

## Welcome

Welcome to the fourth issue of the SMART Wheelchair and Seating Services newsletter. If you have any feedback on the newsletter, please email us at Lothian. [smartmanagement@nhs.net](mailto:smartmanagement@nhs.net) or contact Les Malone, Modernisation Manager on Tel. 0131 537 9436.

### SMART website

The SMART website ([www.smart.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.smart.scot.nhs.uk)) is being updated with a member's area. The new part of the website will be available for NHS staff, Social Care OTs, GPs and other professionals who may refer into SMART Services. This will allow referrers to log into the website and access a range of documents that will assist with the referral process. The section will be accessible once the individual has registered online.

For old and new referrers alike the "How to Fill out a Referral Form" training video will be within the members' area. The video can act as a training tool for new referrers and as a refresher to existing referrers.

To ensure appropriate referrals are submitted, the eligibility criteria for wheelchair provision will also be listed on the webpage. These include the criteria for provision of:

- Manual wheelchairs – attendant controlled, occupant controlled, energy efficient
- Powered wheelchairs – indoor, indoor/outdoor, attendant controlled and dual control (the referral form for powered wheelchairs requires the signature of a medical professional)
- Children's pushchairs/buggies including definitions of the different categories of children
- A second wheelchair

All the relevant referral forms will be available and can be submitted electronically or printed off and submitted by post.

The aim of this new webpage is to make the referral system easier and more efficient and to generate only appropriate referrals.

Any suggestions or comments on the contents of the website can be submitted using the online feedback form.

### Staff profile - WSS therapists

The wheelchair and wheelchair special seating team comprises occupational therapists, physiotherapists, clinical scientists/bioengineers and doctors and is responsible for provision throughout the Lothians, Fife and The Borders. It is supported by a technical team, who will feature in a later edition, and an external contractor based in Livingston.

The service is headed by Cathy Dowell and the staff work in dedicated adult and paediatric teams. The paediatric service is called 'Enabling Technology for Children' (ETC) and provides the service to children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

The team undertake clinical assessments at the SMART Centre, satellite clinics in Fife and The Borders, hospitals, clients' own homes, schools, day centres, and care homes as required. The needs of each wheelchair user are assessed on an individual basis and the requirements of any carers are taken into account where possible. Wheelchairs, cushions and supportive seating

are then prescribed from a range of equipment available to the service. If there is not a commercially available solution to a seating problem then custom-made seating can be designed and manufactured within the SMART Centre's workshop by skilled and experienced staff.



*In the picture from left to right – (back row) Mike Dolan, Andy McLaggan, Cathy Dowell, Catherine Mathieson, Susan Hillman, Tash Chaudhry (front row) Lisa Doughty, Catherine Robertson, Karen Muir, Jennifer Walsh. (Members of the Team missing from the picture – Lesley Purves, Emma Purdie, Margaret Andrews, James Hollington and Colin Geggie)*

## SMART user/carer network

The SMART user/carer network was established over a year ago and now has over 250 members from across Lothian, Fife and Borders. The network aims to provide service users and carers with an opportunity to get involved in the development of the service. Anyone who is interested in joining the network or who would like further information can contact Les Malone, Modernisation Manager on Tel. 0131 537 9436 or by email at: Lothian.smartmanagement@nhs.net

## Outcomes from NHS Borders LEAN event

A redesign project of the Wheelchair and Seating pathway within the Borders was carried out through a modified Lean workout approach. The redesign project focused on the user pathway where patients and staff from Borders interface with SMART Wheelchair and Seating Services. This included

first contact by the referrer to the delivery of the wheelchair and/or specialist seating.

The project involved staff from across NHS Borders, SMART Services and an occupational therapist from Health and Social Care (Borders). A separate event was held for wheelchair users and carers in the Borders which provided an opportunity to contribute to this piece of work and share their experiences of the service.

A 30-day action plan was developed which identified a number of changes to test which included:

- A review of the referral to assessment process including paperwork
- A review of information around transitions – staff and users/families
- Identifying any gaps and solutions around wheelchair accessories
- Reviewing information which was provided to users from SMART
- Looking at access issues and solutions
- Exploring issues around signposting to services and communication
- Scoping the distribution of short-term loan wheelchairs for children
- Exploring training needs of staff within NHS Borders

The benefits and outcomes from the project included:

- Improved sharing of relevant information across SMART and referring agencies in the Borders – robust referral system
- Improved information around transitional arrangements for young people, their families and professionals supporting them
- Patients supplied with information packs which is more user-friendly
- Signposting of wider staff groups across NHS Borders to ensure awareness of SMART services and what it can provide i.e. links to SMART website

- Development of easy access e-links for staff within the NHS and Scottish Borders Council to SMART
- Awareness of training gaps
- Identified gap within children's service – four wheelchairs are being purchased through an endowment fund to support discharge from children's wards. Potential reduction in length of stay.

Kathleen Henderson, who is Lead Occupational Therapist in NHS Borders, said: "The LEAN process gave SMART and NHS Borders staff an opportunity to work together in understanding and refining, where appropriate, the systems and processes that are required in the delivery of an efficient wheelchair and seating specialist service. In summary – an effective process to promote joint working and sharing of knowledge."

If you would like further information on the outcome of the event please contact Kathleen Henderson, NHS Borders Lead Professional on Tel. 01896 824 527 or by email at: [lothian.smartmanagement@nhs.net](mailto:lothian.smartmanagement@nhs.net)

## Hawick satellite clinic

The Wheelchair and Seating Services have been running a satellite clinic once a month at Hawick Community Hospital as part of a pilot project. Patients are offered the opportunity to attend the clinic as an alternative to travelling to the SMART Centre in Edinburgh or a home visit. The pilot project was due to end at the end of March 2011, however due to the adverse weather over the winter period it has been agreed to extend the pilot for a further three months. Data is being collected during the course of the pilot and patients who attend the clinic are invited to complete a short questionnaire on their experience. The outcome from the pilot project will be evaluated at the end of the period.

If you would like further information about the pilot project, please contact Kathleen Henderson, Lead Occupational Therapist, NHS Borders on Tel. 01896 824 527 or you can email [Lothian.smartmanagement@nhs.net](mailto:Lothian.smartmanagement@nhs.net)

## DVD/podcast on demonstration of wheelchair and buggy

As part of improving patient information to support self-management, the Wheelchair and Seating Services are developing a DVD/podcast on the demonstration of a manual wheelchair, powered wheelchair and children's buggy. The DVD/podcast will cover some of the following areas:

- how to setup the wheelchair/buggy
- information on brakes, lap belts/harnesses, armrests, anti-tip castors, tyres etc
- fixing the hanger brackets/footrests to the wheelchair
- transferring from the wheelchair
- transporting the wheelchair by car
- manoeuvring up and down kerbs
- powered chair controls.

The demonstrations will also be available on the SMART website.

If you have any questions about the DVD/podcast or would like a copy when it is available please contact Les Malone.