

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Wheelchair Service

Frequently Asked Questions

1) How long will it be from referral until I get my wheelchair or additional accessories?

The NHS target is for everyone to receive their wheelchair within 18 weeks. Most people receive their wheelchairs much sooner than this and the average waiting time is under 9 weeks. However, some people may wait longer than 18 weeks under certain circumstances. Waiting times may be longer if:

- There is very high demand for the service.
- If you require specialist or custom-made equipment
- We need to help people with more urgent clinical needs first.

We do everything we can to reduce waiting times and keep you updated either by text, or we may arrange for a telephone assessment to check that your needs have not changed. Please let us know if your needs or clinical condition change while you are waiting, by telephoning 0808 175 3996 or email ssotwheelchairservice@ajmhealthcare.org

The NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Wheelchair Service is provided by AJM Healthcare on behalf of the NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB). The ICB is the NHS organisation responsible for planning and commissioning health services for the local population.

You can find more details of the service AJM is commissioned to provide by visiting the AJM website: <https://www.ajmhealthcare.com/local-service-centres/staffordshire-stoke-on-trent/referrals-assessments/>

2) What happens when you receive my referral?

When we receive your referral, an experienced clinical wheelchair therapist will review the information to:

- Make sure we have all the information we need to progress your referral.
- Make sure you meet the service eligibility criteria.
- Check how urgent your clinical needs are.

If we do not have all the information we need, we may need to contact you or the person who referred you to ask questions. If you are not eligible for help from the NHS wheelchair service, we will send you a letter explaining why and suggest other ways you can find help.

If your referral is accepted, our wheelchair therapist will decide how we can best help you. This is usually one of two options:

- 1) If you need to be seen in clinic, you will be added to the waiting list to see a clinician who specialises in your needs.
- 2) If you do not need to be seen in clinic, equipment may be delivered directly to you by one of our specialist engineers.

We will let you know which option is right for you and what to expect next.

3) How long until I receive an appointment with the clinical team?

We offer appointments to people based on how urgently they need to be seen. We aim to offer everyone an appointment within 7 weeks of referral. We decide how urgently you need to be seen based on the information given in your referral.

It may take us longer to offer you an appointment if you have complex needs. For example, if we need to use specialist clinicians or equipment for your appointment, we may have limited appointments available to offer.

We will contact you to offer you an appointment as soon as we can. Please contact us if:

- You have not heard from us to book your first appointment within 8-10 weeks.
- You feel your needs have changed and become more urgent.

You can call us on 0808 175 3996 between 8am-6pm, Monday to Friday, or send us an email via our contact page.

You can find out more about the priority levels we use in our eligibility criteria, which is published on our website here: <https://www.ajmhealthcare.com/local-service-centres/staffordshire-stoke-on-trent/referrals-assessments/>

4) Once I have had an assessment and/or a prescription for suitable equipment, why can't you give me an estimated date for delivery?

It can be difficult to provide an exact timeframe, as there are several factors that may affect the process. We will do our best to keep you updated along the way.

Examples are:

- The time it takes for notes and research from the clinical team, if the item is very technical or outside of our normal matrix of wheelchairs or parts, as we may need input from another colleague.
- A quote is required from the supplier before we can place an order.
- Response times if there is a query on the prescription.
- The supplier having parts out of stock.
- Complexity of a handover appointment and which members of the clinical team are required and location.
- Appointment availability – we typically book up to 6 weeks in advance.
- The length of the NHS waiting list.

5) Why don't you hold stock of all the wheelchairs?

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Wheelchair Service receives a wide range of referral types from basic wheelchairs and buggies, through to complex powerchairs and bespoke specialist seating.

We do hold a fleet of chairs and parts, but often these need to be tailored to an individual and therefore we will order in these to match their individual prescription.

6) What should I do if my condition changes or deteriorates?

If your needs have changed, your condition has worsened or you are experiencing discomfort, please contact AJM by email ssotwheelchairservice@ajmhealthcare.org and a member of our Customer Service Team will respond to your inquiry within 24 hours

If you do not have access to email, please call the Customer Service team on 0808 175 3996 between 8am- 6pm, Monday to Friday.

7) What should I do if I want to make a complaint?

If you are dissatisfied with the service provided by the wheelchair service, we encourage you to contact us so we can understand your concerns and work together to find a resolution. We value all feedback—whether positive or negative—and welcome complaints of any nature, big or small.

If you are raising a complaint on behalf of someone else, please ensure you have their permission before getting in touch. For confidentiality reasons, we require explicit consent from the service user before discussing any details related to their care or experience.

Complain to AJM Wheelchair Services

Step 1

Get in touch with the Staffordshire Wheelchair Service Customer Service Team. They will listen to your concerns and aim to sort out your problem straight away if possible.

Call 0808 175 3996

or email AJM.ssothewheelchairservice@nhs.net

Visit <https://www.ajmhealthcare.com/local-service-centres/staffordshire-stoke-on-trent/feedback/>

Step 2

If the Customer Service team has not been able to resolve your problem, please send a written complaint to:

The Manager
AJM Healthcare
Units J-L Daniel Platts Way
Stoke on Trent
ST6 4JU

Email

ssotwheelchairservice@ajmhealthcare.org

The Customer Service Team will contact you within 5 days to discuss your complaint and provide a formal response within 25 days.

Step 3

If the Team and Manager have been unable to provide you with a satisfactory resolution, you can escalate the matter by writing to the Complaints team at our corporate office:

Complaints Team
AJM Healthcare
Ash House
Woodlands Business Park
Linford Wood West
Milton Keynes MK14 6ET

Email: complaintstokeandstaffs@ajmhealthcare.org

The Complaints Team will contact you within 5 days to discuss your complaint and provide a formal response within 25 days.

In the unlikely event that you remain unhappy with the resolution offered by AJM Healthcare; you can escalate your complaint to the local Integrated Care Board (ICB).

NOTE: *Please be aware that if you have an ongoing complaint with AJM Healthcare you will not be able to raise another complaint with the ICB until a final decision and response has been made.*

Step 4

Complain to the ICB

Complaints and enquiries are managed by the ICB Patient Services team. You can contact the team via any of the methods below:

- Freephone: 0808 196 8861
- Email: PatientServices@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk
- Post: New Beacon Building, Stafford Education and Enterprise Park, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 OBF

Visit <https://staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk/contact-us/patient-advice-and-liaison-service/> for more information.