

Assistive Technology Maintenance Checklist

Maintenance of assistive technology can include servicing by a technician, part replacement, cleaning or lubrication of parts, replacing, or testing/checking it is working order.

Planning and information

i. List the assistive technology used that will require maintenance.

Examples of such assistive technology: motorised bed; air mattress; mattress pump; wheelchair (manual and powered); any powered device such as ventilators, powered ceiling or mobile hoist; hoist to access a vehicle; reverse cycle air-conditioning; environmental control units; back-up battery packs; tyre compressor; non-invasive ventilator; and mains powered evacuation or portable suction equipment.

ii. Obtain information about the:

- possibility of a service agreement with the supplier of assistive technology requiring maintenance (e.g. wheelchair, hoist, environmental control unit)
- cost of repairs, routine maintenance and service and who will pay for this
- whole-of-life costs of the assistive technology, frequency of use and approximate replacement cycle
- known or perceived breakdown rates (gained through the rehabilitation team or the person's experience)
- impact of the environment on the need for routine maintenance and service requirements (e.g. salt air, dusty environment, floor surface).

iii. Develop a plan which establishes:

- recommended periods, frequency and routine for service, routine maintenance and repairs needed for each piece of assistive technology
- who will be responsible for arranging and performing the maintenance
- time frames for access to repairs (e.g. emergency and regular service turnaround times)
- availability of a local repairer for service and repairs, such as a local bicycle repairer, automotive electrician (for

power wheelchairs), NRMA road service for wheelchair service and repairs, including after-hours (e.g. on weekends) emergency repair options.

- contingency plans for adverse events, such as breakdown, power failure or technology failure of essential assistive technology such as power wheelchairs, hoists, mattresses and beds. Consider contingency plans for these occasions at home but also if the assistive technology is used outside the home, in the street or at other places (e.g. work place, holiday accommodation), or if the breakdown occurs out of hours. Contingency plans should be documented.

Practical tasks

Ensure that tools are available and that the person, a family member or support worker knows how to use them. Ensure that daily, weekly or fortnightly routine maintenance tasks are completed.

Plan for provision of:

- a back-up of essential assistive technology where possible (e.g. second wheelchair when primary wheelchair is being repaired or serviced, travel/emergency pressure care mattress)
- written guides (from manufacturer, service technician or specifically developed for support workers and family) or weblinks on recommended maintenance tasks and frequency
- annual training for support workers on routine maintenance tasks such as cleaning and part lubrication (to accommodate turnover in staff)
- spare parts (what and how many) to be kept or carried for some of the equipment (e.g. spare tyres)
- an emergency repair kit where possible (e.g. basic tools such as allen keys, screwdriver)

Download the **Guidance on the support needs of adults with spinal cord injury** from the website www.icare.nsw.gov.au/treatment-and-care/what-we-do/guidelines-and-policies