

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT



It is only when illness strikes that many of us realize the limitations of State help towards the cost of medical equipment, adaptations to residential property or aids that will make daily living that much easier.

At such times it is good to know that, while TBF cannot restore your health, we can help provide things that would not otherwise be available. And the even better news is that - for most things - we do not means test.

We can provide:

- Mobility aids (wheelchairs, scooters, etc) provided you are not eligible for State mobility payments or equipment. We may even be able to help those who are getting these payments where they have to be used towards a car and we will in any case offer £200 towards the deposit if the mobility aid is obtained through the Motability scheme. Where the State is deciding whether or not to help, however, we may be able to make equipment available on short-term loan
- Nebulizers (through the Sandra Barr Memorial; click on the *Memorials* link on the Home page)
- TENS machines (nerve stimulators), including obstetrics
- Other aids such as back supports, special mattresses, walking frames, special cutlery, tilting chairs, etc, where the State or local authority will not provide them
- Help towards adaptations to your property that the State or local authority will not fund, though you need to seek help from them first and we reserve the right to ask you to contribute towards the cost depending on your resources

We need you to complete a pink form for most aids costing over £200 or for adaptations to your house; this includes details of your income and expenditure. For mobility aids, nebulizers, TENS machines or items costing less than this sum we have a simpler (salmon) form, which does not need financial details. In all cases, though, we need a letter from your GP recommending that you need the equipment. Where we can only help if the State or local authority cannot, we may need to see their letter stating this as well.

Where we can help we will generally buy and supply the article (and we may be eligible for VAT relief not available to individuals). Mobility aids, nebulizers and obstetrics TENS machines remain our property and need to be returned when no longer needed, but other aids are usually provided without the need to return them.

Through our service partners, we arrange regular servicing of mobility aids and nebulizers which we loan. We also meet the costs of consumables and of insurance for our mobility aids. In return we have to insist that no-one other than our service partner services these and no-one other than the named member or beneficiary uses them. Full details of the arrangements are given to those to whom we supply these items.

Our resources do not stretch to offering help with costs associated with dentistry, opticians or hearing aids except where extreme hardship would otherwise occur or there are special circumstances. Anyone seeking such help should discuss the circumstances with us before requesting an application form.

We all hope disabling illness will never happen to us or our families but when it does, it is good to know the TBF is here to offer practical help (and advice on State benefits). And while we cannot normally offer convalescence for ongoing illnesses, we may be able to provide a break to help you and your family come to terms with what has happened.