

## **Appendix A – Equipment Categorisations, Activity and Spend**

The provision of equipment to support people to live as independently as possible, is one possible outcome of both an Occupational Therapy assessment, and of a Social Care Support Officer assessment. Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists working for the NHS also provide community equipment following their assessments.

Community Equipment provision is broadly split into three categories in Lancashire:

- Simple items of equipment that are available for general purchase, and not provided by Health or Social Care as an outcome of an assessment
- 'Retail Model' equipment that is provided via a prescription (and is also available for general purchase) following an assessment by Occupational Therapists, Social Care Support Officers or Physiotherapists
- Complex equipment that is provided on a 'loan' basis to people following assessment by an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist. The equipment is provided via an organisation called MedEquip who have the contract across health and social care for Lancashire.

### **Retail Model Equipment**

The Retail Model has been operating in Lancashire for nearly 10 years, and sees a large amount of activity which gives service users more choice and flexibility around the equipment recommended to them. There is a defined list of equipment that is agreed across health and social care and which follows the national model.

Following assessment, the individual receives a prescription which can be redeemed via a number of participating retailers across Lancashire. They have the option to receive the standard equipment specification funded by either Lancashire County Council or the NHS (dependent upon the item) or if they wish they can pay a 'top up' amount on top of the value of the prescription to buy the same piece of equipment but a model that more suits their own lifestyle and home environment.

The average annual spend by Lancashire County Council for social care community equipment contained within the Retail Model is approximately £2.03m. The high volume items tend to be items such as perching stools, raised toilet seats, commodes and toilet frames, and grab rails.

### **Complex Community Equipment**

Many larger items of community equipment such as hoists, specialist chairs or beds are loaned to service users across Lancashire for as long as they need them. Once items are no longer required, they are returned to MedEquip, specially cleaned, decontaminated and refurbished as appropriate and loaned to the next person assessed as requiring this type of equipment.

These items of equipment, used to support people with more complex moving and handling needs are assessed for by Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists, with all items categorised with regard to whether they are funded by the NHS or social care.

Lancashire County Council currently spends around £1.3m per year on complex equipment to support people to live as independently as possible, and to ensure that they are moved and handled in a way that is safe and least restrictive.

### **Minor Adaptations**

Minor adaptations are small scale adaptations to peoples' home environment that enable them to move around and outside their home as independently as they can.

For example, external rails outside peoples' doors, or additional bannister rails to support people to climb the stairs without the assistance of a carer (or to make it safer if the person is being assisted), or small ramps to replace steps would fall into this category.

Minor adaptations are adaptations under £1000, that fall into the remit of Adult Social Care rather than larger adaptations which would fall into the scope of the Disabled Facilities Grant, which is administered by the District Councils.

Currently Home Improvement Agencies deliver this element of our statutory work across all the district areas. The 2018/19 spend on minor adaptations was £1.025m rising from £956,369 in 2017/18, with the highest volume adaptation being internal rails.

A recent piece of innovation work has been undertaken with the Home Improvement Agencies to enable them to undertake a 'trusted assessment' where they are visiting people either as part of their home improvement work or for a commissioned minor adaptation. If during the visit they identify that an additional piece of equipment is required within a defined list, they are able to issue and fit this which avoids the need for these cases to be referred into the Occupational Therapy service for further assessment, thereby reducing delays for the customer.

The county's Disabled Facilities Grant group has defined the thresholds where minor adaptations stop and Disabled Facilities Grants start. This has not only resulted in a more consistent approach across the county and clear compliance with the Care Act, but reduces OT and OT manager time in processing 'exceptions' cases.