

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS)

General Guidelines

Version 5.04 June 2016

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1. Glossary of Terms

Accessories: additional pieces of equipment that enhance the primary aid to meet individual need.

Adult: defined as 16 years of age or older.

Applicant: the person who will receive the equipment. Applicants wishing to apply for subsidy funding must consult an appropriate prescriber (MASS designated prescriber) who will assess the applicant's needs and submit an application form on their behalf.

Acquittal: process of checking that aids and equipment have arrived, have been correctly issued and meet the applicant's needs.

Child: defined as being under 16 years.

Client ownership: where MASS has deemed ownership of an aid to the client.

Co-payment: facility that allows MASS to issue equipment above the level of its subsidies, and that has been clinically justified, provided the client agrees to pay the additional costs.

Endorsed (approved) aids and equipment: aids and equipment 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.

Functional assessment: Holistic assessment of a persons needs within their everyday environments.

Home environment:

- The home environment is defined as the applicant's fixed residence and immediate surroundings (e.g. dwelling, front and back yards).
- For mobility or daily living aids, access (e.g. slopes and ramps) used by the applicant should conform to the Australian Standards for wheelchair use. MASS does not pay costs associated with this requirement.

Maintenance: daily checking of equipment and attending to minor wear and tear issues to prevent breakdown or damage.

MASS designated prescriber: for each category of aids and equipment 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 Aids and Equipment.

Modifications: alterations to the primary aid to meet individual need.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

Permanent and stabilised condition: MASS defines a permanent and stabilised condition as one where the diagnosis is known to require the assistance of aids and equipment for the long term.

Permanent Loan: aids and equipment which remain the property of MASS and which MASS will maintain and repair (conditions apply).

Plaque number: identification number for items provided on permanent loan

Prescriber Model: operating procedure of the scheme whereby designated health professionals assess and prescribe equipment for eligible applicants

“Queensland public hospital discharge priority”:

- the applicant meets administrative and clinical criteria as applied to all applications;
- the aid is essential to enable discharge from a Queensland public hospital i.e. discharge **cannot** occur if this aid is not available before the patient is discharged; **and**
- other alternate means of obtaining the aid (e.g. hire, loan, other funding programs) are not possible; **and**
- the aid 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.

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 equipment is made available for the person to use and assess within their everyday environments and coordinated with the prescriber.

2. Introduction

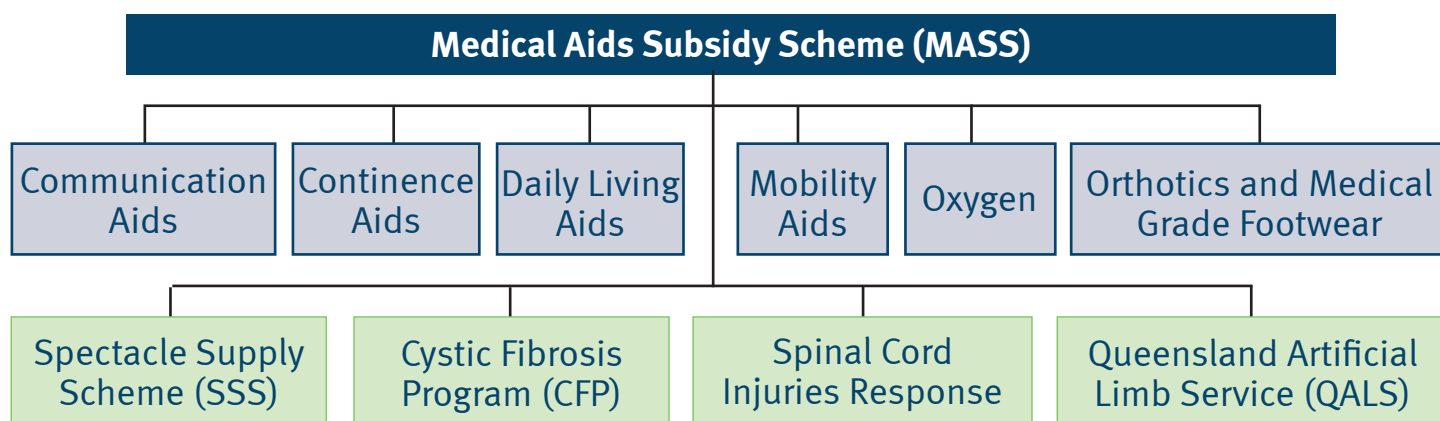
These General Guidelines contain information about the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme which is common to all categories of aids and equipment. It is written to assist clients wishing to receive equipment, and for health professionals prescribing equipment.

For health professionals prescribing equipment, there is a series of Application Guidelines for each specific category of aids and equipment.

These documents are available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and on the internet website at www.health.qld.gov.au/mass

Scope of Service

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) administers funding for the following schemes and programs:



MASS operates through a prescriber model. Applicants wishing to apply for equipment 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 Aids and Equipment. QALS requirements vary from MASS and can be located at www.health.qld.gov.au/qals

Aims of MASS

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

Aids and equipment are selected to assist people to live at home and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

To meet this aim the aids and equipment subsidised by MASS must be required for use within the home. MASS appreciates that aids and equipment will be used to access the community, however, MASS subsidy funding is not available where the sole purpose is to access the community.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

Our primary aims and objectives are to:

- Provide appropriate aids and equipment 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 aids and equipment that are cost effective, meet individual needs and meet Australian Standards compliance;
- Reflect the person's preference within the approved MASS list of aids and equipment;
- Provide a transparent and efficient service to prescribers and clients.

Location of MASS

MASS has 2 Service Centres 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 aids and equipment, including spectacles through the Spectacle Supply Scheme.

41 Southgate Avenue, Cannon Hill QLD 4170

Postal address: PO Box 281, Cannon Hill QLD 4170

Phone: 07 3136 3636 Fax: 07 3136 3599 Email: mass184@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: 07 4433 8000 Fax: 07 4433 8001 Email: mass184@health.qld.gov.au

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

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

Clinical Advisory Services

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

- Contenance 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:

Contenance Aids Services

Principal Contenance Advisor..... (07) 3136 3665

Equipment Services

Principal Mobility Aids Advisor (07) 3136 3524

Principal Daily Living Aids Advisor (07) 3136 3524

Clinical Advisor, Equipment (Townsville)..... (07) 4433 8000

Oxygen Services

Principal Medical Advisor, Oxygen..... (07) 3136 3510

Specialised Services

Principal Clinical Advisor, Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses (07) 3136 3696

Principal Clinical Advisor, Communication Aids (07) 3136 3696

3. Eligibility

Eligibility is determined by both administrative and clinical criteria.

Administrative eligibility

Administrative eligibility is dependent upon the following:

- The applicant is a permanent Queensland resident;
- The applicant 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 (conditions apply)
 - Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) pensioner Concession Card (conditions apply);
 - 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 client 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 restricts activities in the home environment;
- Clinical justification is documented by the prescribing health professional from a functional and clinical perspective as to why the aids and equipment are required;
- Equipment can be appropriately stored and maintained.

Persons not Eligible for Assistance

Person's not eligible for assistance:

- Persons in receipt of assistance or funding for medical aids and equipment under one or more State or Commonwealth government funded programs:
 - Workcover;
 - DVA (if eligible);
 - Commonwealth residential care facility recipients, as follows:
 - for oxygen - all classifications;
 - for other aids and equipment - 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).

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

Persons not Eligible for Assistance cont.

- 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;
- Children under the age of 5 years for continence pads and nappies.

MASS does not provide subsidy funding for aids and equipment that are:

- primarily needed for use to access the community, including school and work;
- needed for short-term post acute care;
- needed for therapy or rehabilitation programs.

Ongoing Eligibility

A person must meet eligibility requirements to receive on-going funding assistance. Should the person become MASS eligible again, MASS will consider further funding assistance based on records of equipment previously supplied.

4. Subsidy Funding

MASS aims to assist as many people as possible; however, as it is a subsidy scheme it may not meet the person's total needs. In some cases, the 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 an aid that is MASS endorsed;
- MASS does not reimburse any portion of a person's private funding;
- MASS will not fund aids and equipment retrospectively, including temporary arrangements made by the person/applicant, health professional or other agency for supply of the aids or equipment.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

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. MASS does not enter into co-payment arrangements with a third party;
- MASS retains ownership of the permanent loan aid and will assume responsibility for reasonable repairs and maintenance. 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 17, 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 aids and equipment;
- 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 Aids and Equipment*.

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 equipment;
- 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 need and consider all aids and equipment 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 Aid or Equipment

Prescribers:

- where required, conduct an appropriate trial of the aid or equipment. Refer to the relevant Application Guidelines for specific categories of aids and equipment;
- select aids and equipment from the MASS Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA) where one is in place for the category of aid prescribed;
- provide clinical justification if prescribing aids and equipment not on the SOA, including why the comparable SOA aids and equipment are not suitable;
- ensure that the applicant's home is compatible with long term use of the aid, including that it can be used safely, manoeuvred, stored and maintained by the applicant;
- 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;
- manufacturer's specification form (if applicable) and including any accessories and/or modifications requested (irrespective of co-payment arrangements);
- safe weight limits and client weight to be noted;

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 aids and equipment have been supplied;
- ensure the aid meets the MASS client's functional requirements;
- perform minor adjustments, in consultation with the supplier if necessary, to ensure the aids and equipment meet the MASS client's functional requirements;
- ensure the MASS client is instructed on the use of the aids and equipment and is able to use the aids and equipment appropriately and safely;
- draw the MASS client's attention to any operating, maintenance and care instructions, including appropriate storage;

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

- draw attention to instructions and information about contacting MASS to request repairs and maintenance;
- inform the applicant about their alternative arrangements and plans for occasions when they may be without their aids and equipment or the aids and equipment requires repairs and maintenance;
- explain that the MASS client is responsible for the daily care and maintenance of the aid;
- assist the MASS client to use the MASS Repair and Maintenance information booklet and powerdrive 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.

6. List of Approved Categories Of Aids and Equipment

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

Continance Aids

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Containment
 - Reusable pants
 - Disposable nappies
 - Disposable shaped pads
 - Stretch pants
 - Disposable pull-on style pads
 - Disposable all-in-one pads
 - Reusable bed pads
- Conduction
- Disposable catheters
 - Indwelling catheters
 - Latex sheaths
 - Non-latex sheaths
 - Night drainage bags
 - Leg bags
- Occlusive
 - Catheter valves

Initial and Three-yearly Applications

- Continance Advisor
- Registered Nurse
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Designated Specialist:
 - Urologist
 - Uro-gynaecologist
 - Geriatrician
 - Paediatrician

Re-Applications - 6 Monthly

- Applicant
 - Carer
 - Guardian
 - Parent
- OR
- Any of the above designated prescribers

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Communication Aids

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Artificial larynges
- Speech generating devices
- Voice Amplification Devices

- Speech Pathologist

Medical Grade Footwear

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Prefabricated medical grade footwear
- Customised medical grade footwear
- Custom made medical grade footwear

- Private:
- Orthopaedic Surgeons
 - Vascular Surgeons
 - Medical Specialists in Rheumatology, Rehabilitation, Geriatrics and Endocrinology

Oxygen

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Oxygen concentrators
- Oxygen cylinders

Initial Application & First Reapplication (4 months)

- Thoracic Physician
- Specialist Physician
- Oncologist
- Palliative Care Physician
- Respiratory Nurse Practitioner

OR

- General practitioner (with designated specialist endorsement) in remote areas

Annual reapplication

- Thoracic Physician
- Specialist Physician
- Oncologist
- Palliative Care Physician
- Respiratory Nurse Practitioner

OR

- General practitioner

OR

- Respiratory Nurse (with designated specialist endorsement) in remote areas

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

Mobility Aids

- Infant/child seated mobility aids
- Manual wheelchairs
- Powerdrive wheelchairs
- Accessories and/or modifications to wheelchairs
- Wheeled walking aids
- Foam and pressure redistribution wheelchair cushions

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Occupational Therapist
 - Physiotherapist
 - Rehabilitation Engineer
- OR
- Registered Nurse in consultation with Designated Health Prescriber in rural and remote locations

Daily Living Aids

- Bathboards (raised/backrest/ extended and/or padded only)
- Non-mobile commodes
- Bath transfer benches/swivel bathseat/ bath hoist or other item of equipment which achieves the same function
- Mobile floor hoists and slings
- Mobile Shower Commode
- Accessories and/or modifications to mobile shower commodes
- Pressure redistribution mattresses

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Occupational Therapist
 - Physiotherapist
 - Rehabilitation Engineer
- OR
- Registered Nurse in consultation with Designated Health Prescriber in rural and remote locations
 - Registered Nurse for non-mobile commodes all locations

Orthoses

- Spinal orthoses
- Lower limb orthoses

MASS Designated Prescriber

- Private:
- Orthopaedic Surgeons
 - Medical Specialists in Rheumatology, Rehabilitation and Geriatrics

Spectacles

- Spectacle packages for adults and children
- Frames
- Lens
- Lens treatments (if clinically justified)

MASS Designated Prescriber

Optometrists and ophthalmologists who are “Dispensing Agents” and appear on the list at:

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/MASS/spectacles.asp>.

Cystic Fibrosis Program**MASS Designated Prescriber**

- Nebulisers (excluding pump)
- PEP systems

Physiotherapists associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic.

Registered nurses associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic (for nebulisers only).

7. Acquittal

Physiotherapists associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic.

Registered nurses associated with a cystic fibrosis centre or clinic (for nebulisers only).

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

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

8. Standing Offer Arrangements

MASS has Standing Offer Arrangements (SOA) for the supply of wheelchairs and wheeled walking aids, patient lifting devices (hoists and slings), non-mobile commodes and bath transfer benches, oxygen, continence aids, and spectacles. 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 client 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 permanent loan aids or equipment (written reasons must be provided by the prescriber);
- Repairs and maintenance to existing MASS aids and equipment;

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

- 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. Client 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.
- Risk of imminent hospitalisation. Client requires equipment to prevent hospital admission due to safety concerns or medical need.
- Replacement, modifications and/or accessories to MASS equipment where client 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.
- Falls risk. Client has history of falls and a diagnosis of osteoporosis and/or Client has a high falls risk (risk assessment must be attached). The requested equipment must assist to minimise falls.
- Carer strain/injury. Equipment is required for Carer to sustain the carer role. Supporting documentation is required (e.g. Carer Strain Index).

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 number

An item on permanent loan remains the property of MASS and is identified through a plaque number. This plaque 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 aid type allocated to a MASS client.

Where MASS has transferred ownership of an aid to a person or agency, the MASS plaque number must be removed.

Daily care and maintenance

It is important for applicants and professionals to know that:

- The person is responsible for daily care and maintenance as outlined in the information provided with the aid;
- MASS will provide relevant Information Sheets about care and maintenance when aids and equipment are issued;
- All plaqued equipment is expected to be serviceable for at least 5 years.

Exceptions to Permanent Loan Arrangements

- Clients will be deemed to own the following items:
 - bathboards;
 - bath transfer benches;
 - non-mobile commodes;
 - wheeled walking aids;
 - backup manual wheelchairs;
 - voice amplification devices.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

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

Either

- 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 client, 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 repairs and maintenance to its MASS plaqued permanent loan aids, associated with reasonable wear and tear and use within the home environment and reasonable community access.

If an aid 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 3636) and Townsville (4433 8000).
- The person 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 plaqued aids;
- To all or part of an aid that has been replaced;
- To co-fund aids above those for the equivalent standard aid;
- For which the person has privately paid (i.e. retrospective payments);
- That exceed the approximate average cost of basic repairs and maintenance for similar types of aids within the MASS fleet;
- Resulting primarily from the use of the aid as an outside transport system (e.g. motor vehicle) or primarily for community access use;
- 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 person to and from the repairer/supplier;
- Costs of alternative arrangements for the person while the aid is being repaired;
- Larger tyres on manual wheelchairs and mobile shower commodes;
- Damage caused 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.

Repairs and maintenance away from normal residence

When the person 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 3545;
- 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 applicant 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 aids and equipment to a person who moves from Queensland to another state or overseas.

The person must advise MASS in writing and request that the specified MASS aids and equipment 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 person move before the requested aids and equipment are delivered, MASS will cancel the order/delivery of the aids and equipment.

MASS will not pay transport or freight costs for aids and equipment outside Queensland.

14. Transferring to Residential Care

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

The person must advise MASS in writing and request that the specified MASS aids and equipment be transferred to their ownership.

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

Should the person move to a Commonwealth funded aged care facility or receive Home Care Level 3 or 4 package before the requested aids and equipment are delivered, MASS will cancel the order/delivery of the aids and equipment

SSS provides spectacles to clients who reside in Residential Care Facilities.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – General Guidelines

15. Changes to Ownership of an Aid

MASS Transferring Ownership to a Person or Agency

The following conditions will apply should MASS choose to transfer ownership of aids and equipment to a person or agency:

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

MASS Taking over Ownership of an Aid

Under certain circumstances MASS will consider taking over ownership of aids and equipment, which have been supplied by another agency e.g. interstate agencies aids and equipment which are similar to those provided by MASS.

MASS will not take over ownership of aids and equipment that are:

- considered by MASS to be beyond their 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 taking over ownership of aids and equipment, the same criteria apply as if MASS had subsidised the aids and equipment. Normal MASS prioritisation and waiting list conditions will apply.

Application Requirements for MASS Taking over Ownership of an Aid

The application requirements for MASS taking over ownership of aids and equipment 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 aids and equipment (e.g. where and when purchased and the specific brands and models of the aids and equipment);
- a written report from a recognised MASS repairer on the condition of the aids and equipment including economic life expectancy. If unsure of recognised MASS repairer please contact MASS Repairs on 3136 3545;

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- application to MASS as per the relevant Application Guidelines for specific aids and equipment;

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

16. Return of Aids and Equipment

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

Aids and equipment returned to MASS, if suitable, are placed into MASS stock. The MASS stock is available for reissue and prescribers are encouraged to utilise the aids or equipment if clinically suitable for their client.

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

If a suitable aid/equipment 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 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 aids and equipment funded by MASS, and also the aids and equipment 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 MASS Privacy Statement and Information Standard 42A (IS42A). In general, MASS is committed to maintaining strict confidentiality in respect to information provided to it, and will not divulge such information without consent of the consumer.

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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 aids and equipment 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 www.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. 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.

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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 www.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. 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 and SSS application processes, in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and Health Services Act 2011, in order to assess the applicant's eligibility for funding assistance for the supply of aids and equipment.

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 aids, equipment 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) (www.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 Health Services Act 1991 (Qld) (www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/H/HealthServA91.pdf) (in relation to health information held by the department).