

Appendix A

Special Seating - Questionnaire



Dear Respondent,
Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. Your input will help to provide an overview of Special Seating service provision in Ireland.

General: Please indicate your HSE area:

Dublin Mid-Leinster Dublin North-East HSE South HSE West

Your Name (optional) _____

Your service Name & Location (optional) _____

Question 1 – Caseload size	Response
Q1) Can you estimate the total number of people who are on your department or service’s caseload?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Number: _____

Question 2 – Need for special seating	Response
Q2) Can you estimate of the number of these service users who have need of ‘ <i>Special Seating</i> ’ (*as defined overleaf)?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Number: _____

Question 3 – Provision of Special Seating Services	Response	
Q3a) Is it possible for your service users to attend a special seating service for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of need for special seating? Design and manufacture of bespoke seating equipment? Seating modifications for individual service users? Specialist advice on off-the-shelf seating solutions? (please tick as appropriate)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Q3b) If so, who supplies that service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSE <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Org. <input type="checkbox"/> Private Company <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ 	
Q3c) Approximately how many service users currently access such a Special Seating Service?	Number: _____	
Q3d) In your opinion, is there adequate provision of Special Seating Services to people in your area?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

Have you any comments you would like to make on this topic?

Special Seating relates to the provision of bespoke seating solutions for non-ambulant people. The distinction between those who require special seating and those with more basic requirements can be ambiguous. For the purposes of this work, it may be considered that special seating is required by people who meet the following criteria:

- a) Individuals whose posture or mobility needs can only be met with a high level of specific design input, resulting in unique prescriptions for mobility and postural support devices.
(these may be combinations of bespoke, prototype, and off-the-shelf components)
OR
- b) Individuals with complex and life-threatening conditions.
(e.g. ventilation, high level spinal cord injuries, rare paediatric syndromes)
OR
- c) A person who needs the skills of a specialist assessment team to identify when referral to other medical specialities is necessary to achieve seating and mobility objectives.
(e.g. spasticity management, PEG feeding, complex orthotics etc.)
OR
- d) Individuals whose posture and mobility needs which may not be complex in their own right, but nevertheless significantly impinge on the overall level of functional ability.
(Some highly 'active' individuals, when seated properly, find it restrictive in lifestyle and so require special expertise to work through their requirements for an iterative prescription, often with unique approach and components. The cumulative prescription is costly in terms of expert time and components)
OR
- e) Individuals who need specialist input to identify control sites and to assemble and programme the specialist equipment that will enable them to control a powered wheelchair despite being unable to use standard joystick controls.
(Risk management is especially important for these individuals)
OR
- f) A person who needs access to a range of assistive technology services.
(Especially those who need a specialised control to operate a number of items of electronic equipment in addition to the specialist wheelchair)
OR
- g) Individuals who need such a high level of customisation that specialist workshop facilities staffed by appropriately trained staff are required to support and maintain their equipment, as well as adapting it to keep pace with changing needs as necessary.

Adapted from: NHS Commissioning Board (2012) Complex Specialised Wheelchair and Seating Services

Thanks again for your help - your input is much appreciated!

Letter of Invitation & Consent

You are being invited to participate in a brief survey relating to the provision of *Special Seating* services in Ireland. You are being contacted because of your involvement in this area – either by way of training and/or professional practice – and your contribution to the research will be highly valued.

The survey comprises a few short questions and will hopefully take you less than 10 minutes to complete.

If you do choose to participate, you will find the survey in the attached word document. Please complete it to the best of your ability, save it, and return it as an attachment via e-mail to: jtiernan@enableireland.ie. Alternatively, you are also welcome to print, complete and post it to: John Tiernan, SeatTech, Enable Ireland, Sandymount Avenue, Dublin 4.

What is this about?

This is a first attempt at characterising the provision of special seating in Ireland. I am hoping in the first instance to identify the level of need for, and provision of, special seating across the HSE regions. The work is being undertaken in partial fulfilment of a Masters programme. It is anticipated that the research findings will be of general interest, and I expect to further this work at a future date in order to provide a more detailed characterisation of sector.

I am hopeful that by contacting you and others who participated in Enable Ireland training over the years, it will be possible to gather a sufficiently large dataset to generalise the findings. For this reason *your* contribution is vital to the success of this work. That said, please know that participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that you are under absolutely no obligation to do so.

By completing this survey you are giving consent to the researcher to use the information you have provided for the purposes of this study. You are not obliged to provide any personal information, and any such information provided by you will be treated in confidence.

It would be much appreciated if you could revert at your earliest opportunity, but please be sure to do so no later than next *Friday, 22nd March 2013*.

Many thanks!
John Tiernan
MA (Healthcare Management) Candidate

If you would like to know more about this study, or if you have any concerns about your rights as a research subject and/or your experiences while participating please feel welcome to contact me at: johndaratiernan@gmail.com or jtiernan@enableireland.ie, Tel. (01) 2615900.