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Welcome

Welcome prescribers to the first 2016 edition of the SWEP prescriber newsletter.

In this edition you'll find information regarding progress on the SWEP website re-development; new business rules for funding of stair/platform lifts; important information regarding management of incomplete applications; price changes and picklist code up-date and much more.

SWEP Website Project – Progress Report

We are very excited about the functionality of our new website. While the website has been active since August, prescribers have been checking registration details and credentialing levels on-line and are now able to lodge applications and associated documents through the secure on-line portal.

Prescribers are now able to check status of applications lodged on-line in the Prescriber Dashboard. Please note that you are still be able to email, fax or mail applications for two months, but we will encourage you to get used to the new system as ultimately you will only be able to submit applications and associated documents on-line.

Thank you all for your patience and co-operation in the early stages of the rollout of the new website – if you find any glitches please let us know straight away.

1. Funding for stair lifts

On 9 December 2015 the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) approved inclusion of both internal and external stair lifts/platforms under the major home modifications category.

Both of these items will be classified as 'red' and they will be added to the catalogue with the following picklist numbers:

- HA6 Internal stair lifts for Adults
- HC6 Internal stair lifts for Children
- HA7 External stair lifts for Adults
- HC7 External stair lifts for Children

Archicentre will be required to provide confirmation that a ramp is not a suitable option for external stair lifts, but will not be required to complete the post installation inspection. Internal stair lifts do not require Archicentre input.

The home modifications team will now process those applications previously placed on hold, to be triaged and funded in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines.

2. Incomplete Applications

In an attempt to manage the number of incomplete applications received by the SWEP programs we have introduced regular reminders for prescribers to submit outstanding information. Across all SWEP programs, we currently have over 1,490 incomplete applications lodged by prescribers since July 2014 with a value of more than \$3M.

Reminders will be sent to you 30, 60 and 90 days after receipt of an incomplete application. If we have had no response from you after 90 days, your client's application will be cancelled.

3. Compensable Clients

It has recently become apparent that SWEP is not always informed by clients, families, prescribers and/or legal practitioners when a client is pursuing or has received compensation for their compensable disability.

Accordingly in December we released a communique for SWEP registered prescribers and Victorian legal practitioners regarding our expectations with regard to eligibility, notification and management of compensable clients. We hope that by now you are all familiar with this communique which can be found on our website [here](#).

4. Contractual obligations of SWEP contracted Suppliers

SWEP recently received feedback from prescribing organisations regarding supplier substitution of products within our tendered equipment catalogue. This matter was addressed with the supplier who was required to immediately contact clients and organise to replace the substituted items with the correct item. There is **no capacity** for a SWEP contracted supplier to substitute a catalogue item for a different piece of equipment.

Any queries or concerns relating to tendered equipment or interactions with our contracted suppliers, should be referred to our Contracts Management Team Leader, Sue Vincent (ph: 5333 8136 or email sussanv@bhs.org.au)

5. Imprest Store FAQ's and Agreement

Following feedback from prescribing organisations who are interested in our Imprest Store concept about greater clarity of responsibilities, we have developed a 'Imprest Store Agreement' and an FAQ so that organisations are very clear prior to commitment to host an Imprest Store. Organisations that have already established a SWEP Imprest Store of contracted items will be contacted and asked to complete the SWEP Imprest Store Agreement. If your organisation is unable to meet the requirements for holding the store, you can arrange return of Imprest Store items.

6. Access to Equipment during Trial Phase

Prescribers are reminded to check the re-issue database to make sure that the item you are prescribing is not available ex-reissue before engaging a supplier. Our overarching A&EP Guidelines are clear that if re-issue equipment is available, it is not possible to purchase the same item new.

We are hoping that by now prescribers are familiar with which suppliers are contracted to provide contract items. Please remember to contact the contracted supplier for access to equipment during trial if you do not have access to an Imprest Store. This will overcome the issue of SWEP changing suppliers on scripts for contract items where there is no clinical rationale not to use the contract item. If you require a non-contract item for your client to trial and the supplier indicates that they will not enable access to the item, SWEP will contact the supplier on your behalf if required as long as you have provided sufficient rationale as to why the contract item is not suitable. If suppliers refuse access to equipment during the trial phase, our only other option is for you to consider an alternate supplier who will enable access to equipment for trial.

7. SWEP contact for feedback

Please note that if you want to provide feedback about your interaction with SWEP please email this to the attention of Dianne Sealey (SWEP Director's PA) swep@bhs.org.au or call Di on 5333 8126.

8. Escalation of Applications

Following feedback from prescribers, SWEP has recently changed the way we communicate the application escalation process when clients and their families call us to check wait list applications. While previously we had advised clients that their prescribers could escalate urgency, we now advise that they should consult their prescriber if they believe their urgency of need has changed. We are hoping that this will alleviate pressure on prescribers to escalate when there is no clinical justification to do so.

9. Pick List & Catalogue change

When the Picklists & Catalogue were being developed a decision was made that the modification subsidy (\$2,750) would be applied to some of wheelchairs as well as the maximum subsidy amount (\$1,000 or \$1,250 lightweight w/cs). Following feedback from prescribers that this has resulted in confusion when additional modifications are required, we have now changed picklist #ZA1A5B (Ki Mobility Focus TIS manual wheelchair) to reflect the subsidy only with a co-contribution required @ \$3,057.17 and #XC1A5 (Zippie Iris TIS paediatric manual wheelchair) will require a co-contribution @ \$1,956.10.

This change means that the modification subsidy (\$2,750) can still be applied against any modifications required.

If you have any queries about this change please contact Sue Vincent on 5333 8136.

10. Price Changes

We have been asked to explain why co-contribution amounts have changed recently for some items. Please rest assured that there has been no reduction in any subsidy levels for any equipment categories. Co-contribution amounts change when suppliers change their prices, sometimes after applications have been lodged with SWEP. When this occurs, we contact the supplier to see if they can honour original price quoted, however suppliers are not always able to do this, hence change in co-contribution amounts. The most recent price change that we are aware of involves some of the voice prostheses which previously could be funded within subsidy but will now require a small co-contribution. We will always notify prescribers when this occurs so that you are able to explain to clients.

11. Competency Based Education

The development of the SWEP education program through Central Queensland University (CQU) is underway, with Clinical Advisors being appointed to develop and provide the courses within the next few months. Course dates and times will be advertised through the SWEP, CQU and OTA web-sites. Unfortunately the anticipated Green induction education sessions due to commence in January will now not be ready in time for new graduates. As soon as they commence, however, we will notify all Green prescribers of the dates and times so that new graduates can take advantage of the SWEP subsidised places.

12. Cataloguing of Equipment Componentry (wheelchair builds)

Work continues at Chemtronics to strip and catalogue reissuable components on wheelchairs when they are returned. This has already enabled us to 'custom build' wheelchairs for our clients using returned wheelchair bases and component parts including backrests, pressure care cushions, power elevating legrests, complex controls, lateral, pelvic and head supports, calf-straps and gel arm/foot pads.

We've already had positive feedback about this initiative, as we can currently provide these options with no wait for equipment and there are no co-contributions required for our clients. We encourage you to contact either Janet at SWEP (janetco@bhs.org.au) or 5333 8123 or the team at Chemtronics (Sarah & Tim) if you would like to take advantage of this initiative. Phone contact is 9463 2888 or via email timbelleville@chemtronics.com.au or sarahcasey@bhs.org.au.

13. A&EP (Adults) Budget & Demand Update

This financial year, we have had a significant increase in the number of applications that have either been triaged as 'order now' or escalated from the Wait-list due to change in client's circumstances. This has resulted in SWEP bringing forward an additional \$900,000 of our total annual budget into the first four months of the financial year. We have committed to ordering another \$440,000 of highest priority waitlisted applications over the next few weeks.

What this means is that there will need to be a commensurate reduction in spending for the remainder of the financial year. Internally, we have allocated budgets for equipment categories for the remainder of the year to ensure equity for all clients waiting for funding across all categories. This will be allocated using the overarching Priority of Access Guidelines to identify those people most urgently needing access to equipment.

Please note that there are currently over 10,000 people waiting for equipment at an estimated value of \$8.4 million in this program alone.

As always is the case, a small percentage of the monthly category budgets is quarantined to assist those people who have been waiting the longest. We have now allocated dedicated EFT to work specifically on Wait-list auditing.

14. Three Function Beds

We would like to remind prescribers that SWEP will not fund 2-function beds. Beds must have a minimum of 3-functions such as:

- High/low height range
- Head Raise
- Knee bend

Four functions beds can be prescribed. SWEP staff will contact the supplier if details on the quote are not provided in order to confirm functions of the bed if a non-contract bed is prescribed.

15. NDIS Up-date

No further news about the roll-out of the NDIS in Victoria other than what has already been released.

Victoria signed a bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth that outlines the transition plan from July 2016 to June 2019. The sequence of transition across Victoria is as follows:-

1 July 2016	Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Yarra
1 January 2017	Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees
1 May 2017	Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mt Alexander
1 October 2017	Inner Gippsland: Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Latrobe, South Gippsland, Ovens Murray: Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga Western District: Corangamite, Glenelg, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack
1 November 2017	Inner East: Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse Outer East: Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges
1 March 2018	Hume, Moreland
1 April 2018	Bayside, Frankston, Glen Eira, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula, Port Phillip, Stonnington
1 September 2018	Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong
1 October 2018	Brimbank Melton: Brimbank, Melton Western Melbourne: Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Wyndham
1 January 2019	Goulburn: Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie Mallee: Buloke, Gannawarra, Mildura, Swan Hill Outer Gippsland: East Gippsland, Wellington

16. SWEP Survey

Since July 2014 SWEP has been undertaking a client satisfaction survey to gauge customer experience and identify areas for improvement.

The responses we have had so far have been largely positive with:

- 96% client satisfaction - SWEP's overall service
- 95% client satisfaction - Equipment
- 93% client satisfaction - Experience with supplier
- 98% client satisfaction - Experience with prescriber
- 100% client satisfaction - Repairs undertaken

As this is an ongoing project we hope to gain a broader and deeper understanding of SWEP's current impact so that we may guide development to further benefit our clientele. We are currently focussing on procurement strategies to assist clients with costs and wait times – two areas that were flagged in the survey as areas that require improvement.

By going out to tender we have been able to provide clients with more cost efficient products which allows our budget to cater to more clients, helping to lower the wait time. We hope to see these initiatives reflected in the survey in the months to come while we search for further ways to assist our clients.

17. SWEP Staffing and contact details

We have had some changes within the management team recently with Loretta Zeeck resigning and Simone Davey taking 12 months leave of absence from her position at SWEP. Both Loretta and Simone have accepted positions as Assistant Directors, Assistive Technology with the NDIA national office in the Market & Providers Division. Exciting times for both Loretta and Simone and we look forward to them leveraging from their experience here at SWEP as they build and roll out the AT strategy.

Fiona Wakeling has been appointed to the Deputy Director's position. For anyone who is not aware, Fiona has been a member of the SWEP management team since our inception in 2010. Fiona brings to the position a wealth of knowledge about service delivery systems for community based clients and has significant experience at a management level. One of Fiona's real strengths is her strategic oversight and we look forward to her input into our ever-emerging service delivery model.

Brendon Butler joins the Management team as our Procurement and Corporate Governance Manager. Brendon has held many senior management positions at DHHS and has extensive procurement experience within the government sector and was a key member of the team that drove the introduction of the DHS One Standards accreditation requirements for service providers.

We are currently reviewing the SWEP Organisational Structure and will update you as soon as the emerging model is agreed upon. In the meantime, if you have any queries in relation to the A&EP (Adults) program or the NDIS that the relevant Team Leader is unable to help with, please direct your queries to Jeni Burton. The Leadership team's contact details are located [here](#)