pension entitlement from Centrelink must be produced.

Consumers in Band 1 are eligible to receive assistance for all devices costing over $100.

Consumers in Band 1 are required to pay a $100 co-payment per annum for any year in which they receive assistance, including assistance with repairs and maintenance.

**Band 2:**
Adults aged 16 years and above whose taxable income in the preceding financial year was less than or equal to $42,000 (single) or $70,000 (couple or family) are eligible as Band 2 consumers. A further $2,100 per dependent person is to be added to the single and family income figures for applicants with dependents.

Consumers in Band 2 are eligible to receive assistance for all devices costing over $100.

Consumers in Band 2 are required to pay a $100 co-payment per annum for any year in which they receive assistance, including assistance with repairs and maintenance.

**Band 3:**
Adults aged 16 years and above whose taxable income in the preceding financial year was above $42,000 (single) or $70,000 (couple or family), with adjustments of $2,100 per dependent, are eligible to apply for high cost items (over $800) only.

Consumers in Band 3 are only eligible to receive assistance for high cost devices over $800 and are required to pay 20% of the cost of the device.

**Table 2: EnableNSW Income Bands for prosthetic limbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 1 - Persons holding a valid Pensioner Concession Card, a valid Health Care Card or a valid Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.</th>
<th>Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 2 - All persons not holding valid Pensioner Concession Card, a valid Health Care Card or a valid Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.</td>
<td>15% of the scheduled cost of the provision, maintenance and repair of prostheses up to a maximum of $200 per financial year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prosthetic Limbs - Band 1:**
Consumers holding a valid Pensioner Concession Card, a valid Health Care Card or a valid Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

No co-payment is required for consumers in this band receiving prosthetic limbs.

**Prosthetic Limbs - Band 2:**
All consumers who do not have a valid Pensioner Concession Card, a valid Health Care Card or a valid Commonwealth Seniors Health Card are assessed as Band 2.
Consumers in Band 2 receiving prosthetic limbs are required to pay 15% of the scheduled cost of the provision, maintenance and repair of their prostheses up to a maximum of $200 per financial year.

### 2.7 Validation of Income Band

An applicant’s income band is to be verified by the production of:

- A statement of full pension entitlement from Centrelink; or
- Copy of a Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card; or
- A valid Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Notice of Assessment for the preceding financial year.

Discretion may be applied in instances where an ATO Notice of Assessment is not available, for example, for some 16 year olds who have yet to be assessed and for newly-arrived migrants or refugees.

Consumers who are over 16 years of age and are applying for assistive technology devices other than prosthetic limbs are required to submit a valid ATO Notice of Assessment to establish access to the appropriate income band, including:

- Applicants with taxable incomes who are part-pensioners;
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Care Card holders; and
- Self-funded retirees.

Applicants who do not provide verification of income will be considered as a Band 3 consumer.

### 3. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

#### 3.1 Categories of Assistive Technology provided by EnableNSW

EnableNSW provides assistive technology devices in four categories:

- Communication;
- Mobility;
- Respiratory function; and
- Self-care.

A summary table of the assistive technology devices provided in each category is available at [www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au)

Devices provided may be new or recycled.

The EnableNSW *Prescription and Provision Guidelines* have been developed in consultation with stakeholders and outline specific information regarding the functional and clinical criteria and the supply limits that apply for each device.

*The Professional Criteria for Prescribers* provides information about the professional qualification and level of experience required by eligible prescribers for each device.

These documents can be found at [http://www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au)

EnableNSW provides the most cost-effective, clinically appropriate devices that meet a person’s assessed functional need and that are consistent with the EnableNSW *Prescription and Provision Guidelines* for those devices.
23. AIDS AND APPLIANCES

Devices provided must primarily promote long term functioning in the community, rather than provide treatment for acute and chronic care episodes, except for oxygen and some respiratory devices.

Where a consumer wishes to upgrade the device beyond that determined by the prescriber to meet their basic needs and approved by EnableNSW, they are required to pay the additional cost of that device.

The Chief Executive of Health Support Services may seek advice from an EnableNSW Appeal Panel and may exercise discretion regarding the provision of specific devices and quantities to be supplied when a request falls outside, or exceeds the supply limits in the relevant Prescription and Provision Guidelines.

3.2 General Exclusions

EnableNSW does not provide the following:
- Devices costing less than $100, unless approved as a recurrent consumable.
- Assistive technology devices that do not comply with Australian Standards where these exist or devices that are not registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration, as applicable.
- Assistive technology devices primarily for sport, recreational, educational or employment purposes.
- Non-disability specific items that are commercially available.
- Installation of some items such as ceiling hoist tracking.
- Reimbursement for devices already purchased or for repairs completed without approval.
- Devices used for the administration of medications.

3.3 Accessing EnableNSW Services

Access to EnableNSW is based on assessed functional or clinical need by an eligible prescriber (see section 3.1). This involves the submission of an EnableNSW Application Form and an Equipment Request Form. Both forms must be submitted to determine eligibility and funding approval. Relevant forms are available at www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au.

The Application Form should be completed by the consumer or their representative. This form provides personal and demographic information and details of the consumer’s disability and is the basis for determining eligibility.

An Equipment Request Form must be completed by the relevant eligible prescriber. The request form provides information regarding the assessment and prescription of the assistive technology device/s recommended. This form is the basis for determining approval of the device/s to be funded.

3.4 Processing of Applications and Prioritisation of Requests

All completed applications and requests submitted to EnableNSW will be assessed for eligibility and consumers will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Requests will be prioritised and EnableNSW will endeavour to give an indication of the time-frame for when the device will be funded.
The prioritisation process will give consideration to:

a) whether the device is necessary to maintain life or ensure safety of the consumer or carer; and
b) whether the device is essential for a primary communication, mobility or self-care task.

Requests outside this criteria will be provided as funds become available.

3.5 Replacements and Repairs

Replacement devices require the submission of an equipment request form.

Replacement devices may be issued when:

• Assistive technology has worn out by natural use and is no longer usable;
• It is more economical to arrange for the supply of a new device rather than to arrange repairs;
• A consumer’s condition has altered to the point where replacement of the assistive technology is required.

EnableNSW provides assistance to meet the cost of regular servicing, maintenance and reasonable repairs to devices supplied by EnableNSW. No prescription is necessary for servicing, maintenance and repairs. Arrangements for the servicing, maintenance and repair of a device are to be made by the EnableNSW Service Centre.

EnableNSW will pay for repairs and maintenance costing $800 or more per financial year for consumers in Band 3, except for repairs to prosthetic limbs, which are provided free, upon approval of EnableNSW. Consumers with prosthetic limbs should contact the manufacturer regarding repairs and maintenance.

EnableNSW will provide repairs and maintenance to items and features that it has funded. Where the total device has been upgraded, the consumer is responsible for the repairs and maintenance for the device. Consumers must clarify in advance with EnableNSW their responsibilities for ongoing maintenance and repairs of discretionary features as these may not be covered.

EnableNSW may also assist with the cost of repairing a device supplied by another organisation, where the same or equivalent device would otherwise have been supplied by EnableNSW.

EnableNSW consumers are required to contact the EnableNSW Service Centre for approval of any regular maintenance and for any repairs to devices before these are undertaken. If an urgent repair is required out of office hours, consumers can arrange this however are required to notify EnableNSW on the next business day.

3.6 EnableNSW Service Centre Operating Hours

The EnableNSW Service Centre will be staffed during business hours from Monday to Friday.

Contact details for the Service Centre are:
E: enable@hss.health.nsw.gov.au
P: FreeCall 1800 ENABLE (1800 362 253).
Website: www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au
3.7 Ownership of Devices

Most devices issued through EnableNSW remain the property of NSW Health. Consumers are expected to return devices issued through EnableNSW when the devices are no longer required or being used.

NB: exceptions include prosthetic limbs, orthotic devices and special footwear which become the property of the consumer.

3.8 Change of Address

Consumers are required to notify the EnableNSW Service Centre of any change of address within NSW or to another State so that EnableNSW can update its records and negotiate transfer of ongoing responsibility for repairs and maintenance of devices.

3.9 Interstate Portability

Consumers planning to move interstate should notify EnableNSW in writing and request that their assistive technology be transferred to the other state’s aids and equipment scheme or to their ownership.

EnableNSW will not be responsible for ongoing repairs or maintenance for assistive technology devices taken interstate. EnableNSW will not pay the freight costs for assistive technology to be taken outside of NSW.

In the event that a person moves interstate/overseas prior to their requested assistive technology being provided, EnableNSW will cancel the order/delivery of the requested device.

When an eligible person moves into NSW, EnableNSW will fund repairs and maintenance of assistive technology provided interstate where the device is consistent with the EnableNSW Prescription and Provision Guidelines.

If a person moving into NSW has outstanding applications to the equipment scheme in their state/territory of origin, EnableNSW will take into account the original application date to the interstate scheme when an application for the device is submitted to EnableNSW.

3.10 EnableNSW Data Collection

The EnableNSW information system will capture information such as consumer demographic information, details of assistive technology devices provided including service and maintenance history, as well as other statistical information used by NSW Health.

4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

People seeking or receiving assistance from EnableNSW can expect to be treated in a way that is consistent with the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights.

EnableNSW staff must be aware of and comply with the NSW Health Policy Directive “Your HealthCare Rights and Responsibilities” which details the rights and responsibilities that apply to all people who access a health service. This policy is available at: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2011/PD2011_022.html
4.1 Rights of Consumers of EnableNSW Services

Respect
The right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Communication
The right to be given clear and accessible information about the EnableNSW services, including the eligibility criteria and copayments, assistance options available, and administrative processes.

Participation
The right to be included in decisions regarding what assistance will be provided and to be consulted about any changes in the way that assistance is provided.

Privacy
The right to privacy and confidentiality regarding personal information held by EnableNSW.

Comment/Feedback
The right to be given clear information about how to provide feedback and the right to have any concerns addressed in a timely and courteous manner without fear of discrimination.

This includes the right to be given information about how to appeal any decisions made regarding their application or requests for assistance.

4.2 Responsibilities of Consumers of EnableNSW Services

- To provide the information required to accurately assess applications for assistance.
- To accept that the available assistive technology device to meet their assessed needs may be recycled rather than new.
- To notify the EnableNSW Service Centre of a change of address or residential status.
- To meet the freight costs involved in taking any assistive technology items interstate once transfer of ownership has been determined.
- To notify the EnableNSW Service Centre of any change to financial circumstances that may affect their eligibility for assistance from EnableNSW or alter their status in relation to the making of a co-payment.
- To properly care for devices received and to notify the EnableNSW Service Centre if repairs or maintenance are needed.
- To fund the full cost of repairs if these result from wilful neglect or damage.
- To agree to reimburse EnableNSW for the cost of assistive technology devices provided (including the cost of any repairs and maintenance) in the event that a compensation claim results in a settlement relating to the disability for which devices were issued.

5. GOVERNANCE

5.1 Role of Health Support Services

Health Support Services is responsible for the development of Key Performance Indicators, for monitoring the performance of EnableNSW, service planning and state-wide administration of EnableNSW services.
5.2 Role of EnableNSW Advisory Council

The role of the EnableNSW Advisory Council is to provide advice to the Chief Executive, Health Support Services and the Director-General, NSW Health regarding the development of strategic policies, plans and initiatives relating to EnableNSW.

The Council reports to the Director-General, NSW Health through the Chief Executive, Health Support Services.

The ENAC Charter is available on the EnableNSW website at www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au. Council members are appointed by the Director-General of NSW Health following an Expression of Interest process. Membership includes representational positions for the Disability Council of NSW, NSW Department of Health and Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services.

5.3 Role of the NSW Department of Health

The Department of Health has responsibility for policy development relating to the EnableNSW services.

5.4 EnableNSW Review and Appeal Panels

Information on how to request a review or appeal, including any forms that need to be submitted, is to be available on the EnableNSW website.

In the first instance, consumers can request that a decision regarding their application/request be reviewed internally if there is additional information, a change of circumstances, or if they feel the application/request was not given due consideration.

Following this internal review process, consumers can request that the decision be reviewed by an external Appeal Panel if they feel they have not been given due consideration. These panels consist of clinical experts and consumers and assist EnableNSW in reviewing applications that are complex in nature, or that fall outside program guidelines.

Appeal Panel members are appointed by the Chief Executive, Health Support Services following an Expression of Interest process which is advertised through stakeholder networks and on the EnableNSW website.

EnableNSW Appeal Panels consist of expert clinicians and consumers, to provide advice and assist in managing formal appeals in relation to applications that have not been approved. This would include decisions made by Statewide Advisors and internal reviews in relation to administrative and clinical matters.

5.5 Provision of Feedback

Comments, concerns and complaints regarding EnableNSW may be made
- by phone on FreeCall 1800 ENABLE (1800 362 253);
- by fax on 02 8797 6543;
- by post to Locked Bag 5270 Parramatta NSW 2124; or
- by email to enable@hss.health.nsw.gov.au.

The EnableNSW website will include information on how to provide feedback. Consumers can request assistance with providing feedback if required.