

**General Advice:** These instructions are general advice only and do not take into account your specific circumstance. These instructions are to be used in conjunction with the information provided by your health professional and any instructions provided by the equipment manufacturer. Do not exceed the Maximum User Weight specified by the manufacturer. If you are unsure on how to use or fit a piece of equipment, please contact your Health Professional or Country Care Store.

## Manual Wheelchair Use

**Manual wheelchairs** are mobility devices in which a person with limited mobility can become more mobile and independent again. There are two types of manual wheelchairs, self-propel where the chair has bigger back wheels and the user can propel themselves or transit/attendant propelled, these come with smaller wheels and the user is pushed by a carer. Depending on how long the user sits in the chair and what their postural requirements are will also depend on what style chair they require

- **Scripted Manual Wheelchair** - A full time wheelchair user, someone that is required to sit in a manual chair for most of the day or may have complex seating needs, will need to be in a manual chair that has been scripted (customised) to their measurements and requirements. It will include a scripted backrest and cushion. Ensuring the person has optimum positioning and comfort in the chair will assist their functionality and independence
- **Non-Scripted Manual Wheelchair** - A user who is going to use a manual chair for only short periods of the day and does not have complex seating requirements will generally have a non-scripted or 'off the shelf' manual wheelchair, these come in standard sizes and builds with some adjustable features

## Safety

- Manual wheelchairs have a safe working limit so always be sure to check the weight of the user as all wheelchairs weight limits differ
- It is important to check that the carer or person handling the wheelchair on behalf of the user is able to dismantle the wheelchair correctly and be able to store it in the car safely without manual handling issues
- When folding and unfolding wheelchair seats be careful not to trap or pinch fingers. Always fold out wheelchair seats with the palm of your hands and keep fingers away from the edge of the seat
- Always apply the brakes when the user is sitting down or standing up from the wheelchair
- Manual wheelchairs are not to be used as seats in a motor vehicle or wheelchair taxi unless they have been transit rated. Please check with your supplier if the wheelchair you are purchasing or hiring is approved for use as a seat in a motor vehicle
- It is important to choose the right type of manual wheelchair for your needs, and to use proper technique and safety measures when operating a manual wheelchair. If you have concerns seek advice from your Healthcare Professional or supplier

**To Fit a Non-Scripted Manual Wheelchair** (next page)



## To Fit a Non-Scripted Manual Wheelchair

**If your seating needs require a scripted manual wheelchair please contact a Healthcare Professional**

1. The wheelchair should be positioned so that the user can easily sit down and get out of it. Brakes should be applied before the user sits or stands up from the wheelchair
  2. The correct seat width will be determined by a persons hips - ensure that the seat is not too wide or too narrow. You should be able to run the side of your hand comfortably along the side of the persons hips and thigh without restriction
  3. Some non-scripted-manual wheelchairs have the ability to adjust the seat depth slightly, however seat depth comes as standard for many of them. Allow for 1-2 finger widths of room between the front of the seat and the back of the knees. The backrest should provide support for the user's back and shoulders. If the user wants to self-propel the backrest should end about a finger width (1-2cm) below the shoulder blades, making it easier for the user to operate the hand rims on the wheels
  4. Many non-scripted manual wheelchairs will allow height adjustments to the footrests. Knees should be level with hips (approximately 90° angle) and feet should make full contact with the footrest. If there is a cushion on the seat, bear in mind this will change the height of the users legs and the footrests may need further adjustment. Footrests are not to be stood on, always swing the footrests away when the user is sitting or standing from the wheelchair
  5. Some wheelchairs may have armrests that have height adjustment so that the user's arms are resting comfortably on them. Many have flip up armrests to help the user get better functionality at a table or desk, but can also assist with transfers
- **It's important to note** that the specific instructions for fitting a manual wheelchair may vary depending on the type and user. Please ensure you read the user manual and seek professional fitting and user advice from your Allied Health Professional or a member of the Country Care Group service team

## PRECAUTIONS & SAFETY

- Be careful not to pinch fingers when unfolding wheelchair seats
- Always ensure quick release rear wheels are fully engaged
- Check tyre inflation & brake function before every use
- DO NOT leave the chair in direct sunlight for long periods or near direct heat sources as the frame may become hot to touch
- DO NOT submerge in water for use in a pool or shower/bathing setting
- DO NOT use for transportation in a motor vehicle unless they have been tested and approved for use. Always consult an Allied Health Professional

## MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

- Please check the product label / user manual for specific cleaning instructions
- Follow instructions on labels where present
- Wash with a damp cloth and a gentle soap with water
- Tyres can be cleaned with most detergents
- Avoid getting water inside the frame of the chair when cleaning - **DO NOT IMMERSE IN WATER**
- Should the equipment appear damaged, **DO NOT USE**. It may require replacing