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Exceptional care.

AMP015

Medical Adaptations

Policy

Last Review	March 2025
Next Review	March 2028
Lead Officer	Head of Development & Asset Strategy



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1. Introduction

Trust receives an annual funding allocation from Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) to assist with the provision of aids and adaptations to customers who have been identified as requiring assistance in the form of permanent medical adaptations, to allow them to remain in their home.

Trust is committed to providing an adequately resourced and efficient medical adaptations, procurement and management service that addresses the needs of our customers.

2. Aims, Objectives & Outcomes

The key aims of the Adaptations Policy are:

- To put the needs of Trust customers first.
- To support customers to stay in their own homes, where appropriate, and arrange appropriate adaptations.
- To ensure that properties with adaptations are clearly identified on Trust databases/software systems so that best use of these properties can be made as they become available. In allocating these properties, applicants requiring an adapted property will be given priority over those who do not.
- To maximise the grants and other resources available for adaptations, ensuring value for money at all times.
- To ensure that resources are directed to those with the greatest need.
- To ensure that Trust effectively administers referrals from Social Work, Occupational Therapists (OTs) and other medical professionals for medical adaptations that will enable disabled customers to sustain their tenancy.
- To work closely with Local Authority and Health Service partners to deliver adaptations to customer's homes where required.
- To comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements in relation to adaptations.

Our objectives for the service include:

- providing a prompt, efficient and cost-effective medical adaptations service.
- supporting the independence and dignity of customers by undertaking adaptations to their existing homes so that they can remain living there.
- ensuring that Trust carries out adaptations that are appropriate to customers' needs and therefore, utilised to their full potential. However, acknowledging that in some instances construction type and financial constraints may prohibit the successful adaptation of some homes and in such circumstances providing appropriate housing options advice.
- ensuring that Trust makes best use of its housing stock and resources available by allocating vacant adapted houses to new and existing customers with similar medical needs.
- procuring appropriately qualified contractors to install medical adaptations within the homes of tenants.

- ensuring that systems and procedures are in place, so that Trust complies with its duties in relation to medical adaptations and does so efficiently, effectively, and economically.
- operating an effective monitoring system, including audit trails and reporting systems that ensure compliance with the medical adaptations process.
- maximising grant funding available from the Scottish Government.
- taking positive steps to inform and listen to customers about continuous improvements to our medical adaptations service.
- In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to medical adaptations by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following:
 - Tenancy sustainment – Customers get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services directly provided Trust and by other organisations.
 - Value for money – customers and factored owners receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

Key outcomes of operating an effective Medical Adaptations Policy include:

- ensuring that tenancies are sustained,
- optimising customer satisfaction with the medical adaptations service; and,
- delivering value for money.

Annual Return on Charter Reporting on the following Indicators:

- No18: Number of households currently waiting on adaptations to their home; and,
- No 19: Average time to complete adaptations.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

The Director of Assets & Sustainability has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Medical Adaptations Policy. The Head of Development & Asset Strategy is responsible for key aspects of the day-to-day service delivery with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.

The Audit & Performance Committee will receive quarterly performance reports on the implementation of the Medical Adaptations Policy so that they can have assurance that it is operating effectively in practice.

Trust approach to the management and recording of Medical Adaptations, as tangible fixed assets, is set out within our FP01 – Tangible Fixed Assets Policy.

We will maintain details of our adapted properties within our property database and ensure that such information is accessible to Repairs & Maintenance and Customer Experience colleagues.

4. Funding Medical Adaptations

Expenditure on medical aids and adaptations varies from year to year, based upon current requirements, historic expenditure levels and the grant subsidy allocation provided by Scottish Government.

Medical adaptations will only be instructed where there is clear confirmation of funding / budget availability. The budget profile will be set to allow the management of spend, as far as reasonably possible, throughout the financial year, so that emerging urgent referrals can be considered.

Where less financial resources are available, Trust may choose to allocate resources for permanent medical adaptations to tenanted houses from its own investment budget, where there is sufficient provision. In these cases, a clear business case for such expenditure will be agreed in advance with the Director of Assets & Sustainability.

Trust recognises that in many instances, such as where a customer's household is expected to have long-term needs and where there are established support networks, there may be a clear rationale for investing in adapting an existing property.

The assessment and prioritisation of such cases will generally be carried out by Occupational Therapists. A property can be adapted where other housing options have been ruled out, where there is budget available, where it is technically possible to adapt the property economically and where adapting the property makes best use of the housing stock in terms of meeting current and future housing needs. Trust will consult with Occupational Therapists to consider alternative housing options, reduced specification or other priority cases that can be assisted within the funds available.

5. Delivery of the Service

We will promote our Medical Adaptations Service through our newsletter, website, social media platforms and tenancy handbook. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult tenants in line with our Customer Engagement Strategy.

Where appropriate, through the Common Housing Registers (CHR) or our own waiting lists, Trust will explore housing options for a customer to transfer to a home more suited to their needs before considering adapting their current home.

Similarly, where Trust has a vacant adapted property, it will use the CHR and our own waiting list to seek to identify a household whose needs match that of the property. In most cases, and where possible, we will accommodate our customers within their homes with the required adaptations where there is funding to do so.

Trust is responsible for permanent adaptations to customer's properties, which include, but are not limited to:

- level access showers.
- provision of ground floor WC / bathing facilities
- installation of lever taps

- provision of permanent access ramps
- handrails (internal and external)
- alterations to window or door widths
- non-slip flooring

The above list is not exhaustive, and other referrals may be considered on a case-by-case basis. For example, minor works under the value of £300 may be instructed by the Head of Assets & Sustainability and paid for via Trust's response repairs budget where it is considered reasonable to do so and/or where AHSP grant funding is not available.

Generally, Trust will not approve or fund property extensions or major structural works and will do this only in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been discounted and where the Director of Assets & Sustainability considers it reasonable within the context of the Asset & Development Management Strategy.

Where funding is secured from alternative sources for such works, Trust will not withhold its consent unreasonably. Local Authority Social Work Departments are responsible for the provision of items classed as temporary, including:

- specialist bathing equipment
- raised toilet seats.
- stair/bath lifts
- removable ramps

Assessments are carried out and prioritised by the Occupational Therapist, or Medical Officer, in cases of central heating requests. Trust will maintain a database of applicants graded in application chronological and priority order, based upon the referrals received from the Occupational Therapist.

Due to limited funding, it may only be possible to progress referrals above a minimum priority level. In this instance, they will be retained for reference and may be funded where resources become available.

However, should a customer's condition change whilst on the medical adaptations database, their priority may be reviewed, and an updated referral submitted by the Occupational Therapist or Medical Officer.

For new build developments Trust will incorporate 'Housing for Varying Needs' (HFVN) standards. Trust will also seek to engage with local authority partners early in the development process and, through the CHR or our own waiting list, identify households with particular needs.

Where reasonable, Trust will endeavour to address any specific requirements at the initial design stage to ensure that those property types being constructed meet the requirement of the household and future generations. Any unidentified minor internal or external adaptations will be dealt with during the construction stage (with funding via AHSP Stage 2 Grant, where such funding is available).

Trust will claim VAT exemption where applicable. The selected Contractor will be provided with a VAT Exemption Form, signed by Trust.

Trust will maintain adaptations on behalf of customers where they continue to be required. However, if due to a change in personal circumstance, or tenancy, the adaptation is no longer required, we may remove the adaptation rather than repairing or replacing.

6. Data Protection

We will comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, which gives individuals the right to see and receive a copy of any personal information that is held about them by the Association and to have any inaccuracies corrected.

7. Anti-Bribery

Trust is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all its activities and, to ensure compliance with the Bribery Act 2010, it has introduced an Anti-Bribery policy and procedures.

These must be adhered to by all employees, Board Members and associated persons or organisations acting for or on behalf of Trust when undertaking any actions referred to in this policy.

8. Statement Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

As leaders of EDI, Trust aims to promote equality and diversity and operate equal opportunities policies which inform all aspects of its business. It will ensure that it adheres to the Equality Act 2010 by being committed to equal and fair treatment for all and opposed to any form of unlawful discrimination. As such, in considering this policy, no one will be treated differently or less favourably than others because of any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010:

- disability.
- sex.
- gender reassignment.
- pregnancy and maternity.
- race.
- sexual orientation.
- religion or belief.
- marriage and civil partnership.
- age.

or because of any other condition or characteristic which could place someone at a disadvantage were it to be taken into account, unless this can be objectively justified in terms of the legislation.

Trust will make reasonable adjustments for disabled people where necessary and possible to do so and will use Happy to Translate tools and procedures to help overcome a language barrier.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis. The purpose of the review is to assess the policy's effectiveness in adhering to current legislation and good practice and identify any changes which may be required.

10. Document References

In all of the Association's official documents, where references are made to specific job titles, roles, groups or committees, such references shall be deemed to include any changes or amendments to these job titles, roles, groups or committees resulting from any restructuring or organisational changes made within the Association (or, where this policy also applies to another member of the Trust group, made within that group member) between policy reviews.