



MINISTRY OF  
HEALTH

MANATŪ HAUORA

# Equipment and Modification Services

## Vehicle Purchase and Modifications Manual



<b>Review History</b>	
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## ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual provides the guidelines for Ministry of Health (Ministry) funding support for vehicle purchase and vehicle modifications for people with disabilities who are eligible to receive such services. This support is part of the Ministry's Equipment and Modification Services (EMS), which also includes funding for equipment and housing modifications.

Specific information about equipment and housing modifications is provided within separate manuals.

This manual is for:

- EMS Assessors who are credentialed to complete assessments and submit Service Requests for vehicle purchase or modifications for eligible disabled people
- people with disabilities and their family, whānau and support people who wish to understand more about this service

The Vehicle Purchase and Modifications Manual covers the Ministry's **Funding Guidelines** and includes:

- an overview of EMS
- assessment, eligibility and access criteria
- service options
- roles and responsibilities of all relevant parties

The **operational processes**, including the forms and templates to be used during the process of consideration of equipment and modifications which have been developed and are administered by the Ministry's contracted providers to manage Equipment and Modification Services are available on the EMS Providers' websites.

EMS Assessors may be Approved Assessors, Credentialed Assessors (including Provisional (In Training)) or Assessors approved through Service Accreditation. Information on the EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework, under which EMS Assessors submit Service Requests for Ministry funded equipment and modifications, can be found at the web address opposite.



Throughout this manual the term 'person' refers to the disabled person.



For more information on the EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework, go to:

[EMS Assessors - Enable New Zealand](#)



[Accessible Disability Funding](#)



An Approved or Credentialed EMS Assessor undertakes an assessment with the person for the consideration of equipment or modifications.



[EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework](#)

## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

The content of the manual is found on the left hand side of each page and is categorised by chapter names and numbered sequentially for easy reference.

**PART 1**

**Chapter Name**

Content...

This manual is for:

- EMS Assessors who complete assessments for disabled people and submit Service Requests for equipment on their behalf.
- Disabled people, their family or whānau and/or support people who wish to understand more about this service.

 Definition  
 Information  
 Example  
 Reference

April 2012 *Vehicle Manual* 2

Vehicle manual part number - indicating the main sections of the manual.

These icons indicate further explanations to the text contained on the page. The icons are used consistently throughout the manual.

Information contained in the text boxes provides explanation of the content.

Date page created or amended allowing for accurate version control of this publication.

Vehicle manual sequentially numbered for faster and easier referencing.

Note: This manual has been formatted for double sided printing.

## Key to symbols used throughout the manual:

Symbol	Meaning	Explanation
	<b>Definition</b>	<i>Definitions of terminology used in the text are explained as well as having a full glossary of terms.</i>
	<b>Information</b>	<i>This icon provides further explanation to the text and also directs readers to associated information in other sections of the manual.</i>
	<b>Example</b>	<i>The content of the text is further illustrated with relevant examples.</i>
	<b>Reference</b>	<i>This icon directs readers to alternate sources of information or relevant websites.</i>

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# 1. INTRODUCTION TO EQUIPMENT AND MODIFICATION SERVICES

## 1.1. What are Equipment and Modification Services?

Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) are one of the many services funded by the Ministry through Disability Support Services.

The purpose of Ministry funded Equipment and Modification Services is to:

- support people with disabilities and their families, to live as independently and safely as possible, and
- make a significant, consistent and reasonable contribution to enabling people with disabilities to participate (if and when they want to) in activities inside and outside their home, and in their local communities.

## 1.2. Guiding Principles

The Ministry is not able to provide funding to meet all of the needs identified by disabled people and their families or whānau. To assist with the fair allocation of resources, the following principles guide the provision of Equipment and Modification Services:

- An effective contribution is made towards helping disabled people to live, as far as reasonably possible, as others do in their own homes and communities.
- Decisions represent value for money both now and in the future, and contribute to supporting disabled people of all ages to remain independently and safely in their homes, as is reasonably possible, and not to have to rely more heavily on their families or paid carers or move into residential care.
- Services are allocated fairly through a consistent, principled and equitable approach being taken to the way equipment and modifications are allocated across the diverse range of people the Ministry serves.
- Decisions reflect a long term perspective, recognising that the equipment and modifications that are most appropriate for a person may change over time as people grow, age and develop, and as their circumstances or needs change.

The provision of equipment and modifications needs to be managed within the annual budget allocated to these services by the Ministry. As demand for services regularly exceeds the annual allocated budget a prioritisation system,



See section 3, Priority of Services, for more information.

the EMS Prioritisation Tool, is in place to ensure that those eligible disabled people who meet specific access criteria who have the greatest need for services and the greatest ability to benefit from equipment and modifications are given first access to the available funding.

### 1.3. What Services Are provided?

The Ministry contracts with two organisations to administer and provide EMS. They are:

#### Accessible

The region administered by Accessable extends from the Bombay Hills including Meremere to Cape Reinga.

#### Enable New Zealand

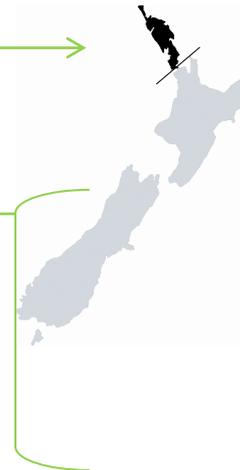
The region administered by Enable New Zealand extends from South of the Bombay Hills and Meremere to Stewart Island.

Throughout this manual, the two organisations are referred to as the “EMS Providers”.



Funding for vehicle purchase or modifications is only provided when the outcome of the EMS Prioritisation Tool indicates that funding is available.

For purchase of a vehicle, an income and cash asset test is also applied to determine the level of funding that can be provided by the Ministry.



Equipment and Modification Services provides:

- Vehicle purchase and modifications
- Equipment
- Housing modifications

This manual contains guidelines for the funding of vehicle purchase and modifications only. Guidelines for the funding of housing modifications and equipment can be found at the web address opposite.



[info@accessible.co.nz](mailto:info@accessible.co.nz)

0508 001 002

[moh.processing@enable.co.nz](mailto:moh.processing@enable.co.nz)

0800 17 1995



Vehicle hoists, hand controls and swivel seats.



Items that are portable, free-standing or immediately removable such as bathing or toilet aids, wheelchairs, hoists, walking frames and equipment to help with communication and vision.

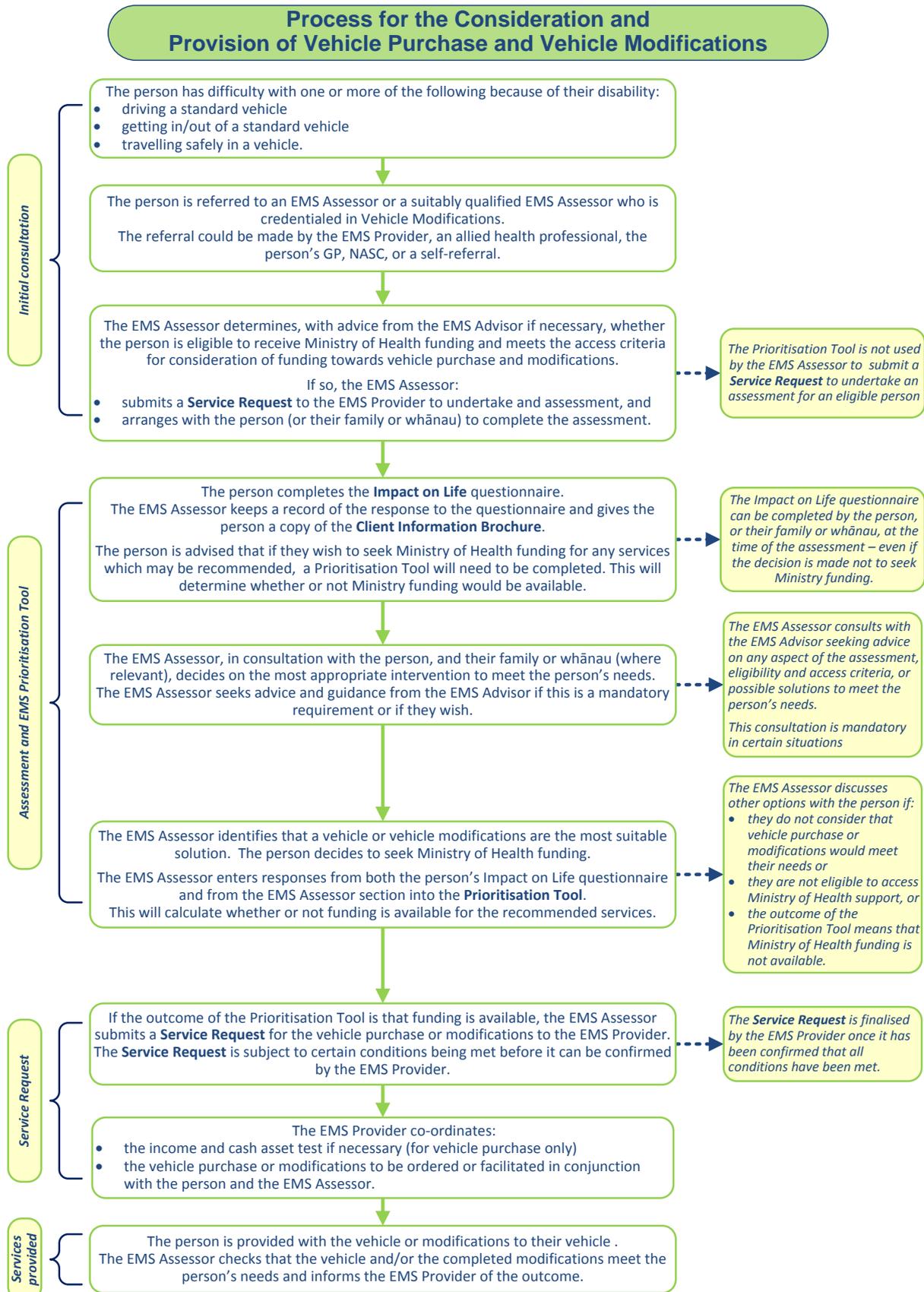


Door widening, handrails, ramp access and level access showers.



[EMS Manuals](#)

## 1.4. Process Map



## 2. ASSESSMENT, ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS CRITERIA

### 2.1. Initial Consultation

Before an assessment can be undertaken, it must first be established that the person is eligible for and meets the Ministry's specific access criteria for funding. This can be confirmed during an initial consultation with an EMS Assessor. The EMS Assessor may conduct this consultation with the person either over the phone or at a face to face meeting.

There are two pathways for this consultation to occur:

- The consultation may be undertaken directly with an EMS Assessor with a vehicle modifications credential. In many cases, these EMS Assessors work in private practice. If it can be established by the EMS Assessor that the person is eligible to access Ministry funding, the cost of this initial consultation can be included in the assessment fee charged to the Ministry through the EMS Provider. If the person is not eligible to access Ministry funding, they may be charged a fee for this initial consultation.
- The initial consultation may be with an occupational therapist or physiotherapist working in either the health (primarily District Health Board) or education (schools) sectors. This may happen when the disabled person already has contact with these services or if they have a range of daily living needs which they wish to have addressed. There may be a waiting list for new referrals to publicly funded services, however this initial consultation will be at no cost to the person.

When it is agreed that the person is eligible for services and meets the specific access criteria as outlined in this manual, and alternatives (such as a change in technique, vehicle and use of equipment) have been excluded, the EMS Assessor may make a Service Request for an assessment of their transportation needs.

#### 2.1.1. Assessment

Before funding for vehicle purchase or modifications can be considered, the person needs to have an assessment of their transportation needs with an EMS Assessor holding the appropriate level of accreditation.

The assessment for the consideration of vehicle purchase or modifications is undertaken by a suitably qualified occupational therapist who has specialist skills in driving and vehicle modifications known as a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor. Credentialed Vehicle Modifications



EMS Assessors hold categories of accreditation which relate to their individual qualifications and experience. The categories of accreditation refer to services that the EMS Assessor is able to submit a Service Request for on behalf of the disabled person.



For more information, go to [EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework](#)



The EMS Assessor may consult with an EMS Advisor where there is uncertainty about the person's eligibility to access Ministry of Health funding for an assessment of their transportation needs.



An assessment for the consideration of vehicle modifications or the purchase of a vehicle should not take place until it has been established that the person is eligible to receive Ministry funded services and the access criteria as outlined in this manual have been met.



The EMS Prioritisation Tool does **not** need to be used when submitting a Service Request for an assessment of a person's transportation needs

Assessors will hold the relevant area of accreditation for vehicle purchase and modifications – they are referred to as EMS Assessors throughout this manual.

The EMS Assessor should identify the person's transportation needs together with them. The assessment team may also include the person's family, whānau or support people, and relevant professionals including EMS Assessors credentialed in Wheeled Mobility and Postural Management.

During the assessment, the EMS Assessor needs to consider:

- The availability and viability of a range of options, including support packages (paid support services and unpaid support from others) and alternative transport options, to meet the person's disability related needs.
- The person's essential need for, and their ability to benefit from, vehicle purchase or modifications.
- The implication of the proposed services not being provided and how this might affect the person's need for support and/or impact on carer stress.
- The most appropriate and cost-effective solution to meet the person's disability related needs when all other factors have been taken into account.
- Whether the person will be able to safely manage adaptive driving controls where these are being considered or recommended. In such cases provision for an on-road or simulated experience may need to be included within the overall assessment.
- The EMS Assessor may make a Service Request for funding when the outcome of the assessment has identified that **all** of the following requirements have been met:
  - the vehicle purchase or modifications are essential to meet the person's disability related needs, and
  - the recommended solution is the most appropriate and cost-effective option to meet their needs and no other viable options are available
  - consultation with the EMS Advisor (according to the mandatory requirements for such consultation) supports the recommended solution, and
  - the completion of the EMS Prioritisation Tool indicates that funding is available.

EMS Advisors, employed by the EMS Providers, are available to support EMS Assessors to consider a range of intervention options. In some situations, consultation with an EMS Advisor is mandatory (See section 2.4).



An EMS Assessor credentialed in Wheeled Mobility & Postural Management may need to be involved in an assessment of a vehicle hoist for a person in a power wheelchair.



Essential for an **adult 16 years and over** means that there is no viable long term transport alternative available to enable the person to undertake employment, tertiary education or to be the main carer of a dependent child(ren) according to the definitions in this manual.



Essential for a **child 15 years and under** means that the use of alternative transport is not viable to meet their transportation needs and that without a modified vehicle for their individual use, the child, their family, whānau or welfare guardian will be at risk of harm.



Cost effective means the most economic and suitable solution to meet the person's needs related to their disability. This may not necessarily mean the cheapest option but does include the consideration of equipment and alternative transport options before funding towards vehicle purchase and/or modifications may be requested.

If the person is not able to get Ministry funding towards vehicle purchase or modifications, or if these are not considered as being essential or the most suitable or cost-effective solution for the person, the EMS Assessor should discuss other support or funding options with the person.

The EMS Assessor will discuss other options with the person and their family or whānau to ensure their needs are addressed if:

- they are not eligible for Ministry funded services, or
- they do not meet the specified access criteria for Ministry funded vehicle purchase or modifications, or
- the outcome of the EMS Prioritisation Tool is that funding is not available.

## 2.2. Eligibility

Eligibility is assessed at the time services are received<sup>1</sup> and means the right to be considered to receive publicly funded services. It is neither an entitlement, nor a guarantee, to receive any particular service.

To be eligible for consideration of funding towards the provision of a vehicle or vehicle modifications the person must:

- be eligible for publicly funded Health and Disability Services (as set out in the Health and Disability Services Eligibility Direction 2011); and
- have a disability as defined by the Ministry; either physical, intellectual, sensory (vision and/or hearing) or a combination of these, or an age-related disability, which is likely to:
  - remain after the provision of treatment and/or rehabilitation
  - continue for at least six months, and
  - impact on their ability to do some everyday tasks, resulting in a need for ongoing support.

The person will generally not be eligible for cover or entitlement for services through Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) under the Accident Compensation Act 2001.

### 2.2.1. Establishing eligibility

- Eligibility for services will generally be able to be determined by the EMS Assessor. The EMS Assessor may need to liaise with medical personnel to obtain further information about the cause and nature of a person's disability.



Refer to Section 3 for more information on the priority of services.



For more information about the Health and Disability Services Eligibility Direction 2011, go to [Eligibility for publicly funded health and disability services](#) and also refer to Appendix A.



Eligibility includes that the person must be in New Zealand when the services are provided and be:

- a New Zealand citizen, or
- a permanent resident, or
- be entitled to work in New Zealand for at least 2 years (ie, on a work visa).

<sup>1</sup> This task is usually completed by the local NASC or the DHB (referring health provider).

- People whose eligibility is unlikely to change (eg, New Zealand citizens and permanent residents) can expect to have their eligibility assessed once only by any provider.
- If a person does not meet the criteria set out in the Health and Disability Services Eligibility Direction 2011, they are not able to receive free or subsidised services and he/she is usually liable for the full costs of the services.
- People who are under 65 years of age with very high needs requiring ongoing support services as a result of a chronic health condition may be eligible for the provision of services through the Long-Term Supports Chronic Health Conditions (LTS-CHC) funding stream. Access to this funding is determined by the local District Health Board (DHB) NASC.



For further information on Long Term Support - Chronic Health Conditions (LTS-CHC) refer to Section 7.1.2.

An assessment by an EMS Assessor must have identified that the person has an essential need for, and ability to benefit from, the proposed equipment or modifications and eligibility for LTS-CHC must be determined by the NASC.

### 2.3. Meeting the Access Criteria for Services

Funding related to the purchase of vehicles, equipment to be installed in vehicles and modifications to vehicles is provided according to different criteria. These are described as follows:

- i **Vehicle modifications** (see section 3 of this manual).
- ii **Vehicle purchase** (see section 4 of this manual).
- iii **Vehicle equipment** (refer to both 10.9 of the Glossary in this manual as some vehicle equipment is included both within this manual and its processes and in section 11.5.10 of the EMS Equipment Manual).

Funding towards the purchase of a vehicle is only considered for adults 16 years of age and over.

Funding for vehicle modifications will be considered for people of all ages, subject to other criteria requirements being met.

Service Requests can only be submitted for vehicle purchase or modifications once the outcome of the EMS Prioritisation Tool has determined that funding is available.



[EMS Equipment Manual](#)

### 2.4. Consultation with an EMS Advisor

When considering the following vehicle purchase or modifications the EMS Assessor will need to consult with an EMS Advisor:

- Clarification of Policy – where the EMS Assessor is uncertain as to whether the person meets the Ministry of Health's eligibility requirements or the

specific EMS access criteria

- All situations where the purchase of a vehicle is being considered
- Consideration of any vehicle modification which requires liaison between the EMS Assessor involved with consideration of a wheelchair
- When the person has received previous Ministry funding towards an already modified vehicle
- Second requests for vehicle modifications of the same/similar type due to extenuating circumstances
- Consideration of new technology which has not previously been commonly provided or where it has been identified that the situation or solution required is unique (for example, seating and upholstery, new vehicle modification products entering the market, engineered or “one-off” customised solutions)
- To ascertain the status of the vehicle modification assessment requests (if not previously received) for clients receiving joint funding including Lottery Grants Board vehicle purchase grant.

### 3. FUNDING FOR VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

Where the use of alternative or unmodified transport is not a viable option, a person may be able to get assistance with funding for:

- i modifications to their own or a family vehicle
- ii modifications to a business owned vehicle
- iii modifications to a vehicle to be purchased.

Such modifications must be considered as a long-term solution that is essential to enable the person to be able to drive independently or travel safely, including transferring in/out of the vehicle and transporting mobility equipment.

The level of funding available for vehicle modifications is up to a maximum of \$12,165 (incl. GST). This funding is not subject to income and cash asset testing. Additional requests for funding will generally only be considered after a period of six years in cases if the person's disability related needs have changed resulting in the need for different modifications to their vehicle.

The following costs will be included in the maximum funding contribution:

- essential modifications to the vehicle
- certification of the modifications (if required).

The funding for modifications is considered separately from funding for purchase of a vehicle (refer to Section 4). Where the total cost of the EMS funded vehicle modifications are less than the maximum available \$12,165 (incl. GST) the balance of available funding cannot be put towards the costs of purchasing a vehicle.

The funding of equipment for use in a vehicle (see glossary) is considered separately from vehicle modifications. Its value is therefore not attributed to the maximum of \$12,165 (incl. GST) available for vehicle modifications.

Any costs for modifications above \$12,165 (incl. GST) must be met by the person.

#### 3.1. Meeting the Access Criteria for Vehicle Modifications

##### 3.1.1. Disabled Drivers

Funding for vehicle modifications will be considered where it has been identified as being essential for the person to do one of the following:



Alternative transport means:

- public transport
- mobility taxi
- being a passenger in a private vehicle.



Not a viable option includes:

- no access to regular and reliable transport (eg, person doing shift work, person lives with others who cannot assist with transport)
- no physically accessible or safe transport available



The Ministry's EMS Review Panel may, due to a person's genuine and exceptional circumstances, agree to funding within the six year timeframe.



*For more information on the EMS Review Panel, refer to section 8.3.2*



Vehicle Equipment includes:

- wide angle rear view mirrors
- non-remote steering wheel spinners
- transfer boards
- portable ramps
- car seats
- vehicle restraint harnesses.



Vehicle modifications to enable safe and independent driving includes:

- hand controls
- extended foot controls
- joy stick controls
- remote switches
- vehicle mounted hoists
- automatic swing out seat.

- i get to/from or undertake their full time employment (see Glossary)
- ii get to/from tertiary education or vocational training (see Glossary)
- iii undertake their role as the main carer of a dependent child or children (see Glossary).

The person must be the intended driver of the vehicle, and have the minimum of a Learner Licence to drive a vehicle and either:

- i be the vehicle owner (or intending to purchase a vehicle)
- ii be an employee of an organisation which has provided a vehicle for their use.

### 3.1.2. Disabled Passengers (adults)

To be able to access this funding, a disabled adult, (16 years of age and over), must be a passenger who is unable to drive because of their disability. The person will require a modified vehicle to travel safely in order to meet their full time employment or educational requirements (see section 3.1.1 and glossary). They must always have someone who is available to drive the vehicle for them.

### 3.1.3. Disabled Passengers (children)

Funding for vehicle modifications can be considered for disabled children aged 15 years or under where it has been identified that the modifications are essential to enable the child to:

- i get in and out of a vehicle safely
- ii travel in a vehicle safely.

The vehicle to be modified must be owned by one of the following:

- i a family or whānau member who is the main carer of a child 15 years or under and who is living with them full-time.
- ii a foster family member who is the main carer of a child 15 years or under who is living with them full-time and on a long term basis ie a minimum of 2-3 years.



Disabled adults who are passengers in a vehicle will not be able to access funding for vehicle modifications in order to fulfil their role as main carer for a dependent person.

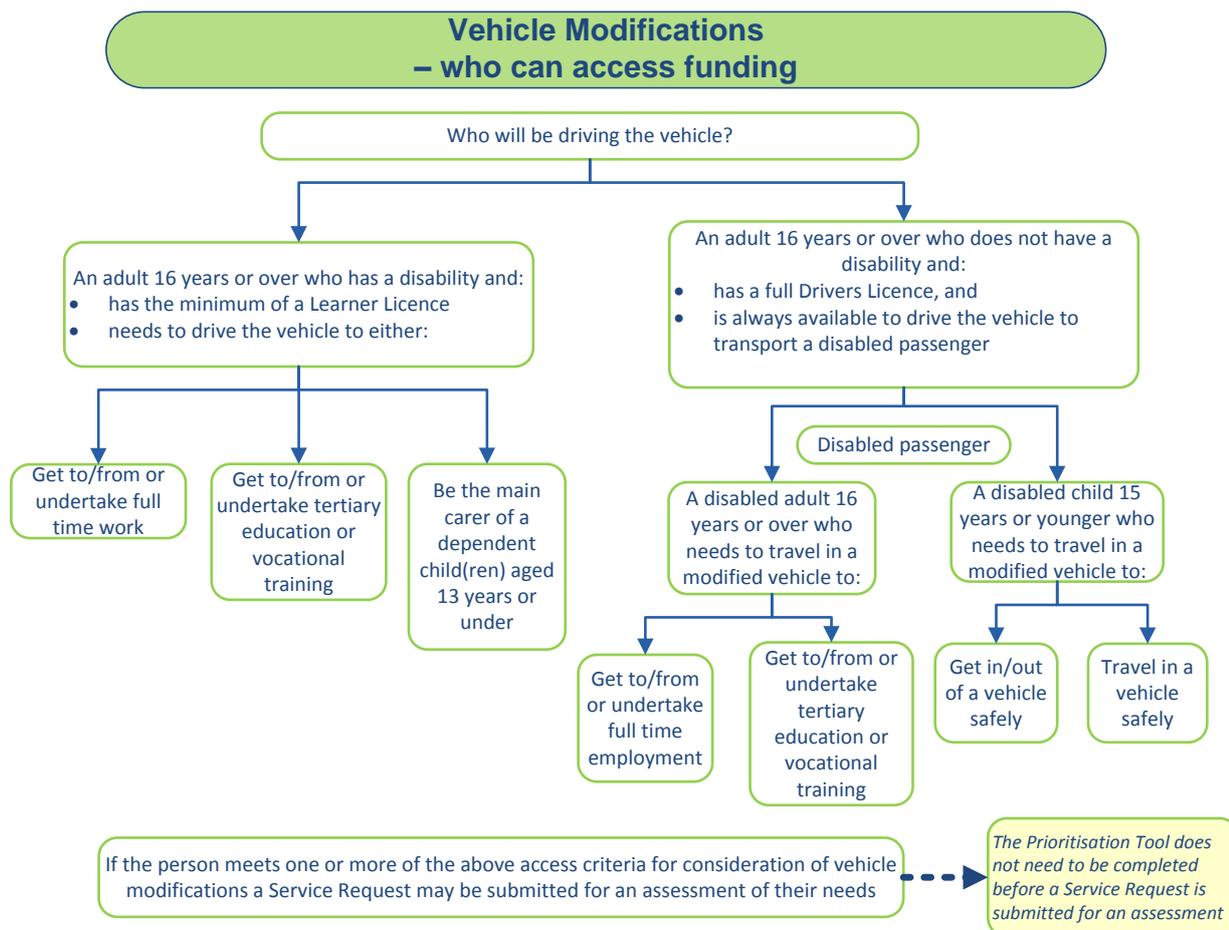


Modifications to support a child in safe travel and/or transferring include:

- platform hoists
- wheelchair restraints.



Where a child is living regularly in a shared care arrangement, modifications to one vehicle only will be considered.



### 3.2. General Information

- The funding contribution for vehicle modifications is up to a maximum of \$12,165 (incl. GST). Costs over and above this amount must be met by the person.
- Service Requests for vehicle modifications are not subject to income and cash asset testing.
- If the person's needs change and further modifications are required to the vehicle, Service Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, generally after a minimum of six years.
- Modifications to vehicles will only be considered for funding when it is confirmed that it is economically viable to modify the vehicle. Confirmation of this is required from the EMS Assessor or the vehicle modifier to the EMS Provider.
- Where a person is not able to access Ministry funding, the Lottery Grants Board may be able to assist. For example, the Lottery Grants Board may assist with funding of a vehicle for a disabled child under 16 years of age. Where this occurs,



Further funding for vehicle modifications can generally only be considered if the person's needs change.



For further information go to [Lottery Grants funding](#) or Phone: 0800 824 824  
Email: [grantsonline@dia.govt.nz](mailto:grantsonline@dia.govt.nz)

and all access criteria have been met, a Service Request may be submitted for the recommended modifications to that vehicle.

- Where Service Requests are being made for funding contributions from both the Ministry and Lottery Grants Board, this should be noted on the Service Request submitted by the EMS Assessor. Where possible, the same EMS Assessor should manage both the Lottery Grants application for the vehicle purchase and the Ministry funded assessment and subsequent Service Request for vehicle modifications to ensure the continuity of assessment and service provision.
- Service Requests can only be submitted for vehicle modifications once the outcome of the EMS Prioritisation Tool has determined that funding is available.
- Services must be provided and in place within 12 months from the date of the Service Request being processed by the EMS Provider.

### 3.3. Repairs and Maintenance

Instructions on the use and maintenance of the vehicle modifications should be given to the vehicle owner by the EMS Assessor and/or the vehicle modifier.

All repairs and maintenance of vehicle modifications are the responsibility of the vehicle owner, except if repairs are covered within the warranty period.

### 3.4. Insurance

Once vehicle modifications are installed, they become part of the vehicle and as such are the responsibility of the vehicle owner to insure.

### 3.5. Vehicle Modifications not covered by the Ministry

- The purchase of a vehicle (unless the person is eligible for funding under the vehicle purchase criteria – refer to section 4).
- Insurance costs of any modifications to the vehicle.
- Repairs and maintenance of the modifications.
- The cost of replacing vehicle modifications as a result of vehicle theft, damage or loss.
- Reimbursements to cover the cost of vehicle modifications that have been purchased or installed before a Service Request has been



If the vehicle modifications have not been purchased and fitted within 12 months of the Service Request being processed, the Service Request will no longer be valid.



Modifications to a vehicle become the property of the owner of the vehicle and are not removed and returned to the EMS Provider if they are no longer required by the person.

submitted, unless funding has been agreed due to the person's genuine and exceptional circumstances (See Section 3.6 below).

- Modifications to vehicles where it is not considered economically viable to proceed with modifications.
- Modifications to vehicles owned by organisations or disability service providers.
- Removal of vehicle modifications.
- Costs associated with learning to drive a vehicle using adaptive driving controls, such as hand controls.

### 3.6. Reimbursement

The Ministry does not generally provide reimbursement for services which have been paid for by the person, their family or whānau before a Service Request has been received by the EMS Provider.

However, reimbursement for services which have already been purchased, commenced or completed by a person, their family or whānau before a Service Request has been made to the relevant EMS Provider can be considered in genuine and exceptional circumstances when **all** of the following requirements have been met:

- the person meets the eligibility and access criteria for Ministry funding
- the person's needs have been assessed by suitably credentialed EMS Assessor
- the solution, either fully or in part, has been confirmed by an EMS Assessor as being essential and cost-effective in meeting the person's disability related needs and the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool (if required) is that Ministry funding would be available
- the departure from the usual processes for the consideration and provision of the services has resulted in improved long term outcomes for the person and or their family, whānau and support people, and
- all relevant standards, certification and legislative requirements (including Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association standards) have been met, and
- the services have been purchased or provided within twelve months of the date of the request for the reimbursement.



Organisations or disability service providers include:

- aged residential care providers
- disability support services and residential care providers
- supported living providers
- day/vocational service providers.



If a solution can only be partly supported by the EMS Assessor, the essential and cost-effective elements of the solution will be costed following agreement between the EMS Provider and the EMS Assessor and any reimbursement will only cover the components of the equipment or modifications that they agree to support.

## 4. FUNDING FOR PURCHASE OF A VEHICLE

When access to alternative transport is not a viable option, the person with a disability may be able to receive a once-only funding contribution up to a maximum of \$12,165 (incl. GST) towards the purchase of a vehicle to be modified. This vehicle will be required to enable the person to get to and from their work, tertiary study or vocational training or fulfil their role as main carer of a dependent child who lives with them.

The cost of modifications that are required to the vehicle are considered separately (refer to section 3) - additional funding of up to \$12,165 (incl. GST) may be provided for modifications to the vehicle which has been purchased with Ministry funding, depending on the assessed needs of the person.

### 4.1. Meeting the Access Criteria

Funding towards the purchase of a vehicle to be modified can be considered where it has been identified as being essential for the disabled person to do one of the following:

- i get to/from or undertake their full time employment (see Glossary)
- ii get to/from tertiary education or vocational training (see Glossary)
- iii undertake their role of main carer of a dependent child aged 13 years or younger who lives with them (see Glossary).

The person must either:

- i be the intended driver of the vehicle, and have the minimum of a Learner Licence to drive a vehicle
- ii be a passenger who is unable to drive because of their disability and requires a modified vehicle to travel safely in order to meet their full time employment or educational requirements. In such cases the person must have someone who is always available to drive the vehicle for them.

### 4.2. General Information

- Where a Service Request has been submitted for funding towards purchase of a vehicle, the person is required to have an income and cash asset test administered by Work and Income to determine the amount of funding the person will be eligible to receive.
- The maximum funding contribution for purchase of a vehicle is \$12,165 (incl. GST). Costs over and above this amount must be met by the person.



Alternative transport means:

- public transport
- mobility taxi
- being a passenger in a private vehicle.



Not a viable option includes:

- no access to regular and reliable transport (eg, person doing shift work, person lives with others who cannot assist with transport)
- no physically accessible transport available.



Once-only funding means that a person is eligible to receive a funding contribution from the Ministry towards the purchase of one vehicle only.



Disabled adults who are passengers in a vehicle will not be eligible for funding for vehicle purchase in order to fulfil their role as main carer for a dependent person (see glossary).



A Learner Licence is the minimum requirement as the person may require the use of a modified vehicle to drive safely and pass the practical test.

- Funding for modifications to the purchased vehicle is not subject to income and cash asset testing (refer to section 3).
- Service Requests can only be submitted for the purchase of a vehicle once the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool has determined that funding is available.

### 4.3. Repairs and Maintenance

- All ongoing repairs and maintenance of the vehicle are the responsibility of the vehicle owner, including Warrant of Fitness and registration.

### 4.4. Insurance

- All insurance costs are the responsibility of the vehicle owner.

### 4.5. Costs Not Covered by the Ministry

- The purchase of standard vehicles that do not require any modifications to them to enable the person to drive independently and safely.
- The purchase of a vehicle to be owned by a person's employer. It is the responsibility of an employer to provide a suitable work environment, facilities and tools. Note that funding will be considered for the provision of modifications to a business owned-vehicle to enable a person to undertake their work activities (refer to section 3).
- The purchase of vehicles to be owned by organisations or disability service providers.
- Costs towards pre-purchase checks of the vehicle.
- Costs (including lessons) relating to the obtaining of a New Zealand Driver Licence.
- The purchase of vehicles where it is not considered economically viable to proceed with modifications.
- Costs associated with learning to drive the vehicle using adaptive driving controls, such as hand controls.
- The purchase of a vehicle where the person does not agree to an income and cash asset test being undertaken by Work and Income.



Standard vehicle features such as power steering, automatic transmission, and wide door opening do not meet the Ministry's definition of vehicle modifications and will not be covered by Ministry funding.



Organisations and disability providers include:

- aged residential care providers
- disability support services and residential care providers
- supported living providers
- day/vocational service providers
- shared care/foster care providers or families.



Refer to [Work and Income](#) for information on income and cash asset testing.

### 4.6. Reimbursement

The Ministry does not generally provide reimbursement for services which have been paid for by the person, their family or whānau before a Service Request has been received by the EMS Provider.

However, reimbursement for services which have already been purchased, commenced or completed by a person, their family or whānau before a Service Request has been made to the relevant EMS Provider can be considered in genuine and exceptional circumstances when **all** of the following requirements have been met:

- the person meets the eligibility and access criteria for Ministry funding
- the person's needs have been assessed by suitably Credentialed EMS Assessor
- the solution, either fully or in part, has been confirmed by an EMS Assessor as being essential and cost-effective in meeting the person's disability related needs and the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool (if required) is that Ministry funding would be available
- the departure from the usual processes for the consideration and provision of the equipment or modifications has resulted in improved long term outcomes for the person and or their family, whānau and support people
- the usual requirements for Income and Cash Asset Testing have been met, and
- all relevant standards, certification and legislative requirements (including Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association standards) have been met, and
- the services have been purchased or provided within twelve months of the date of the request for the reimbursement.

## 5. PRIORITY OF SERVICES

The provision of equipment and modifications needs to be managed within the annual budget allocated to these services by the Ministry. As demand for services regularly exceeds the annual allocated budget, a prioritisation system is in place to ensure that disabled people who have the greatest need for services and the greatest ability to benefit from equipment and modifications are given first access to the available funding.



The EMS Prioritisation Tool replaces the Priority 1 and Priority 2 process and determines whether or not funding is available for the proposed services.

### 5.1. EMS Prioritisation Tool

In order for all requests for equipment and modifications to be considered fairly and consistently and for those people who have the highest priority to receive their services in a timely way, a prioritisation tool is in place.

The EMS Prioritisation Tool is made up of two parts:

#### i. Impact on Life questionnaire

This questionnaire must be completed by the person and allows them to identify the current impact of their disability on their lives. It gives the person, and where appropriate, their family, whānau or key support people, an opportunity to have a “voice” in the assessment process.

#### ii. EMS Assessor section

The Prioritisation Tool requires the EMS Assessor to determine:

- the likelihood of the person’s physical or psychosocial status deteriorating if the services are not provided
- the impact of carer stress and the likelihood that the resilience of the person’s carer will deteriorate if the proposed services are not provided
- the ability of the proposed services to benefit the person and/or their family or whānau who care for them. The EMS Assessor will consider how the proposed solution is likely to provide benefit to the person in the following areas of their life:
  - independence in daily living
  - safety
  - external roles and responsibilities (eg, employment, study, main carer)
  - primary relationships
  - day to day activities that are important to them.
- the likely length of time the proposed services will offer benefit to the person or their family or whānau who help support them
- the likelihood of achieving the benefit taking into account social and environmental factors.



When considering the likelihood of the person’s physical or psychosocial status deteriorating if services are not provided, The key people to assist with the preparation of this information could include:

- an advocate
- the person, or their family or whānau
- other members of the multi-disciplinary team.

## 6. PRIVACY ACT

The information provided within the Prioritisation Tool and in a Service Request may be used for the following:

- To assess the need for funding of Equipment and Modification Services by the Ministry. This assists the Ministry with planning and purchasing future services.
- To collect statistical information such as gender, ethnicity and disability type. This data assists the Ministry to develop a clear picture of the needs of disabled people to ensure that access to disability support services is as fair and equitable as possible within existing constraints.
- To provide the Ministry with specific information about equipment and modifications a person has received or has not been able to receive following the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool.
- For other such functions as permitted under law.

The provision of information sought for the Impact on Life questionnaire (as part of the EMS Prioritisation Tool) and a Service Request is voluntary for the person but consideration of funding will depend upon all the information being provided.

The person has the right to access the information held about them and to request that corrections be made to this information.

The Health Information Privacy Code (1994) applies to the information collected as part of the completion of the EMS Prioritisation Tool and within a Service Request for Equipment and Modification Services. Adherence to the code ensures all information collected is received and treated in the strictest confidence.



For more information on the Privacy Act and Code, go to: <http://www.privacy.org.nz>

## 7. OTHER FUNDING OPTIONS

### 7.1. Ministry of Health - Other supports

Equipment and modifications are one of the many support options funded by Ministry. Provision of equipment or modifications should therefore be considered along with the availability of any other support options.

#### 7.1.1. Other equipment items

Some equipment items are covered by other services through the Ministry. Specific funding criteria and Service Request processes apply for such items.

#### 7.1.2. Long Term Supports - Chronic Health Conditions Funding

Long Term Supports – Chronic Health Conditions (LTS-CHC) funding, managed by DHBs, funds long term support services for eligible people under 65 years of age and needing ongoing support services as a result of **chronic health conditions**. People eligible for LTS-CHC are neither eligible for the Ministry's Disability Support Services nor for other DHB funded long term supports (eg, for older people). This funding is targeted towards people with very high needs.

A chronic health condition is:

- either a progressive health condition where the person has a functional impairment that is expected to last for at least six months or to increase over time as a direct result of the condition
- or a health condition lasting at least six months where the person's level of functional impairment can be ameliorated by periodic or ongoing treatment (drugs, therapy, surgery, etc)
- and the impairment resulting in the need for support does not meet the Ministry funder's definition of a disability.

**Very high needs** is where the person requires assistance with activities of daily living at least daily to remain safely in their own home or needs residential care. The person's wellbeing and functional status is deteriorating, their needs are increasing and safety issues are becoming apparent. They have limited opportunity to participate in age appropriate activities.

- The person with very high needs is assessed as requiring support daily but some or most of the support may be provided by family, whānau or friends. The LTS-CHC funding would provide any additional formal supports if these were not being supplied through other means.

To access funding for services through LTS-CHC, the person needs to have:



Other support options are: personal care support, household management, respite care through NASC. See 7.1.3



Equipment for use in a vehicle that is not permanently fixed to the vehicle and does not require Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA) Certification may be provided following the processes outlined in the Equipment Manual.



LTS-CHC funding is targeted towards people who have very high needs for long term support services. The majority of people who meet the criteria will have more than one chronic health condition.

- been identified by their local DHB NASC as being eligible for LTS-CHC funding, and
- had an assessment by an EMS Assessor who has identified that the person has an essential need for, and an ability to benefit from vehicle purchase or modifications, and the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool has indicated that funding is available.

Requests for vehicle purchase and modifications for eligible people under the LTS-CHC funding stream are considered in the same manner as other requests for vehicle purchase and modifications.

The recommendation for services needs to be considered within the person's overall support package, in consultation with DHB NASC personnel. The EMS Assessor will need to obtain written confirmation from the DHB NASC service that the person is eligible to access funding through LTS-CHC before a request for vehicle purchase or modifications can be made through this funding stream.

### 7.1.3. Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination organisations

Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination (NASC) organisations provide a single point of contact to identify a range of support options for disabled people. Such supports can include personal care support, household management, respite care, and residential care.

Services provided by NASC organisations include:

- Needs Assessment. This is the process of working with the person and their family, whānau and support people to identify their strengths and goals, priorities and disability support needs. The needs assessment is usually done in the person's home.
- Service Co-ordination. This is a process of developing a support package to meet the person's prioritised assessed needs and goals within the available funding. The support package is developed by the service co-ordinator with input from the person, their family, whānau and support people.

Service co-ordination determines which of the assessed needs can be met by the person's natural supports, which may be met by other government agencies/groups and which are supported through Disability Support Services.



Natural supports refer to support from family, whānau, friends, or community groups.

This combination of supports and services makes up the person's support package and is what assists them in meeting the support needs and goals identified in their needs assessment.

NASC, EMS Assessors and EMS Providers are encouraged to work together to ensure the most appropriate and cost effective supports are provided for the person and their family, whānau and support people. The provision of vehicle purchase or modifications needs to be considered within the overall support package available to the person.

The principles<sup>2</sup> that guide the relationship between NASC and EMS Assessors and providers are that all:

- interactions are person-centered
- interactions are collaborative
- interactions are based on finding the most cost effective interventions for the person
- services are coordinated for the person.

The indicators for liaison between NASC and the EMS Assessor are defined in the Practice Guideline. It is mandatory for the EMS Assessor and the NASC to complete a joint report, using the agreed template, when the proposed services are likely to be high cost or it is being considered to meet the needs of people who have challenging behaviours.

## 7.2. Accident Compensation Corporation

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides equipment and services for people who are eligible for cover and entitlement under the Accident Compensation Act 2001.

## 7.3. Ministry of Education

Transport to and from school for a student attending compulsory education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

## 7.4. Lottery Grants Board

The Individuals with Disabilities Subcommittee provides lottery grants on a discretionary basis for mobility and communication equipment to help disabled people achieve independence and gain access to the community. Those who meet the eligibility criteria of the Ministry or other Government Agencies for items they are requesting are not eligible for lottery grants.

Priority is given on the basis of:

- the severity of the disability
- the contribution the vehicle or equipment would make to the quality of life of the person with a disability (the applicant)
- the financial circumstances of the applicant and their family



For further information contact ACC regional branch offices - Call Free:

0800 101 996 (claim enquiries) or contact [ACC](#)



An individual with a disability is defined by the Lottery Grants Board as:

‘a person who has a permanently reduced capacity to be transported, to be personally mobile or to communicate, as a result of a physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual disability’.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health Practice Guideline: Interface between NASC and EMS Assessors and Providers

- the availability of alternative transport or assistance
- the family situation of the applicant
- the applicant's locality
- any lottery assistance received in the past.

Generally, the Subcommittee is able to fund about 50-60% of the Service Requests it receives. Service Requests can be made at any time.

Further information is available from the Lottery Grants Board, Department of Internal Affairs.

## 7.5. Total Mobility Scheme

The Total Mobility Scheme provides subsidised taxi services to people who have an impairment that prevents them from undertaking any one or more of the following five components of a journey unaccompanied, on a bus, train or ferry in a safe and dignified manner:

- getting to the place from where the transport departs
- getting onto the transport
- riding securely
- getting off the transport
- getting to the destination .

The scheme provides:

- vouchers or electronic cards to eligible scheme members that discount the normal taxi fare by 50 percent up to a maximum fare (set by the relevant regional council, or Auckland Transport)
- funding to scheme providers to help purchase and install wheelchair hoists in taxi vans
- payments for the owners of vehicles that are part of the Total Mobility Scheme.



Call free: 0800 824 824  
[Lottery Grants](#)



For more information, go to  
[Total Mobility](#)

## 8. DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

### 8.1. Services not supported by an EMS Assessor

- Where the EMS Assessor does not support (fully or in part) a person's preference for specific modifications to their vehicle or the purchase of a vehicle, the EMS Assessor should consult with an EMS Advisor to work through what interventions could best meet the person's needs.
- If the outcome of this process confirms that vehicle purchase or modifications are not considered to be the most appropriate solution to meet the person's needs the EMS Assessor should not submit a request for such services.
- The EMS Assessor should work with the person and their family or whānau to establish other support options or services that would better meet the person's needs.

### 8.2. Review of assessment by an EMS Assessor

The person may seek a second opinion or re-assessment from another EMS Assessor if they are not satisfied with any aspect of the service they have received. This would need to be arranged by the person, their family or whānau. They could do this by:

- contacting the EMS Assessor's manager or supervisor to request a second opinion or make a complaint
- contacting Enable New Zealand (Phone 0800 17 1995) for a list of EMS Assessors who have the required accreditation or credential to carry out the assessment
- asking their GP for a referral to their local District Health Board (in DHBs where assessment services for vehicle purchase and modifications are provided)
- contacting another EMS Assessor for a privately funded assessment.



If the person wishes to have a re-assessment from a private EMS Assessor, they will generally have to pay the costs associated with this.

### 8.3. Review by the Ministry

#### 8.3.1. Disability Support Services

If a person is not satisfied with or does not accept the outcome of the EMS Prioritisation Tool, ie funding is not available for equipment or modifications, and they wish to take this further, they should be advised to contact:

#### **Disability Support Services**

- Freephone: 0800 373 664
- Website: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our->

work/disability-services

- Email: [dsdcomplaints@moh.govt.nz](mailto:dsdcomplaints@moh.govt.nz)

If the person needs support and information to do this they can contact the Health and Disability Advocacy Service on:

- Freephone: **0800 555 050**
- Website: <http://advocacy.hdc.org.nz/>

Email: [advocacy@hdc.org.nz](mailto:advocacy@hdc.org.nz)

### 8.3.2. EMS Review Panel

The Ministry's EMS Review Panel (the Panel) reviews proposals for equipment and modifications in the following situations:

- Services that are estimated to cost over \$25,000 (GST excl.).
- Clarification of the Ministry's operational policy is required.
- Equipment or modifications are being sought due to a person's genuine and exceptional circumstances

The objectives of the Panel are to ensure that all recommendations regarding proposals are:

- considered in a nationally consistent way
- transparent and fair
- based on the Ministry's agreed eligibility requirements and the funding criteria for accessing specific services.

The Panel will inform the relevant EMS Provider of its recommendation within 10 working days of receipt of a proposed request. The EMS Provider will then advise the person and EMS Assessor of the Panel's recommendations. Only proposals forwarded by the EMS Providers will be considered by the Panel.



The review by the Panel will be undertaken **before** a Service Request has been submitted to the relevant EMS Provider.



The EMS Providers may share relevant information about individual proposals that are submitted to the Panel in order to seek national consistency of decision-making.

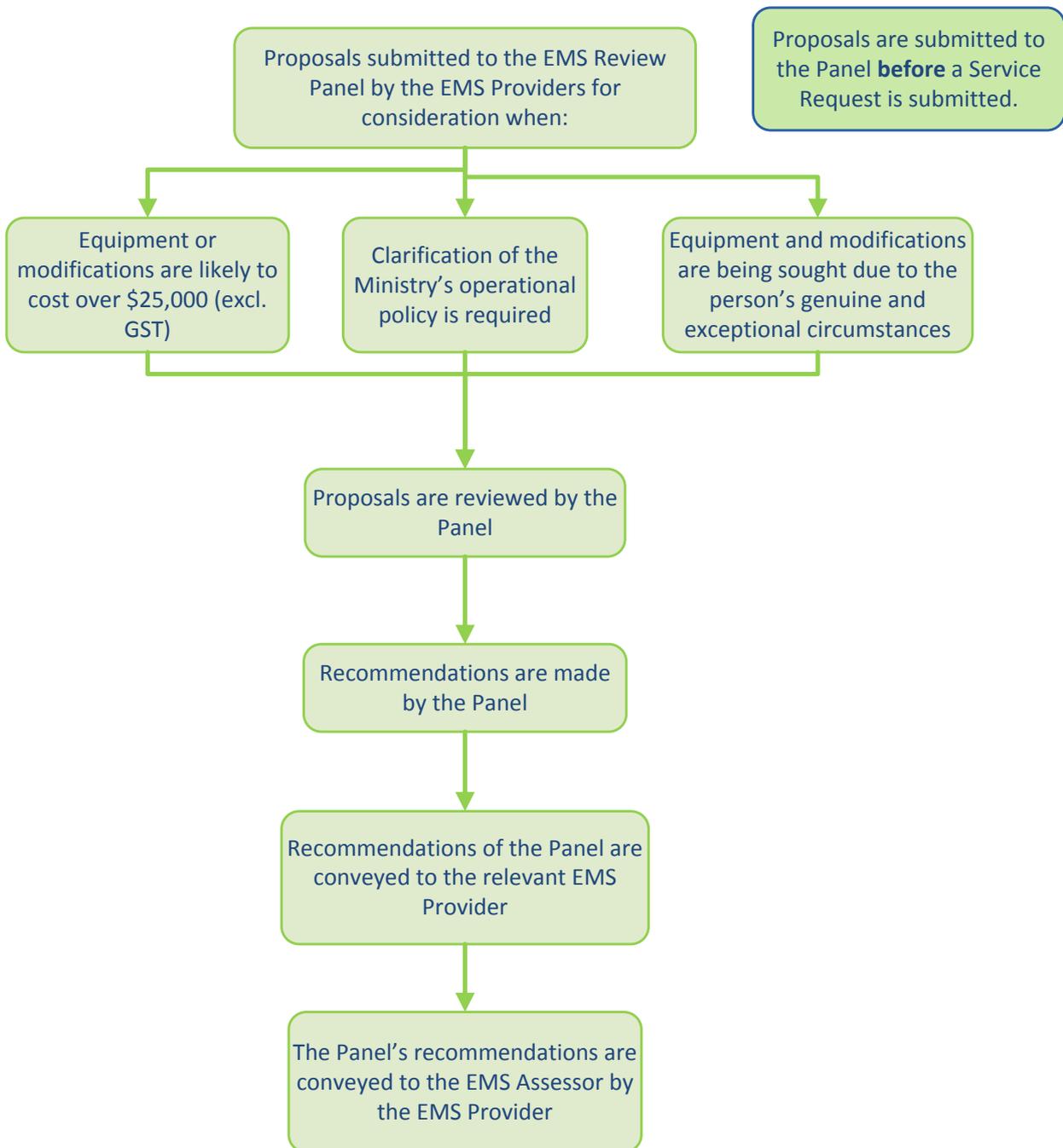


The EMS Assessor is advised when a proposal is submitted to the Panel.



The Panel may request further information from the EMS Assessor if necessary.

### 8.3.3. EMS Review Panel Process Map



## 9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The consideration and provision of vehicle purchase and modifications for the person involves a number of different people and organisations. Their responsibilities are outlined below.

### 9.1. The Person will:

- Participate in an assessment with an EMS Assessor.
- Consider, with the EMS Assessor, a range of options to determine the most appropriate and cost effective solution(s) to meet their disability related needs regarding transportation.
- Work together with the EMS Assessor (and the EMS Advisor and other key people where required) to agree on a possible solution to meet the identified disability needs if it is determined that vehicle purchase or modifications are the most appropriate option.
- Complete the Impact on Life questionnaire as part of the EMS Prioritisation Tool and give to the EMS Assessor.
- Read, complete, sign and return any forms in order for the request for funding to progress. Seek clarification from the EMS Assessor if necessary.
- Agree to undertake an income and cash asset test by Work and Income if seeking funding towards the purchase of a vehicle.
- Hold a current, valid New Zealand Driver License (a minimum of a Learner License) if planning to be the intended driver of the vehicle.
- Contact the EMS Assessor, their service manager or supervisor if unsatisfied with any part of the assessment process.
- Contact the relevant EMS Provider or the Ministry if dissatisfied with the process regarding funding for the purchase of a vehicle or for vehicle modifications.



Where modifications to the vehicle are required for children aged 15 years and under or an adult who has a welfare guardian, the roles and responsibilities are assumed by their parent or welfare guardian.

### 9.2. The Vehicle Owner will:

- Advise the Motor Vehicle Dealer of the value of the services when funding towards vehicle purchase has been confirmed. If the total vehicle cost exceeds the agreed funding amount, the intended vehicle owner must make arrangements with the Motor Vehicle Dealer regarding payment of the outstanding portion.
- Maintain vehicle modifications in accordance with instructions provided at the time of installation or purchase.



These responsibilities may apply to the intended owner of the vehicle, ie, before the vehicle has been purchased.

- Undertake repairs to the vehicle and modifications as required in order to maintain them in safe working order.

### 9.3. The Driver will:

- Use the modifications in accordance with the instructions provided at the time of installation or purchase.

### 9.4. The EMS Assessor will:

- Be responsible for participating in training and development activities, as available and as appropriate, to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to competently carry out assessments for, and recommend, equipment funded by the Ministry.
- Meet the requirements of the EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework to attain the appropriate level of accreditation to complete assessments and submit Service Requests for vehicle purchase or modifications.

#### 9.4.1. During the assessment

- Work with the person, their family, whānau, caregivers and support people to assess the person's functional abilities, limitations, disability related needs and to determine the anticipated outcomes for them in relation to transportation.
- Discuss with the person all possible support options and interventions that could meet their essential disability needs in relation to transportation (this could include options other than Ministry funded services).
- Determine whether the person meets eligibility and access criteria for Ministry funded vehicle purchase or modifications, if this is considered to be the most appropriate solution to meet their needs.
- Seek advice, guidance and support, where necessary, from an EMS Advisor about any of the following:
  - > whether the person is eligible to receive services
  - > whether the person meets the access criteria for specific services
  - > where it has been determined that consultation with an EMS Advisor is mandatory.
- Seek peer review from colleagues to ensure the consistency and quality of decisions and recommendations.
- Collaborate with the NASC, where necessary, to:
  - > achieve an alignment between the person's needs and goals and the services provided



For more information, go to:

[Vehicle Purchase and Modifications, Level 1 & 2](#)



The outcome of an assessment may not result in a Service Request for Ministry funded equipment or modifications.



For further information, go to: [Consultation with an EMS Advisor](#)

- > jointly discuss the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of the different options
- > identify instances where collaboration with the NASC is mandatory or flexible and complete the EMS and NASC Joint Report where appropriate
- > identify whether a person may be eligible to access funding through the LTS-CHC funding stream.
- Discuss the EMS Prioritisation Tool with the person, their family, whānau and relevant support people as appropriate and introduce the Impact on Life questionnaire.
- Complete the EMS Assessor section of the Prioritisation Tool to determine whether funding is available for the proposed equipment solutions.
- Ensure the person and other relevant people are fully informed regarding:
  - > the Ministry's eligibility for services and criteria for accessing specific services
  - > the process for considering Ministry funded services and the prioritisation of services
  - > the requirement of the EMS Assessor to recommend the most cost effective solution to meet the person's essential disability related needs
  - > the agreed solution/s identified to meet their disability-related needs
  - > other support options if the person is unable to access funding from the Ministry.

#### **9.4.2. During the Service Request process for the purchase of a vehicle**

- Ensure that the person has medical clearance to drive and a current New Zealand Driver Licence.
- Discuss with the person the vehicle specifications that are being recommended.
- Discuss additional funding arrangements with the person if it likely that the cost of the vehicle will exceed the funding available.
- Explain the processes for income and asset testing to the person.
- Explain the processes for vehicle selection and purchase to the person.
- Support the person to select a suitable vehicle that meets their needs and is economically viable to modify.
- Submit the relevant documentation regarding vehicle selection to the EMS Provider.

### 9.4.3. During the Service Request process for Vehicle Modifications

- Identify suitably qualified vehicle modifiers to undertake the work required.
- Liaise with the vehicle modifiers to provide appropriate quotes which:
  - > clearly separate the essential modifications from modifications that are preferred (and are therefore the responsibility of the person, their family or whānau or the vehicle owner to fund should they wish to have these)
  - > include the cost of Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association Certification (LVVTA) where required.
- Discuss additional funding arrangements with the person, their family or whānau or vehicle owner when the cost of modifications is likely to exceed the funding available.
- Submit the relevant documentation regarding the recommended vehicle modifications to the relevant EMS Provider.

### 9.4.4. After completion of the vehicle purchase or modifications

- Confirm with the person that the completed vehicle modifications or vehicle purchase meets their identified needs.
- Discuss the ongoing care and maintenance of the vehicle and modifications with the person, their support people and/or the vehicle owner.
- Explain the safe use of the modifications to the person, their support people, vehicle owner and driver.



For more information about Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association Certification, go to

[LVVTA](#)



It is expected that the person's capacity to drive a vehicle with adaptive driving controls will have been determined during the assessment process.

If a person requires additional lessons to improve their competency and confidence, they will need to fund this privately.

## 9.5. Employers, Supervisors or Professional Leaders of EMS Assessors will:

- Verify that the EMS Assessor has the qualifications and experience to enable them to competently perform the role of an EMS Assessor (Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor).
- Follow up on concerns raised by the EMS Provider about aspects of specific Service Requests from an EMS Assessor.
- Complete a peer review of Service Requests submitted by an EMS Assessor where concerns have been raised about aspects (for example, average service utilisation or quality) of specific or successive Service Requests.

## 9.6. The EMS Providers will:

- Provide education and advice to EMS Assessors to support their overall knowledge and skill development as an EMS Assessor in their nominated categories of accreditation and the funding criteria and processes for EMS.
- Engage with EMS Assessors to ensure that they are working towards a nationally consistent service delivery model.
- Follow up with EMS Assessors or their supervisors or professional leaders where an EMS Assessor's service utilisation is above the average of their peers.
- Administer Ministry funding within the annual allocated budgets and in a way that ensures that people who have the greatest need and ability to benefit from the equipment or modifications have access to services first.
- Provide notification and access to information on agreed Ministry policy and procedural changes and updates to EMS Assessors.

### 9.6.1. During the consideration of potential interventions

- Provide support and advice to EMS Assessors including, but not limited to:
  - > advice on the Ministry's operational policy, funding guidelines, and eligibility and access criteria
  - > advice on potential transport solutions to meet a person's needs related to their disability
  - > information and advice to guide their decision-making and clinical reasoning when considering the intervention/s that would be the most appropriate and cost-effective to meet the person's needs.
- Refer individual proposals to the Ministry's EMS Review Panel when:
  - > clarification of the Ministry's policy is required, or
  - > vehicle purchase or modifications are being sought due to a person's genuine and exceptional circumstances.

### 9.6.2. Following receipt of a Service Request

- Acknowledge receipt of Service Requests to EMS Assessors within 3 working days of receiving them.
- Maintain up to date records of services supplied to each person.



An EMS Advisor is available to provide advice to the EMS Assessor to assist them to determine:

- whether the person meets the specific criteria to access funding towards vehicle purchase or modifications
- how the person's essential needs related to their disability will be met by the recommended solution/s being provided
- whether the proposed solution is cost effective, and other solutions and support options have been considered.

- Facilitate the process for income and cash asset testing where funding has been requested towards the purchase of a vehicle.
- Liaise with the EMS Assessor to facilitate the supply of the vehicle or the modifications once all requirements for a Service Request have been met.
- Facilitate the resolution of any disputes that have arisen as a result of a request for Ministry funded equipment.
- Follow up with an EMS Assessor and their supervisor, professional leader or manager where Service Utilisation reports indicate that the EMS Assessor's average utilisation of services is significantly higher than their peers and no clear reason for this is evident.
- Follow up with the supervisor of an EMS Assessor where concerns are raised about aspects of a specific assessment or Service Request submitted by an EMS Assessor.
- Respond to complaints by following the Provider's complaints processes.
- Facilitate the resolution of a dispute where it has arisen due to a Service Request for Ministry funded vehicle modifications.
- Maintain accurate records of individual contributions towards vehicle purchase and modifications.

### 9.7. The Ministry of Health will:

- Develop and communicate eligibility and access criteria for the provision of Equipment and Modification Services funded through Disability Support Services.
- Manage and monitor the contracts with the EMS Providers to ensure that quality services are provided in a nationally consistent, timely, fair and efficient manner and administered within budget.
- Review relevant individual proposals through the EMS Review Panel and communicate its conclusions to the relevant EMS Provider within 10 working days of the Review Panel meeting.

### 9.8. Work and Income will:

- Conduct an income and cash asset test where a Service Request has been submitted to an EMS Provider for the purchase of a vehicle.
- Notify the relevant EMS Provider in writing of the funding amount the person is eligible to receive once the income and cash asset test has been completed.



Refer to [Work and Income](#) for information on income and cash asset testing.



Requirements to be confirmed following the receipt of a Service Request include:

- The EMS Assessor has consulted with an EMS Advisor when mandatory consultation is indicated.
- The outcome of the income and cash asset testing process (for vehicle purchase only) indicates that a funding contribution can be made (either fully or in part).
- Support from the EMS Assessor that the selected vehicle is suitable and economically viable to modify.
- The outcome of any other applications to agencies or organisations (such as Lotteries Grants, philanthropic trusts) to cover additional costs.
- The person's agreement to cover any additional costs of the modifications or purchase cost of the vehicle which are over and above the Ministry's contribution.

- Follow up with a person regarding any dispute relating to the income and cash asset test.
- Undertake a review of decision regarding the income and cash asset test when requested by the person.



Refer to [Work and Income](#) for information on income and cash asset testing.

### 9.9. The Motor Vehicle Dealer/Salesperson will:

- Provide relevant product information to the person and the EMS Assessor.
- Provide a copy of the Consumer Information Notice regarding the selected vehicle to the person and/or the EMS Assessor.
- Negotiate with the person to arrange payment for purchase which is additional to any contribution approved by the EMS Provider.
- Provide written confirmation to the EMS Assessor that arrangements for payment have been made as above.
- Liaise with the EMS Provider regarding the relevant payment requirements and processes of the funding providers.
- Comply with all relevant legislation regarding vehicle sales.

### 9.10. The Vehicle Modifier will:

- Liaise with the EMS Assessor and provide appropriate quotes that:
  - > clearly separate the essential modifications from modifications that are preferred (and are therefore, the person, their family or whānau or vehicle owner's responsibility to fund)
  - > include the cost of LVVTA where required.
- Contact the person, where possible, within 10 working days of receipt of formal notification to proceed to arrange commencement of the modifications.
- Notify the EMS Assessor if unable to contact the person or undertake the modifications as requested for any reason.
- Notify and liaise with the EMS Assessor immediately if any issues arise during the course of modifications that may result in the need to alter the specifications or cost of the modifications.
- Once the modifications are completed, notify the EMS Assessor and provide an invoice and a copy of the LVVTA Certificate, where applicable, to the relevant EMS Provider. A copy should also be sent to the vehicle owner and be retained in the vehicle.

- Liaise with the EMS Provider regarding the relevant payment requirements and processes of the funding providers.
- Comply with all relevant legislation and certification regarding vehicle modifications.

## 10. GLOSSARY

### 10.1. EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework

The EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework has been established by the Ministry for health professionals undertaking assessments that may result in requests for equipment or modification services for eligible disabled people.

The Framework has four types of accreditation to allow access to Ministry funded equipment and modifications:

#### 10.1.1. Service Accreditation

Specific service areas, primarily community health services, can be accredited to allow district health board staff (or contractors to DHBs) to undertake assessments and recommend certain equipment items, for example low cost, low risk and high volume equipment such as shower stools and over toilet frames.

#### 10.1.2. Approved Categories of Accreditation

Specified allied health professionals whose existing graduate level training is considered sufficient to assess for and recommend some Ministry funded equipment and basic housing modifications may apply for Approved Assessor category of accreditation.

#### 10.1.3. Credentialed Categories of Accreditation

Where additional training requirements are necessary before clinicians can recommend more specialised equipment or modifications, allied health professionals may obtain further training and skills and apply for Credentialed Assessor category of accreditation for that specialty area. These health professionals will have completed the respective assessor competency programmes. They will be registered as holding a specific credential with Enable New Zealand's EMS Assessor On-Line system.

#### 10.1.4. Provisional (In Training) Accreditation

An EMS Assessor who is working towards attaining the appropriate credential in an accreditation category will need to have Service Requests endorsed and counter-signed by an EMS Assessor who holds the appropriate level of credential. The supervisor who has endorsed the Service Request will take overall responsibility for the Service Request.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that EMS Assessors are competent to perform this role, that a robust peer review is undertaken by each provisional EMS Assessor's supervisor and that EMS Assessors who hold this provisional status complete the relevant credential requirements in that category within the defined time period.



For more information on the Accreditation Framework go to [EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework](#)

## 10.2. Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor

A suitably qualified occupational therapist with specialist skills in driver and passenger assessment and vehicle modifications who has completed the Ministry's vehicle modifications assessor competency programme. The Assessor will be registered as holding a vehicle assessor modifications credential (Levels 1 and/or 2) with Enable New Zealand's EMS Assessor Online system. In order to undertake assessments and submit Service Requests for vehicle purchase or modifications, an EMS Assessor must have a vehicle modifications credential at either Level 1 or Level 2.



For further information go to:

[Vehicle purchase and modifications Level 1](#)

[Vehicle purchase and modifications Level 2](#)

## 10.3. Dependent Person

A dependent person is a person who requires full time care either:

- because the person is a child of 13 years or under and cannot be legally left at home alone, or
- because of the person's long-term health or disability needs.



For the legal definition of a dependent child 13 years or under, go to: [Leaving a child without reasonable supervision or care](#)

## 10.4. EMS Advisor

An EMS Advisor is a suitably qualified and experienced person employed by the Ministry's contracted EMS Provider, who provides education and advice to EMS Assessors to support their consideration of the most appropriate and cost-effective interventions, including equipment and modifications, to meet a person's disability related needs.



EMS Advisors were previously known as Professional Advisors

## 10.5. EMS Assessor

An EMS Assessor is approved as an assessor by the Ministry under the EMS Accreditation Framework published by the Ministry. EMS Assessors hold certain categories and credentialed levels of accreditation which relate to their qualifications and experience within that specialty. The categories of accreditation refer to the types of equipment that the EMS Assessor is able to request.



Correspondence from Accessable or Enable New Zealand will be sent to the address the EMS Assessor has recorded on the national database of accredited EMS assessors.

The EMS Assessor is responsible for:

- maintaining their registration on the EMS Assessor On-line registration system (EMS Assessor Online), which is administered on the Ministry's behalf by Enable New Zealand. EMS Assessor status, Approved and/or Credentialed, needs to be re-validated every three years or earlier if the EMS Assessor's employment circumstances change.
- updating their registration details, using the Enable On-line system, of any change in their accreditation area, employer, registration or practicing status or contact details.



EMS Assessors can receive regular updates and information via email. This can be arranged by contacting Enable New Zealand. Work email addresses only should be provided - hotmail and Gmail addresses cannot be used for this email communication.

- maintaining the relevant clinical competencies for each accreditation category they hold.

### **10.6. Full Time Employment**

Full time is considered as at least thirty hours per week or achieving a degree of financial independence that is at least the same as they could earn on the sickness benefit. Where the person is in full time employment, written confirmation of their employment status or earnings must be provided by the person and retained by the EMS Assessor on the person's file.

If a person is unable to work thirty hours per week due to the limitations of their disability, funding can be considered if the person is working at their maximum capacity. This will require supporting documentation from either a registered medical practitioner or an allied health professional which will be retained by the EMS Assessor on the person's file.

### **10.7. Full Time Tertiary Education/Vocational Training**

The course/s must be full time. If a person is unable to undertake a full time course due to the limitations of their disability, funding approval may be considered if the person is studying at their maximum capacity. This will require supporting documentation from one of the following: a registered medical practitioner, allied health professional or disability advisor/coordinator who is based in a tertiary education institution.

The course length must be at least a calendar or academic year and the content of the course must support the person working toward full time employment or employment to the level of their maximum capacity. Where the person is undertaking tertiary education or vocational training, written confirmation of their full time student status must be provided by the person and retained by the EMS Assessor on the person's file.

### **10.8. Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association**

A legal requirement as overseen by the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure that vehicle modifications comply with specific standards as set out by the LVVTA.

### **10.9. Main Carer**

A main carer is an unpaid carer who lives with the person and provides the majority of their care. A main carer may have a disability themselves and may require assistance to support a dependent person in their care.

## 10.10. Vehicle Equipment

Items that are not permanently fixed to the vehicle and do not require certification and either:

- i. Are required to facilitate independence and safety as a driver.

Service Requests for all such equipment (i) must be submitted by a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor using the Service Request process for Vehicle Modifications.

- ii. Or will be used in and around a vehicle to transfer someone or their mobility equipment into / out of or transport a person safely in a vehicle.

Service Requests for all such equipment (ii) can be submitted by a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor or an appropriately credentialed EMS Assessor (for example, Wheeled Mobility & Postural Management) using either the Service Requests process for Vehicle Modifications or Band 2 or Band 3 Equipment (refer to EMS Equipment Manual)



Examples of **equipment (i)**:

- non-remote steering wheel spinners
- extension indicator arms
- wide angle rear view mirrors
- removable seating inserts



Examples of **equipment (ii)**:

- transfer boards
- car seats
- vehicle restraint harnesses
- portable ramps.

[EMS Equipment Manual](#)

## 10.11. Vehicle Modification Assessment

An assessment by a EMS Assessor for selection of an appropriate vehicle or modifications to the vehicle that will enable a person to achieve either:

- independence and safety as a driver
- safe access to and/or transportation as a passenger in a vehicle.

## 10.12. Vehicle Modifications

Any permanently attached alteration and/or adaptation of a vehicle completed to meet a person's needs related to their disability. These modifications may or may not require certification.

## 10.13. Vehicle Modifier

The person or company that is contracted to complete the modification works as recommended by the EMS Assessor and approved by Accessable or Enable New Zealand.

## 10.14. Website addresses

Enable New Zealand - [www.enable.co.nz](http://www.enable.co.nz)

Disability Funding (Enable New Zealand) - [www.disabilityfunding.co.nz](http://www.disabilityfunding.co.nz)

Accessable – [www.accessable.co.nz](http://www.accessable.co.nz)

EMS Assessor Accreditation Framework -

<http://www.disabilityfunding.co.nz/ems-assessors/credentialed-categories-of-accreditation>

Disability Support Services, Ministry of Health –

<http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/disability-services/types-disability-support/equipment-and-modification-services/vehicle-modifications-disabled-people-all-ages>

Ministry of Health Equipment and Housing Modifications Manuals -

<http://www.nsfl.health.govt.nz/apps/nsfl.nsf/pagesmh/519>

Ministry of Health EMS Operational Process and Guidelines -

<http://www.nsfl.health.govt.nz/apps/nsfl.nsf/pagesmh/522>

Lottery Grants - <http://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/Funding-and-grants---Lottery-grants---Lottery-Individuals-with-Disabilities>

Work and Income - <http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/how-we-can-help-you/disabled-or-ill/car-modification-funding.html>

## 11. APPENDIX A

Eligibility criteria for publicly funded Health and Disability Services are set out in the Health and Disability Services Eligibility Direction 2011. The Direction is issued by the Minister of Health under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000. This information is correct as at May 2012.



See [Eligibility Direction](#) for the legal document.

To be fully eligible means a person whom meets the eligibility criteria for *any* publicly-funded health service as per the Eligibility Direction (2011), and must met at least one of the following:

- i.** Is a New Zealand citizen
- ii.** Holds a resident visa or permanent resident visa (includes residence permits issued before December 2010)
- iii.** Is a Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident AND able to show that he/she has been in New Zealand or intends to stay in New Zealand for at least 2 consecutive years
- iv.** Has a work visa and is able to show that he/she is able to be in New Zealand for at least 2 years (including visas/permits held immediately beforehand)
- v.** Is an interim visa holder who was eligible for publicly funded health services immediately before his/her interim visa started
- vi.** Is a refugee or protected person OR is in the process of applying for, or appealing to the Immigration and Protection Tribunal for refugee or protection status OR is the victim or suspended victim of a people trafficking offence
- vii.** Is under 18 and in the care and control of a parent/legal guardian/adopting parent who meets one criterion in i-vi above
- viii.** Is 18 or 19 years old and can demonstrate that, on 15 April 2011, he/she was the dependent of an eligible work visa/permit holder (visa must be still valid)
- ix.** Is an NZ Aid Programme student studying in New Zealand and receiving Official Development Assistance Funding (or their partner or child under 18)
- x.** Is participating in the Ministry of Education Foreign Language Teaching Assistantship scheme
- xi.** Is a Commonwealth scholarship holder studying in New Zealand and receiving funding from a New Zealand university under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Fund.