



Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS)

# General Guidelines

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# 1 Glossary of Terms

- **Accessories:** additional pieces of equipment that enhance the primary aid to meet individual need. See also “Modifications”
- **Acquittal:** process of checking that assistive technology has arrived, has been correctly issued and meets the applicant’s needs.
- **Applicant:** the person who will receive the assistive technology. Applicants wishing to apply for subsidy funding must consult an appropriate MASS designated prescriber who will assess the applicant’s needs and submit an application form on their behalf.
- **Assistive Technology:** aids or devices/equipment whose primary purpose is to maintain or improve an individual’s functioning and independence to facilitate participation and to enhance overall well-being.
- **Child:** defined as being under 16 years.
- **Client:** a customer/person who receives subsidy funded services through MASS. Also refers to an applicant that has been approved for subsidy funding.
- **Client ownership:** where MASS has deemed ownership of assistive technology to the client.
- **Community Access:** Access to community activity and social interaction outside of the home environment such as work, education, recreation and social engagement.
- **Co-payment:** additional cost incurred by the applicant, above the level of subsidy - facility that allows MASS to issue assistive technology that has been clinically justified, provided the applicant agrees to pay the additional costs.
- **Endorsed (approved) aids and equipment:** Assistive technology that meets appropriate Australian Standards or International Standard Organisation (ISO) standards as required by MASS and/or is available on a MASS Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA).
- **Functional assessment:** Holistic assessment of a person’s needs within their everyday environments.
- **Home environment:** The client/applicant’s fixed residence and immediate surroundings (e.g. dwelling, front and back yards).
- **Maintenance:** daily checking of equipment and attending to minor wear and tear issues to prevent breakdown or damage. See also “Planned Maintenance”
- **MASS designated prescriber:** for each category of assistive technology there is a health professional group/s authorised to assess the needs of the applicant and submit an application on their behalf. The list of designated prescribers can be found in section 6, List of Approved Categories of assistive technology.
- **Modifications:** alterations to the primary aid to meet individual need. See also “Accessories”.

- **Permanent and stabilised condition:** MASS defines a permanent and stabilised condition as one where the diagnosis is known to require the assistance of assistive technology for the long term.
- **Permanent Loan:** Assistive technology which remains the property of MASS and which MASS will maintain and repair (conditions apply).
- **Planned Maintenance:** scheduled maintenance co-ordinated by MASS as part of a Maintenance Program.
- **Plaque number/bar code:** identification number for items provided on permanent loan.
- **Prescriber Model:** operating procedure of the scheme whereby designated health professionals assess and prescribe assistive technology for eligible applicants.
- **“Queensland public hospital discharge priority”:**
  - the applicant meets administrative and clinical criteria as applied to all applications;
  - the assistive technology is essential to enable discharge from a Queensland public hospital i.e. discharge cannot occur if this item is not available before the patient is discharged; and
  - other alternate means of obtaining the assistive technology (e.g. hire, loan, other funding programs) are not possible; and
  - the assistive technology can be delivered to the applicant’s discharge address or the hospital ward on or before the discharge date of the hospital patient.

Additional prescriber requirements for applying for hospital discharge consideration are to:

- ensure that the proposed discharge date is provided;
- ensure that the application form is received by MASS at least 5 working days prior to the discharge date.
- **Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA):** formal arrangement with commercial suppliers for the supply of products at an agreed price for an agreed period.
- **Subsidy Scheme:** a scheme that has limits on the funding of particular items, which may not cover the full cost of the item requiring a contribution from the applicant.
- **Trial:** process whereby assistive technology is made available for assessment by the Prescriber with the applicant within their home environment.

## 2 Introduction

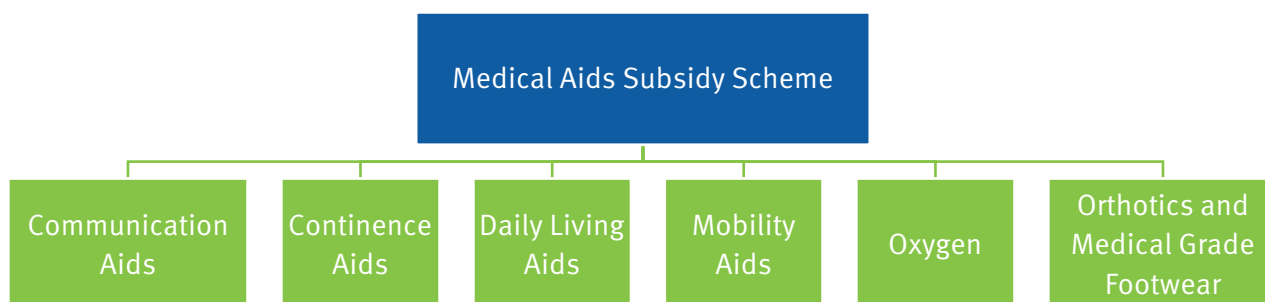
These General Guidelines contain information about the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme which is common to all categories of assistive technology. It is written to assist applicants and prescribing health professionals with the application process.

For health professionals prescribing assistive technology, there is a series of Application Guidelines for each specific category of assistive technology.

These documents are available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QEHP) and on the internet website at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass).

## Scope of Service

These guidelines apply to the following service areas:



MASS operates through a prescriber model. Applicants wishing to apply for assistive technology need to consult an appropriate prescriber who will, in consultation with the applicant, submit an application on their behalf.

MASS prescribers for specific areas of the scheme can be found in section 6, List of Approved Categories of assistive technology.

MASS is also responsible for: [Spectacle Supply Scheme \(SSS\)](#), [Cystic Fibrosis Program \(CFP\)](#), [Spinal Cord Injury Response \(SCIR\)](#), [Queensland Artificial Limb Service \(QALS\)](#) and [Queensland Heat Moisture Exchange Subsidy Scheme for Laryngectomy \(QHSSL\)](#). These services have area specific guidelines, different eligibility and criteria may apply.

## Aims of MASS

The aim of MASS is to provide endorsed aids and equipment (assistive technology) to eligible Queensland residents with a permanent and stabilised condition or disability.

Assistive technology is selected to assist people to live in their home environment and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

To meet this aim the assistive technology subsidised by MASS must be required for use within the home environment. MASS acknowledges that assistive technology may be used for some community access, although the MASS subsidy is not provided for this purpose as it is outside the scope of the scheme.

## Our primary aims and objectives are to:

- Provide appropriate assistive technology to eligible people;
- Ensure equity of access;
- Provide subsidy funding that may not meet full need, but allows MASS to assist as many people as possible;
- Effectively manage resources by providing Assistive technology that is cost effective, meets individual needs and complies with relevant Australian Standards or International Standard Organisation (ISO) standards as required by MASS;
- Reflect the person's preference within the approved MASS list of Assistive technology;
- Provide a transparent and efficient service to prescribers and clients/applicants.

Eligible Queensland residents over the age of 65, and under the age of 65 with a health condition, are able to apply for MASS subsidy funding.

## Location of MASS

MASS has a Service Centre in Brisbane and Townsville. In addition to managing local enquiries, each centre focuses on a specific category of MASS services:

**Brisbane Service Centre** is the primary administrative centre and provides services for all categories of assistive technology, including spectacles through the Spectacle Supply Scheme.

41 Southgate Avenue, Cannon Hill QLD 4170

Postal address: PO Box 281, Cannon Hill QLD 4170

Phone: 3136 3636      Toll Free: 1300 443 570      Email: [mass184@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mass184@health.qld.gov.au)

### Contenance Aids Services

Phone: 3136 3665

Email: [MASS-Contenance@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Contenance@health.qld.gov.au)

### Equipment Services (Includes Spinal Cord Injury Response)

Phone: 3136 3525

For equipment applications and enquiries: [MASS-Equipment@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Equipment@health.qld.gov.au)

For equipment repairs: [MASS-Repairs@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Repairs@health.qld.gov.au)

For MASS stock reservation and enquiries: [MASS-Stock@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Stock@health.qld.gov.au)

For MASS Warehouse: [MASSwarehouse@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASSwarehouse@health.qld.gov.au)

### Oxygen Services (Includes Cystic Fibrosis Program and Heat Moisture Exchange)

Phone: 3136 3510

Email: [MASS-Oxygen@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Oxygen@health.qld.gov.au)

### Queensland Artificial Limb Service

Phone: 3136 3660

Email: [QALS@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:QALS@health.qld.gov.au)

**Spectacle Supply Scheme and Specialised Services** (Includes Communication Aids, Orthotics and Medical Grade Footwear)

Phone: 3136 3696

Email: [MASS-Specialisedservices@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Specialisedservices@health.qld.gov.au)

**Townsville Service Centre** focuses on equipment services, such as daily living and mobility aids.

190 Palmerston Street, Vincent QLD 4814

Postal address: PO Box 980, Hyde Park QLD 4812

Phone: 4433 8000 Fax: 4433 8001

Email: [MASS-Equipment-TSV@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Equipment-TSV@health.qld.gov.au)

**Repairs and maintenance:** please refer to section 12, Permanent Loan Repairs and Maintenance for details about which centre to contact.

### Clinical Advisory Services

To assist prescribers, MASS has clinical advisors in the following areas:

- Continence Aids Services
- Equipment Services (daily living and mobility aids)
- Oxygen Services
- Specialised Services (communication aids, medical grade footwear and orthoses).

For advice or discussion, contact:

#### Continence Aids Services

Principal Continence Advisor 3136 3665

#### Equipment Services

Principal Mobility Aids Advisor 3136 3525

Principal Daily Living Aids Advisor 3136 3525

Clinical Advisor, Equipment (Townsville) 4433 8000

#### Oxygen Services

Principal Medical Advisor, Oxygen 3136 3510

#### Specialised Services

Principal Clinical Advisor, Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses 3136 3696

Principal Clinical Advisor, Communication Aids 3136 3696



## 3 Eligibility

Eligibility is determined by both administrative and clinical criteria.

### Administrative eligibility

The applicant must be a permanent Queensland resident and must hold one of the following eligibility cards in the name of the applicant:

- Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card;
- Centrelink Health Care Card;
- Centrelink Confirmation Concession Card Entitlement Form (excludes partial entitlement holders i.e. issued for travel concession)
- Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) pensioner Concession Card (excludes DVA Gold Card holders);
- Queensland Government Seniors Card.

Applicants need to provide a copy of both sides of the eligibility card or signed consent to access Centrelink information on the MASS 84 Proxy Access to Centrelink Information Form. The MASS 84 form includes information for the applicant about its purpose and scope.

### Clinical eligibility

- Clinical eligibility will be determined by the MASS Clinical Advisor based on information provided by the prescriber;
- The applicant has a permanent and stabilised condition or disability which impairs their ability to function independently in their home environment;
- Clinical justification is documented by the prescribing health professional from a functional and clinical perspective, with regard to the applicant's prognosis, and the expected benefit to the applicant from the prescribed Assistive technology;
- The applicant or carer can appropriately store and maintain the prescribed assistive technology.

### Persons not Eligible for MASS Assistance

Persons not eligible for assistance include:

- Persons in receipt of assistance or funding for assistive technology under one or more State or Commonwealth government funded programs including, but not limited to:
  - Department of Veterans' Affairs
  - National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants;
  - National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) participants;



- Commonwealth residential care facility recipients, as follows:
  - for oxygen - all classifications;
  - for other assistive technology - have a classification of a high rating in any domain category or a medium rating in two or more domain categories per the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) assessment as noted in the Quality of Care Principles 2014 Subsection 7 (6).
- Home Care Package- All Level 3 & Level 4 recipients of Aged Care (Living Longer Living Better) Bill 2013; For oxygen All Level 1 to 4 recipients;
- Consumer Directed Care (CDC) high care program recipients;
- Hospital in-patients;
- Palliative care eligible persons;
- Persons in receipt of compensation or damages in respect of their disability or engaged in a claim and have not acknowledged reimbursement to MASS for services provided when/if the claim is successful;
- Children under the age of 5 years for continence pads and nappies.

MASS does not provide subsidy funding for assistive technology that is needed:

- solely for community access, or
- for short-term post-acute care, or
- for therapy or rehabilitation programs.

## Ongoing Eligibility

A person must meet eligibility requirements to receive on-going funding assistance and may become ineligible for MASS assistance if their circumstances change.

Should the person become MASS eligible again, MASS will consider further funding assistance based on records of assistive technology previously supplied. MASS may require additional information to confirm eligibility.

## 4 Subsidy Funding

MASS aims to assist as many people as possible; however, as it is a subsidy scheme it may not meet a person's total needs. In some cases, a person will be asked to make a co-payment (see below).

It is important for applicants and professionals to know that:

- MASS provides subsidy funding towards assistive technology that is MASS endorsed;

- MASS does not reimburse any portion of a person's private funding;
- MASS will not fund assistive technology retrospectively, including temporary arrangements made by the applicant/carer, health professional or other agency for supply of the assistive technology;
- MASS subsidy funding is not available where the sole purpose is to access the community.
- MASS will fund replacement of assistive technology that is no longer clinically appropriate or has reached the end of its economic life. This determination is made on a range of factors and is not based directly on the age of the aids/equipment e.g. is now 5 years old. Well maintained aids/equipment can have a long life.

## Co-payment

Co-payments may occur in the following areas of MASS:

- Communication Aids;
- Daily Living Aids;
- Mobility Aids.

A co-payment arrangement is required where:

- a MASS approved aid, accessories or modifications exceeds the maximum MASS subsidy funding levels;
- accessories or modifications are requested by the applicant but not funded through MASS (subject to clinical justification provided).

## Conditions of Co-payment Arrangements

Conditions of co-payment arrangements are that:

- MASS co-payment arrangement will be with the applicant only and only for clinically appropriate modifications. MASS does not enter into co-payment arrangements with a third party;
- MASS retains ownership of the permanent loan equipment and will assume responsibility for reasonable repairs and maintenance associated with use in the home environment of MASS subsidy funded equipment and accessories/modifications. Refer to section 11, Permanent Loan Aids, for information about repairs and maintenance that MASS will and will not pay;
- applicants must provide MASS with a signed statutory declaration to agree to their co-payment responsibility;
- the applicant will make their co-payment direct to the supplier;
- MASS does not reimburse co-payments.

Where an applicant contributes a co-payment of more than 50% to the total cost of an aid, including modifications and accessories, refer to page 19, Exceptions to Permanent Loan Arrangements.

## 5 Prescriber Role

MASS operates through a prescriber model. This means that:

- There are designated MASS prescribers for each category of assistive technology;
- Prescribers, in consultation with the applicant, submit an application on behalf of the applicant.
- For MASS prescriber groups, refer to section 6, List of Approved Categories of assistive technology.

### General Information

Prescribers:

- are responsible for the accuracy of the prescription/application;
- have current registration with their relevant National Registration Board or equivalent;
- familiarise themselves with the following documents: “General Guidelines: Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme” and the relevant Application Guidelines for different categories of assistive technology;
- ensure that the applicant is fully involved in the prescription/application process;
- make the applicant aware of the scope of the service provided by MASS, including:
  - eligibility criteria;
  - conditions of supply;
  - co-payment responsibilities, where applicable;
  - waiting lists - these may apply when demand for subsidy assistance exceeds available MASS resources;
  - that MASS approval is not automatic and that all criteria must be met;
  - making the applicant aware that they should contact MASS within 14 days of any change of either residential address, or eligibility for MASS funding subsidy e.g. no longer eligible for a Health Care Card;
  - Ensure continuity of service, by arranging a new prescriber, if unable to continue working with applicant during the assessment, trial or follow up stage of the process.

### Assessment

Prescribers

- conduct a full functional assessment of the applicant’s needs and consider all assistive technology options in terms of function, cost and usage within the home environment;
- consult with MASS clinical advisors, or other experienced prescribers as necessary to assist the prescription/application process.

## Selection of Assistive Technology

### Prescribers

- where required, conduct an appropriate trial of the assistive technology. Refer to the relevant Application Guidelines for specific categories of assistive technology;
- select assistive technology from the MASS Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA) where one is in place for the category of assistive technology prescribed;
- provide clinical justification if prescribing assistive technology not on the SOA, including why the comparable SOA assistive technology is not suitable;
- ensure that the applicant's home environment is compatible with long term use of the assistive technology, including that it can be used safely, manoeuvred, stored and maintained by the applicant or carer;
- For mobility or daily living aids ensure that:
  - access (e.g. slopes and ramps) for use of the assistive technology complies with relevant Australian Standards or International Standard Organisation (ISO) standards as required by MASS. MASS does not pay costs associated with this requirement.
  - Applicant weight is within the safe working load of the equipment
- where the applicant's request and expectations differ from the prescriber's assessment and recommendation, the issues are to be resolved prior to the application being submitted to MASS;
- be aware that MASS will not pay for a replacement/exchange item that has been inappropriately/incorrectly prescribed, once ordered. MASS will refer these cases back to the original prescriber's agency for their funding consideration.

## Application Process

Prescribers need to complete and collate all paperwork including:

- application forms – although fillable PDF forms are available MASS has developed electronic applications via MASS-eApply ([health.qld.gov.au/mass/mass-online-applications](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass/mass-online-applications)) for use across all service areas;
- manufacturer's specification form (if applicable) and including any accessories and/or modifications requested (irrespective of co-payment arrangements);
- safe weight limits and applicant weight to be noted per Application Guidelines;

Prescribers need to keep and maintain records of the assessment, application and post-delivery follow up and ongoing checks and reviews.

## Post Delivery Follow-up

Prescribers need to organise a post-delivery check to:

- ensure the correct assistive technology has been supplied;
- ensure the assistive technology meets the MASS applicant's functional requirements;
- perform minor adjustments, in consultation with the supplier if necessary, to ensure the assistive technology meets the MASS applicant's functional requirements;
- ensure the MASS applicant is instructed on the use of the assistive technology and is able to use the assistive technology appropriately and safely;
- inform the applicant of any operating, maintenance and care instructions, including appropriate storage;
- provide instructions and information about MASS repair and maintenance processes;
- inform the applicant about their alternative arrangements and plans for occasions when they may be without their assistive technology or the assistive technology requires repairs and maintenance;
- explain that the MASS applicant is responsible for the daily care and maintenance of the Assistive technology;
- assist the MASS applicant to use the MASS Repair and Maintenance information booklet and power drive or manual wheelchair checklist provided by MASS.

## Incomplete Application Forms

Incomplete applications will be returned to the prescriber and will remain the property and responsibility of the prescriber until completed. This may result in processing and delivery delays for applicants.

Electronic applications via MASS-eApply have been designed to assist prescribers in completing the application. MASS-eApply has business rules in place so the next appropriate question is determined by the previous answer. The form can only be submitted when all mandatory areas have been completed.

# 6 List of Approved Categories of Assistive Technology

MASS funds the following categories of Assistive Technology within its funding capacity, however, MASS reserves the right to review this undertaking at its discretion.

Continance Aids	MASS Designated Prescriber
<p>Containment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable pants</li> <li>• Disposable nappies</li> <li>• Disposable shaped pads</li> <li>• Stretch pants</li> <li>• Disposable pull-on style pads</li> <li>• Disposable all-in-one pads</li> <li>• Reusable bed pads/chair pads</li> </ul> <p>Conduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposable catheters</li> <li>• Indwelling catheters</li> <li>• Latex sheaths</li> <li>• Non-latex sheaths</li> <li>• Night drainage bags</li> <li>• Leg bags</li> </ul> <p>Occlusive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catheter valves</li> </ul>	<p>Initial and Three-yearly Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continance Specialist Registered Nurse</li> <li>• Registered Nurse</li> <li>• Physiotherapist</li> <li>• Occupational Therapist</li> <li>• Designated Specialist:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urologist</li> <li>• Uro-gynaecologist</li> <li>• Geriatrician</li> <li>• Paediatrician</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Re-Applications - 6 Monthly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant</li> <li>• Carer</li> <li>• Guardian</li> <li>• Parent</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any of the above designated prescribers</li> </ul>

Communication Aids	MASS Designated Prescriber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artificial larynges</li> <li>• Speech generating devices</li> <li>• Voice amplification devices</li> </ul>	<p>Speech Pathologist</p>

Medical Grade Footwear	MASS Designated Prescriber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefabricated medical grade footwear</li> <li>• Customised medical grade footwear</li> <li>• Custom made medical grade footwear</li> </ul>	<p>Private:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orthopaedic Surgeons</li> <li>• Vascular Surgeons</li> <li>• Neurologists</li> <li>• Medical Specialists in Rheumatology, Rehabilitation, Geriatrics and Endocrinology</li> </ul>

Oxygen	MASS Designated Prescriber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxygen Concentrators</li> <li>• Oxygen Cylinders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Application &amp; First Reapplication (4 months)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoracic Physician</li> <li>• Specialist Physician</li> <li>• Oncologist</li> <li>• Palliative Care Physician</li> <li>• Respiratory Nurse Practitioner</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General practitioner (with designated specialist endorsement) in remote areas</li> </ul> <p>Annual reapplication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoracic Physician</li> <li>• Specialist Physician</li> <li>• Oncologist</li> <li>• Palliative Care Physician</li> <li>• Respiratory Nurse Practitioner</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General practitioner</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respiratory Nurse (with designated specialist endorsement) in remote areas</li> </ul>
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Mobility Aids	MASS Designated Prescriber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manual wheelchairs</li> <li>• Power wheelchairs</li> <li>• Accessories and/or modifications to wheelchairs</li> <li>• Wheeled walking aids</li> <li>• Foam or pressure redistribution wheelchair cushions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational Therapist</li> <li>• Physiotherapist</li> <li>• Rehabilitation Engineer</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Nurse in consultation with Designated Health Prescriber in rural and remote locations</li> </ul>

Daily Living Aids	MASS Designated Prescriber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non standard bathboards (raised/backrest/extended and/or padded only)</li> <li>• Static or 3-in-1 Commodes</li> <li>• Bath transfer bench/swivel, bathseat /bath hoist</li> <li>• Mobile floor hoist/ceiling hoist, slings</li> <li>• Mobile Shower Commode</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational Therapist</li> <li>• Physiotherapist</li> <li>• Rehabilitation Engineer</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Nurse in consultation with Designated Health Prescriber in rural and remote locations</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessories and/or modifications to mobile shower commodes</li> <li>• Pressure redistribution mattresses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Nurse for non-mobile commodes all locations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Orthoses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spinal orthoses</li> <li>• Lower limb orthoses</li> </ul>	<p><b>MASS Designated Prescriber</b></p> <p>Private:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orthopaedic Surgeons</li> <li>• Neurologists</li> <li>• Medical Specialists in Rheumatology, Rehabilitation and Geriatrics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spectacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spectacle packages for adults and children</li> <li>• Frames</li> <li>• Lens</li> <li>• Lens treatments (if clinically justified)</li> </ul>	<p><b>MASS Designated Prescriber</b></p> <p>Optometrists and ophthalmologists who are “<a href="https://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/prescribe/spectacles">Dispensing Agents</a>” and appear on the list at: <a href="https://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/prescribe/spectacles">health.qld.gov.au/mass/prescribe/spectacles</a></p>
<p><b>Cystic Fibrosis Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nebulisers (excluding pump)</li> <li>• PEP systems</li> </ul>	<p><b>MASS Designated Prescriber</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physiotherapists associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic.</li> <li>• Registered nurses associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic (for nebulisers only).</li> </ul>

## 7 Acquittal

An acquittal process ensures that the applicant receives the best possible service outcome. It is applied to some but not all categories of assistive technology.

A MASS 70 Acquittal Form may be requested by MASS for particular assistive technology and should be completed at the time of the post-delivery check.



## 8 Standing Offer Arrangements (SOA)

MASS has SOAs for the supply of assistive technology (wheelchairs and wheeled walking aids, patient lifting devices, static/3-in-1 commodes and bath transfer benches/swivel bath seats, mobile commodes, pressure redistribution equipment), oxygen, continence aids, and spectacles (refer to the Application Guidelines for more detail). The SOAs are formal arrangements with commercial suppliers for the supply of these products at an agreed price for an agreed period.

## 9 Prioritisation

There may be times when demand for subsidy assistance exceeds available resources. In these circumstances, a waiting list may exist. Prioritisation criteria have been developed for this situation. Category 1 applicants are given priority over category 2 applicants.

### Category 1

- Oxygen;
- Ongoing continence supplies for existing MASS clients;
- Enabling a Queensland public hospital discharge to occur (for artificial larynges, mobility and daily living permanent loan aids and equipment only) i.e. the applicant must remain in hospital until the MASS equipment is delivered because hiring/borrowing of appropriate equipment is impossible;
- At risk of imminent hospitalisation because of safety or medical need without the assistive technology (written reasons must be provided by the prescriber);
- Repairs and maintenance to existing MASS assistive technology;
- Modifications and/or accessories to a MASS aid for a MASS client who is at risk because of that aid (written reasons must be provided by the prescriber);
- Replacement of a MASS aid that is unsafe for use (written reasons must be provided by the prescriber and/or MASS recognised repairer).

### Category 2

All other categories, including:

- The MASS Continence Aids Service priority score initiatives. For specific eligibility criteria, refer to the Application Guidelines for Continence Aids, which should be read in conjunction with this section.

## 10 Urgent Processing

Urgent processing of applications for artificial larynges, mobility and daily living permanent loan aids and equipment may be considered for the following:

- Hospital discharge - applicant is unable to be discharged and relevant equipment is not able to be sourced elsewhere. If multiple items of equipment are requested, those required for discharge must be specified.
- Replacement, modifications and/or accessories to MASS equipment where applicant is at risk because of that equipment. Equipment must be specified including MASS plaque number, reason why unsafe and modification/accessory required. Attach supporting documentation (e.g. report from repairer).
- Pressure redistribution equipment – where applicant has existing pressure injury.
- Falls risk – where applicant has had one or more falls in the last month.

Supply of an aid will be dependent on the availability of the aid from MASS stock or from a supplier.

Note this area does not affect section 9 Prioritisation of these Guidelines. **Should waiting lists be implemented, the Prioritisation section will be applied and this section will not impact ordering of aids/equipment.**

## 11 Permanent Loan Aids

Permanent loan aids are offered in the following areas of the scheme:

- Communication Aids;
- Daily Living Aids;
- Mobility Aids.

### Plaque/Bar Code Number

- An item on permanent loan remains the property of MASS and is identified through a plaque or bar code number. This plaque/bar code must not be removed and the reference number must be used when contacting MASS about the aid.
- MASS will only be responsible for the most recent plaqued or bar coded aid type allocated to a MASS client.
- Where MASS has transferred ownership of an aid to a person or agency, the MASS plaque or bar code number must be removed.

## Daily care and maintenance

It is important for clients and professionals to know that:

- The Client is responsible for daily care and maintenance as outlined in the information provided with the equipment;
- MASS will provide relevant Information Sheets about care and maintenance when assistive technology is issued;
- All plaqued or bar coded equipment is expected to be serviceable for a minimum of 5 years.

## Exceptions to Permanent Loan Arrangements

Clients will be deemed to own the following items:

- Non standard bathboards;
- bath transfer benches/swivel, bathseats/bath hoists
- static and 3-in-1 commodes;
- wheeled walking aids;
- backup manual wheelchairs;
- voice amplification devices.

If an applicant contributes more than 50% towards the total cost of an aid, including modifications and accessories, the applicant can choose to:

- deem ownership of the aid to MASS. MASS will subsidise the cost of ongoing reasonable repairs, maintenance and also the cost of future approved modifications and accessories, as per MASS permanent loan conditions, OR
- accept ownership of the aid and be responsible for the cost of ongoing repairs and maintenance, and also be responsible for the cost of any future modifications and accessories.

Where ownership is either deemed or chosen by the applicant, the following conditions apply:

- The owner will be responsible for the cost of ongoing repairs and maintenance, and also be responsible for the cost of any future modifications and accessories.
- The owner will have the right to dispose of/or donate serviceable equipment to a local Queensland Health Service. The owner should contact their local community health centre or allied health department to discuss options.
- MASS will not normally replace the aid within five years for any reason other than functional change or growth. In this case the aid must be returned to MASS in exchange for the new subsidised aid.

## 12 Permanent Loans – Repairs and Maintenance

MASS will subsidise maintenance for wear and tear associated with the use of assistive technology within the home environment only, noting that MASS subsidies are not provided for the purpose of community access. If equipment requires repairs and maintenance these should be undertaken as soon as possible to prevent further damage and safety issues occurring.

### Contacting MASS

- Contact should be made with the local MASS service centre:
  - Brisbane (3136 3525) or [MASS-Repairs@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Repairs@health.qld.gov.au)
  - Townsville (4433 8000) or [MASS-Equipment-TSV@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-Equipment-TSV@health.qld.gov.au)
- The client needs to provide the plaque number and a brief description of the repairs and maintenance required.
- MASS and repair and maintenance suppliers will refuse to accept unclean aids.

### Repairs and Maintenance that MASS will NOT pay

MASS will not pay for repairs and maintenance:

- To privately owned aids or accessories;
- To non-plaquetted/bar coded aids;
- To all or part of an aid that has been replaced;
- To co-funded upgraded aids/modifications above the repair cost for the equivalent standard aid;
- For which the client has privately paid (i.e. retrospective payments);
- Beyond the typical cost of basic repairs and maintenance for similar types of aids within the MASS fleet;
- Resulting from the use of a MASS mobility aid as a vehicle on roads or footpaths or for other community access.
- Without prior contact and authorisation by MASS;
- That are not undertaken by the supplier or its authorised agent or by a repairer authorised by MASS;
- Covered by warranty conditions.

MASS will also not pay for:

- The transportation of the client to and from the repairer/supplier;
- Costs of alternative arrangements for the client while the aid is being repaired;

- Larger tyres on manual wheelchairs and mobile shower commodes;
- Damage cause by unreasonable use, misuse or inappropriate use of an aid;
- Damage caused by lack of maintenance and cleaning;
- Damage caused to an aid by the constant and/or continual soiling of bodily fluids (e.g. urine or faeces);
- Accidental damage, loss or neglect of an aid;
- Cleaning of an aid.

Unauthorised modifications to MASS permanent loan equipment will void MASS responsibility for repairs. Prescribers/clients must seek approval prior to organising modifications to MASS permanent loan equipment.

## Repairs and maintenance away from normal residence

When the client is within Queensland, MASS will continue to fund authorised repairs and maintenance, but freight/additional costs in transporting the aid to the repairer/supplier is not normally funded. MASS does not provide a breakdown service.

## Aids beyond repair

MASS will consider replacing an aid that has worn out by natural use and is no longer usable. The following conditions apply:

- MASS needs written confirmation from a repairer/supplier that the aid is not economical to repair. If unsure of recognised MASS repairer please contact MASS Repairs on 3136 3525;
- Reassessment and a complete application are required for any replacement aid;
- MASS does not provide temporary aids while a replacement is being prescribed and/or provided by MASS;
- If the MASS aid is deemed unsafe, alternative arrangements will need to be made by the prescriber for the client and the unsafe aid returned to MASS;
- The aid must be returned to MASS when it is no longer required, is unserviceable or unsafe or has been replaced by a new aid.

# 13 Transferring out of Queensland

MASS may allow the transfer of ownership of its assistive technology to a client who moves from Queensland to another state or overseas.

The client must advise MASS in writing and request that the specified MASS assistive technology be transferred interstate to a similar scheme or to their ownership. MASS will provide a written response outlining the conditions that apply to the MASS decision.

Should the applicant move before the requested assistive technology is delivered, MASS will cancel the order/delivery of the assistive technology.

MASS will not pay transport or freight costs for assistive technology outside Queensland.

## 14 Transferring to Residential Care

When a client with a Home Care Package Level 3 or 4 moves to a Commonwealth funded aged care facility on a permanent basis the client can choose to return the assistive technology to MASS or have ownership transferred to them.

The client must advise MASS in writing and request that the specified MASS assistive technology be transferred to their ownership.

MASS will provide a written response outlining the conditions that apply to the MASS decision. Should the applicant move to a Commonwealth funded aged care facility or receive Home Care Level 3 or 4 package before the requested assistive technology is delivered, MASS will cancel the order/delivery of the assistive technology

Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS) provides spectacles to clients who reside in Residential Care Facilities.

## 15 Changes to Ownership of Assistive Technology

### MASS Transferring Ownership to a Client or Agency

The following conditions will apply should MASS choose to transfer ownership of assistive technology to a client or agency:

- the client or agency will be responsible for repairs and maintenance to the assistive technology
- the client will not normally be eligible for other similar assistive technology within a five-year period from date of the original supply of the assistive technology by MASS.

Although MASS may have agreed to transfer ownership of the assistive technology there is still the option for the client/carer to return the assistive technology to MASS for reissue if appropriate per section 16

## MASS Taking Over Ownership of Assistive Technology

Under certain circumstances MASS will consider taking over ownership of assistive technology, which has been supplied by another agency e.g. interstate agencies' assistive technology which is similar to those provided by MASS.

MASS will not take over ownership of assistive technology that is:

- considered by MASS to be beyond its' economical life
- in need of repairs or maintenance at the time of takeover;
- not on the MASS approved list of permanent loan aids and equipment;
- not on the MASS approved list of permanent loan accessories and modifications;
- within the warranty period.

The applicant must meet the administrative and clinical eligibility criteria outlined under the relevant sections of the MASS General Guidelines.

If MASS agrees to take over ownership of assistive technology, the same criteria apply as if MASS had subsidised the assistive technology. Normal MASS prioritisation and waiting list conditions will apply.

## Application Requirements for MASS Taking Over Ownership of Assistive technology

The application requirements for MASS taking over ownership of Assistive technology are:

- a letter from the applicant (or owner, if not the applicant) requesting that MASS takes over ownership. The letter must include the full details of the assistive technology (e.g. where and when purchased and the specific brands and models of the assistive technology);
- a written report from a recognised MASS repairer on the condition of the assistive technology including economic life expectancy. If unsure of recognised MASS repairer please contact MASS Repairs on 3136 3525;
- application to MASS as per the relevant Application Guidelines for specific assistive technology;

MASS will provide a written response outlining the conditions that apply to the MASS decision.

## 16 Return of Assistive Technology

A MASS client has the use of assistive technology as long as it is needed and remains serviceable. The assistive technology must be returned to MASS (unless owned by the client) when it is no longer required, is unserviceable, unsafe or has been replaced by a new aid.

Assistive technology returned to MASS, if suitable, is placed into MASS stock. The MASS stock is available for reissue and prescribers are encouraged to utilise these items if clinically suitable for their applicant.

When a MASS stock item is requested there is no co-payment required.

If a suitable item is held in MASS stock, MASS will arrange delivery to the requested address.

## 17 Translating and Interpreting Service

MASS can arrange, free of charge, an interpreter through the Queensland Health Interpreter Service for persons from non-English speaking background and those with hearing loss.

## 18 Client/Applicant Feedback and Complaints Mechanism

MASS recognises that consumer feedback, both positive and negative, is essential in order to provide a quality service that meets the needs of our consumers. Compliments and complaints can be made both verbally and in writing or by using the forms as detailed below.

Consumers such as prescribers, MASS clients/applicants and their advocates are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the service they have received from MASS and suppliers of assistive technology funded by MASS, and also the assistive technology supplied.

MASS will treat all complainants with respect, sensitivity and confidentiality. Complainants will not be subjected to any prejudicial treatment as a result of making a complaint about the standard of service received.

The consumer's privacy is protected in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011.



MASS will endeavour to provide feedback to the complainant on the progress of their complaint at regular intervals throughout the complaint management process.

## Compliments and Complaints Mechanisms

To assist the process, consumers are encouraged to provide factual and full information of their concern. Complaints will be managed according to the nature of the issue, as follows:

- Issues concerning the performance of MASS whilst providing its service will be investigated and resolved, if possible, at local MASS level.
- Issues concerning the outcome of an application to MASS for assistance will involve an objective review of the issues by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel, and if necessary, co-opted health professionals.
- Issues concerning the performance of suppliers and/or the assistive technology they have provided are investigated and resolved, if possible, by the MASS Contracts Manager. To investigate and resolve these issues it will generally be necessary for MASS to contact the supplier, who by nature of the investigation, may be able to identify the consumer even if names are not provided by MASS to the supplier.

Complaints that cannot be resolved at the local level are referred to the Director of MASS for consideration or appropriate referral to the Health Service Chief Executive Metro South Health.

## Compliments and Complaints Forms

- Client Satisfaction Feedback Form
- Supplier Performance Report Form

These forms are available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and Internet website at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass) and from MASS service centres.

Completed forms can be returned to the local MASS service centre or e-mailed to MASS on [mass184@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mass184@health.qld.gov.au). Refer to section 2, Introduction for MASS Service Centre contact details.

# 19 Reapplications and Appeals

Reapplications or appeals about the outcome of an application, may be made in writing, by the prescriber, to the appropriate MASS Clinical Advisor or MASS Service Manager, with the provision of additional written clinical supportive information.

The appropriate MASS Clinical Advisor will initially address reapplications or appeals.

If the applicant remains ineligible for MASS assistance following reassessment by the appropriate MASS Clinical Advisor, and the applicant or prescriber still wishes to appeal the MASS decision, the appeal will be objectively reviewed by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel, and if necessary, co-opted health professionals.

Appeals which are rejected to the appellant's dissatisfaction are referred to the Director of MASS for consideration or appropriate referral to the Health Service Chief Executive Metro South Health.

## 20 Accidents and Incidents

The monitoring of incidents plays an important role in ensuring that MASS improves service delivery to its consumers by minimising potential risks. The MASS accident and incident monitoring process supports a preventative approach by monitoring events that have, or may lead to, unintended harm, complaint, loss or damage.

The Accident and Incident Report form is available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and Internet website at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass) and from MASS service centres. Completed forms should be returned to the local MASS service centre or e-mailed to MASS on [mass184@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mass184@health.qld.gov.au). Refer to section 2, Introduction for MASS Service Centre contact details.

## 21 Privacy Statement

The Queensland Health, MASS is collecting administrative, demographic and clinical data as part of the MASS application process, in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, in order to assess an applicant's eligibility for funding assistance for the supply of assistive technology.

The information will only be accessed by Queensland Health officers. Some of this information may be given to the applicant's carer or guardian; other government departments who provide associated services; the prescribing health professional for further clinical management purposes; and to those parties (e.g. commercial suppliers, community care and repairers) requiring the information for the purpose of providing assistive technology and services.

Your information will not be given to any other person or organisation except where required by law.

If the information provided in the application is not complete or accurate, MASS may not be able to properly assess the application. If any details change, or if the applicant finds the personal information MASS holds is inaccurate, the applicant must contact MASS and reasonable steps will be taken by MASS to ensure the information is corrected.

Queensland Health has a long-standing commitment to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of personal information collected by the department. That commitment is supported by nine National Privacy Principles in the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)

([legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2009/09AC014.pdf](http://legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2009/09AC014.pdf)) (in relation to all personal information held by the department) and strict confidentiality obligations found in Part 7 of the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (Qld) ([legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2011-032](http://legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2011-032)) (in relation to health information held by the department).