

Application to charities for financial assistance (1 of 3)

Purpose

Charitable grants exist to help people with spinal cord (and other) injuries to buy equipment that will help them be more independent, where they could not otherwise afford this.

The Spinal Centre supports people applying to 3 particular charities: Southern Spinal Injuries Trust (SSIT), Aspire, and Regain. Regain is a charity supporting people with tetraplegia, who have been injured through a sporting or leisure activity. The Spinal Centre can also support applications to other charities where appropriate.

Funds are limited and are generated by fund-raising activity.

Eligibility

Each charity has its own eligibility criteria and you will need to contact them for more information. Eligibility will also be dependent on residency status - grants are available to those who live in the UK and Ireland, either as a UK or EU Citizen, with indefinite leave to remain, or with full refugee status.

Statutory provision

Statutory services, including local Health Authorities, Social Services and NHS Wheelchair Services, may be able to provide essential equipment or contribute funds towards it. Charities will not consider applications where statutory provision has not first been explored and exhausted. They may require written evidence of this. If a contribution is possible, such as Wheelchair Services voucher, the amount granted needs to be identified on the application form and a copy of the voucher submitted with the application.

Charitable contribution

Charities can't usually provide all the money requested on each application. They are often able to contribute towards the equipment, and ask people to provide the rest of the funding, such as from statutory sources, private funds or other organisations. Charities will often help you with this process by providing details of other organisations that can be approached.

Type of equipment considered

Spinal Occupational Therapy

 **01722 336262 ext. 2083**



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer-care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Grants are considered for equipment that will enhance independence, but would be unavailable to an individual through other means, such as statutory services or private funds.

Charities are likely to fund essential aspects of a product only. If you want to enhance or upgrade the equipment with non-essential items, such as a special paint finish on a wheelchair, this will need to be covered at your own expense. A separate quote can be generated by the provider, to you, for these items.

Charities will not ordinarily consider applications for home alterations, holidays, vehicles, passive exercise equipment, cosmetic features of a product, or functions such as the standing facility of a wheelchair, that could be met by other means.

Product selection

You are expected to carry out a thorough assessment of the product to include trial in all of the environments in which it will be used, such as in and around the home, work environment and vehicle, to ensure that it will meet your needs. We advise you to get help with the selection and assessment, from appropriate professionals and equipment specialists.

Professional support

All applications for medical equipment, including wheelchairs and other mobility equipment, must be supported by a health professional appropriate to the nature of the application.

Supporting evidence, such as a letter outlining clinical reasoning behind the choice of a particular piece of equipment regarding its suitability, compared with other products, is frequently required by the charities. The health professional who signs the application form needs to have carried out the assessment to ensure it meets the individual's needs. If a Spinal Centre therapist is asked to support an application but has not been involved in the assessment, he/she may not be happy to sign the application form and has no obligation to do so.

Second-hand equipment

Second-hand equipment cannot usually be bought with charitable funds. However, a charity may consider this where the equipment is sold through a reputable business and comes with a suitable warranty.

Compensation

If the applicant is successful in pursuing a compensation claim charities may require full repayment of any money they have granted. Each charity will have guidelines about this.

Ongoing costs

A charitable grant is made only towards the cost of buying a piece of equipment. It is not responsible for and is unlikely to fund any ongoing costs including repairs, maintenance, insurance, or replacement of the product when it has reached the end of its life. You must consider and accept these ongoing costs before an application is made.

Timescales

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Timescales for committee meetings are individual to each organisation. Charities can consider applications once all the required paperwork, including quote/specification, letter of support etc has been received.

Charities will not consider funding an item that you already have, or one for which you have already placed an order. Funds are generally sent direct to the equipment supplier and not to the applicant.

Some charities accept only one application per applicant in any 5 year period, however, this may be reviewed if there has been a change in medical circumstances rendering the previous equipment unusable/unsuitable.

Outcome

Once the charitable application has been submitted you are responsible for liaising directly with the charity about any queries regarding the progress of the application. Each charity will inform you of the outcome and some do not ordinarily inform the supporting professional. Once notified of the outcome you are responsible for liaising with the charity and equipment provider, for coordinating the order, delivery and setting up of the equipment. Spinal Centre staff are not able to place or monitor the order. Delivery and set up of the product needs to be agreed between the supplier and the applicant at the point of order.

Charities retain the right to refuse any application.

Some useful contacts:

Aspire: 020 8420 6707

kim.elliott@aspire.org.uk

SSIT: 0793 5054622

www.ssit.org.uk

Regain: 01590 677854

www.regainsportscharity.com

Outpatient Therapy Team, Spinal Centre, Salisbury ☎ 01722 425083 or 01722 429339.