

Wheelchair user name:

Emergency wheelchair provider name and contact details:

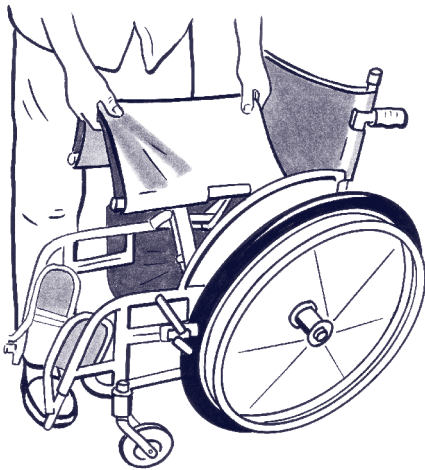
## Important information

This booklet contains important information for your health and mobility. Your new wheelchair is a temporary wheelchair. You may need to be assessed for a permanent wheelchair within 6-9 months.

You may need referral if you are:

- *At risk of a pressure wound;*
- *Finding it difficult to sit in comfort and upright (for a more supportive wheelchair);*
- *Moving to a different place after receiving your wheelchair (for follow-up, including maintenance and repairs).*

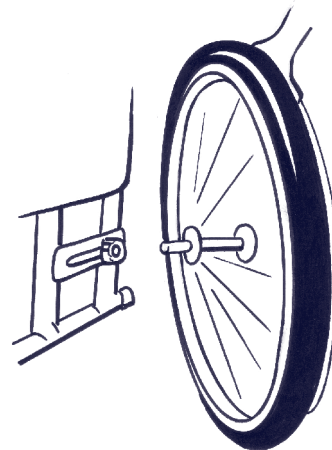
## How to handle your wheelchair



### FOLDING AND UNFOLDING THE WHEELCHAIR

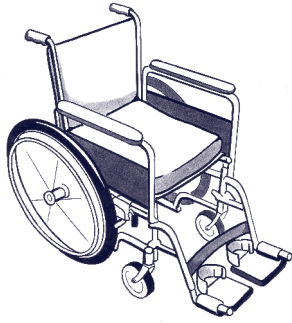
### PREPARING FOR TRANSPORT

- Remove armrests (if removable)
- Remove footrests (if removable)
- Fold – some backrests fold forwards
- Remove rear wheels (if removable)



**When replacing rear wheels, always check they have clicked or locked back in position. A loose rear wheel is very dangerous!**

## How to check your cushion



### PUTTING THE CUSHION ON THE SEAT

Make sure the cushion is placed correctly on the seat.

- Check front / back
- Check top / bottom

## How to avoid pressure wounds

### **Remember**

Any part of your body that comes into contact with the wheelchair can be an area where a pressure wound could develop.

You are at most risk of developing a pressure wound if you:

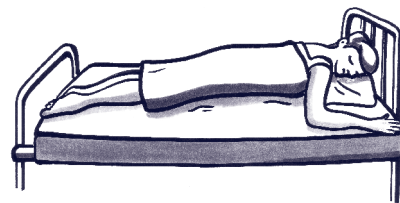
- Have reduced feeling (sensation) in any area in contact with the wheelchair e.g. buttocks, back
- Have had a previous pressure wound in the past
- Are very thin or frail
- Cannot easily shift your weight

It is easier to prevent pressure wounds than to treat them.

Pressure wounds can usually be prevented by:

- Using pressure relief techniques
- Using a pressure relief cushion
- Sitting upright
- Regularly changing position while lying or sitting
- Checking your skin regularly

Lying on front to relieve pressure from sitting in a wheelchair



Checking skin using a mirror

### HOW TO CHECK FOR PRESSURE WOUNDS

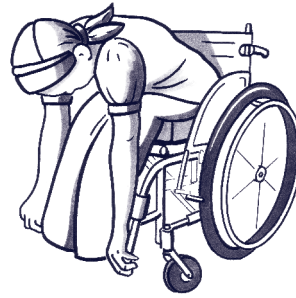
Check daily

- Before getting out of bed in the morning
- Before going to bed at night
- Ask for assistance if you are unable to do this for yourself

## HOW TO RELIEVE PRESSURE: BENDING FORWARD

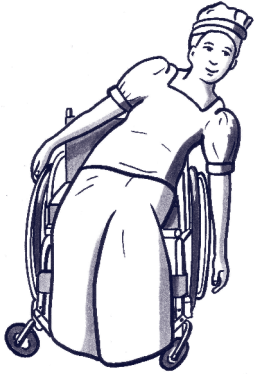
There are different ways to relieve pressure when in your wheelchair.

- Independent: if you have good balance and strength
- Bending forward with assistance if you have difficulty with balance and less strength



## HOW TO RELIEVE PRESSURE: SIDE TO SIDE LEANING

- This method is suitable if you have difficulty leaning forward. Repeat on both sides.
- Hook your arm over the push handle for support.



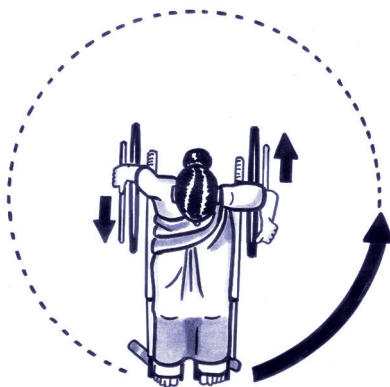
## How to propel your wheelchair

### PUSHING POSITION: LEAN FORWARDS SLIGHTLY

- To use less effort while pushing, push from a 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock position with long smooth action
- Let your arms swing back before starting the push again



## How to turn your wheelchair



### TURNING THE WHEELCHAIR

- To turn, push forwards with one hand
- At the same time, the other hand pulls backwards

## How to go up and down slopes

### PROPELLING UP A SLOPE

- Lean forward – this stops the wheelchair tipping
- To stop or rest – park the wheelchair sideways



### PROPELLING DOWN A SLOPE

- Lean backwards
- Let the push rim slide slowly through the hands



If you prefer assistance, ask your assistant to hold the push handles as you move up or down a slope.

## How to move on rough ground and stairs with assistance

### ASSISTANCE OVER ROUGH GROUND

- Ask your assistant to tilt the wheelchair on its back wheels until it feels balanced
- Your assistant should keep good control of the tilt by holding the push handles firmly
- Keep your head forward while you push the wheels



## To go up and down stairs



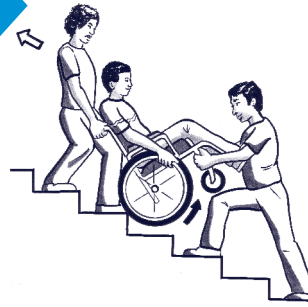
It is possible to go up and down stairs with one or two people. If in doubt, ask two people to help, one person behind holding push handles; one person in front holding frame.

Advise your assistant to keep their back straight and bend their knees.

Co-ordinate lift counting 1,2,3.

## UP STAIRS

- Go up **backwards**
- Position wheelchair against first step
- Ask assistant to tilt wheelchair onto back wheels
- To go up the step pull up and back against each step
- Assist by pulling the push rims backwards for each step



## DOWN STAIRS

- Go down **forwards**
- Ask assistant to tilt the wheelchair onto the back wheels
- Ask assistant to slowly roll the rear wheels down one step at a time.
- Assist by controlling the push rims as the wheels roll down the step
- Pull back against each step



Watch this video for a demonstration of some of the mobility skills described above:

## How to transfer to and from your wheelchair

### PREPARING THE WHEELCHAIR

Some armrests and footrests are swing away or removable. Move these before transferring.



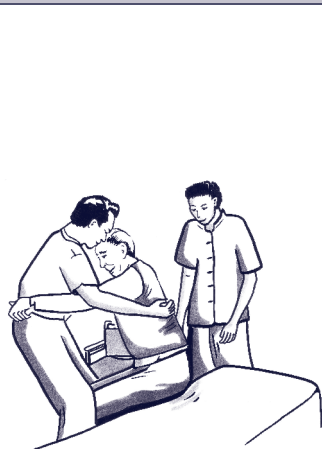
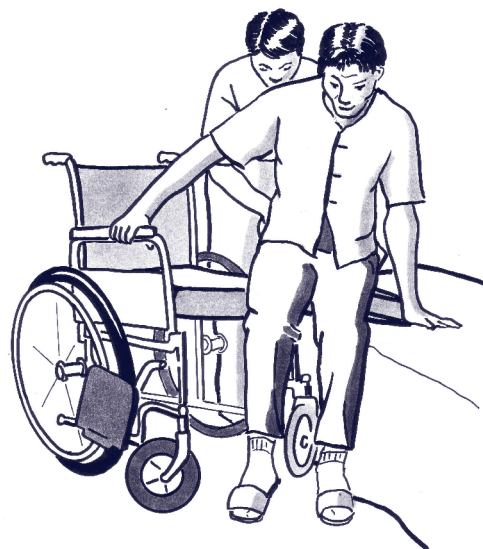
### TRANSFERRING INDEPENDENTLY

- Position your wheelchair close and apply brakes
- Move to front of cushion
- Position your hands and feet
- Push shoulders down to lift
- Keep head down to help balance



## TRANSFERRING SITTING WITH A TRANSFER BOARD

- Position your wheelchair close and apply brakes
- Remove armrest and swing away footrests
- Move to front of cushion
- Lean to side and ask assistant to position transfer board under buttock and on bed
- Push shoulders down to lift. Ask assistant to help by moving buttocks
- Keep head down to help balance



## TRANSFERRING STANDING WITH ASSISTANCE

- Position your wheelchair close and apply brakes
- Remove armrest and swing away footrests
- Move to front of cushion
- Ask assistant to support around your shoulder blades to help you to lean forward and stand up. They may also gently support your knees from the side
- A second assistant may help by supporting you around the hips
- Gently turn to the side and sit down

## TRANSFERRING TO AND FROM A CAR

Transferring into a car:


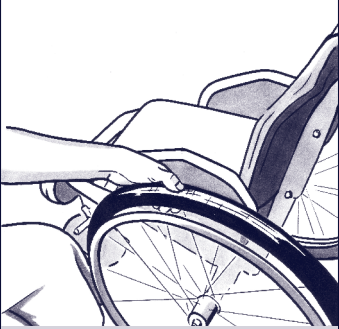
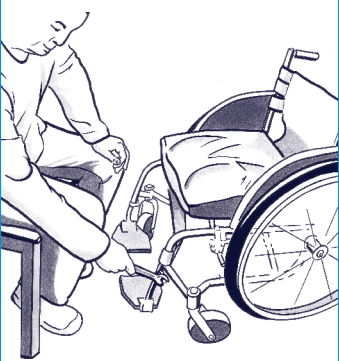
- Position your wheelchair close and apply brakes
- Move to front of cushion
- **Place feet inside vehicle first**
- Position your hands and feet
- Push shoulders down to lift
- Keep head down to help balance

Transferring out of a car – follow the same steps as above but in reverse order. **Move feet out of vehicle last.**



Watch this video for a demonstration of some of the transfers described above:

## How to care for your wheelchair and cushion

Check	Why this is important	How to do it
 <p><i>Check cushion</i></p>	<p>Cushions should be clean and dry to protect skin</p>	<p>Remove cushion from cover and wash separately</p>
 <p><i>Check tyres are pumped up.</i></p>	<p>It is easier to propel the wheelchair, taking less energy Brakes will work correctly</p>	<p>Press thumb across the tyre. It should be possible to depress the tyre very slightly (about 5mm) Pump up using a bicycle pump or similar</p>
 <p><i>Tighten nuts and bolts (if loose)</i></p>	<p>Loose bolts cause unwanted movement in parts</p>	<p>Check wheelchair for loose bolts or nuts. Tighten loose bolts or nuts with a wrench. Do not overtighten.</p>



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For more information see:  
<https://www.gate-tap.org>  
[assistivetechology@who.int](mailto:assistivetechology@who.int)