

Wheelchair Service Review

22nd April 12:00 – 13:00

Chloe Morley chairing.

Terri Standhaft and Louise Middleton attended this initial meeting.

There was discussion around the difference between children, young people and adults getting access to a wheelchair due to a physical need, and those who may be eligible for safety reasons. In some cases, a buggy is identified as being appropriate if the need is related to behaviour and safety. However, these buggies are expensive (there is always a monetary element) and some are not appropriate once the child is over the age of 7 years.

There were concerns raised around the issues of restraints, for example, some able children and young people being transported in a wheelchair due to behaviour and safety concerns. It was raised that restraint should be minimal. What happens if a young person gets used to being restrained? Would it be more appropriate for there to be other support made available to enable those children and young people to access their community safely.

The system seems to be patchy across Dorset, with families experiencing different levels of support depending on where they live. Not all families are aware of the criteria for accessing services, or what services are available. Many families who have not met criteria for either a wheelchair or buggy have been self-funding these from charities, however, there is not equipment maintenance on this route.

Referrals come from a variety of sources; OTs are able to refer to the service where there are safety concerns. However, there has been a change in provision and there are big gaps where support is needed for those with behaviour and safety concerns.

It was agreed by all that their needs to be consistency with regard to assessments across whole of Dorset and better joint working.

Next meeting in 6 weeks.

Actions: to develop a set of questions for parents – what existing experiences are, where are gaps, what needs to be done. These questions will be sent out via Dorset Parent Carer Council and Parent Carers Together.