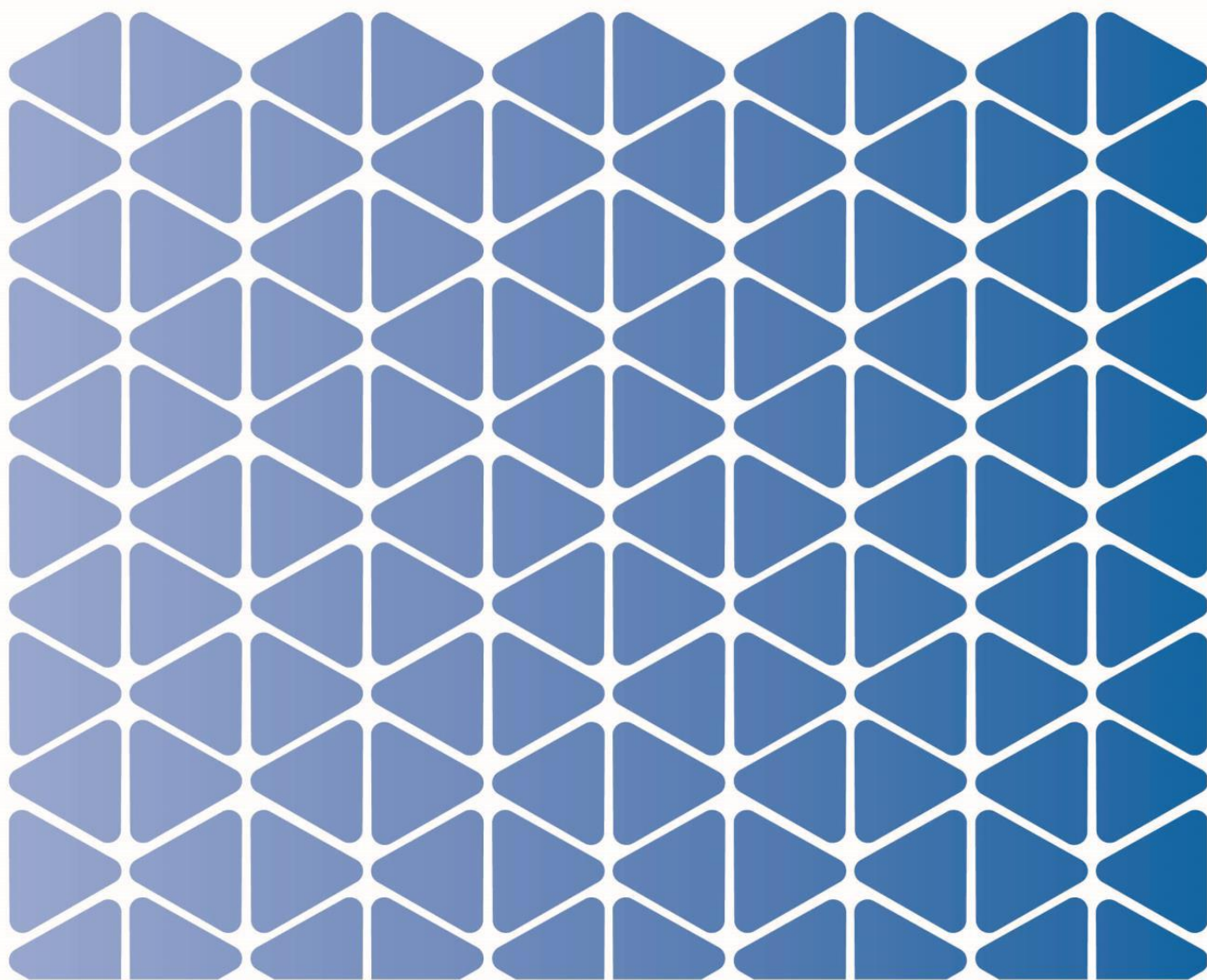




PATIENT INFORMATION



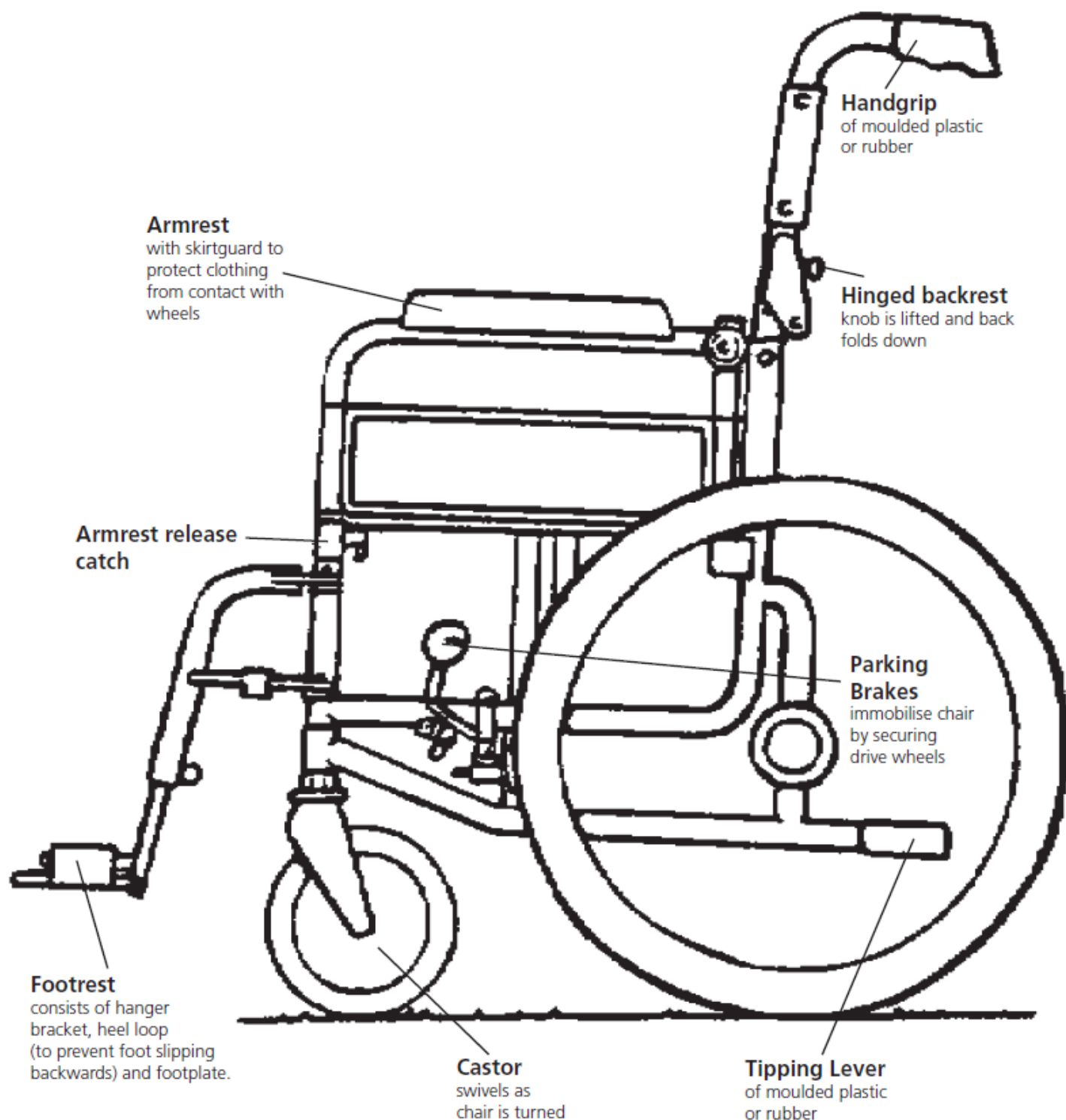
## GETTING ABOUT WITH YOUR WHEELCHAIR



## INTRODUCTION

This User Guide has been supplied to give guidance and advice to help you make the most effective use of your wheelchair. We recommend you use this guide to become completely familiar with the chair, and to know how to ensure that it is maintained in order to give you maximum benefit and reliability.

## SELF PROPELLING WHEELCHAIR



**Wheelchair model supplied may vary (Please note representative picture only)**

## PARTS OF THE WHEELCHAIR

### ARMREST

Most wheelchairs have detachable armrests. These can be removed if you need to transfer sideways into or out of the wheelchair, for storage or access under a table. Removal is generally by operating a latch at the front side of the chair, and lifting the armrest out from the front and rear sockets.



On replacing the armrest, ensure alignment with their respective sockets and ensure that the release lever has locked firmly into place.

### BACKRESTS

Most wheelchairs have folding backrests. Hinged backrests usually have two knobs that are lifted at each side of the frame upright (see positions of these hinges in the previous diagrams). With the knobs and plungers fully up, the backrest is free to fold at the back hinge. To raise the backrest, simply lift until it is upright and check that the plungers are fully back into the locked positions. Always fold the back rest before putting the chair in the boot of the car.

### PARKING BRAKES

These are located either side of the chair next to the rear wheels and operate as a brake pad onto the tyre. Push the levers forward to apply the brakes.

**Brakes must always be applied when getting into and out of the wheelchair** to prevent it from rolling away when the occupant is transferring. Brakes should also be applied when folding or opening the wheelchair or lifting the chair.

### FOOTRESTS

It is easier and safer, to get into the wheelchair by moving the footplates aside. This is done by turning the footplates up out of the way and swinging them aside.

**You must not stand on the footplates when getting into or leaving the wheelchair or the chair will tip forwards.**

The distance from the seat to the foot rest can be adjusted for comfort. There is a clamp bolt or locating clip which must be slackened or removed as appropriate to make the adjustment. The safest position is usually with your thighs horizontal, and hips and knees at right angles. Retighten clamp or refit clip after adjustment and check for security.

The footrests will have been correctly adjusted for you by one of the Occupational Therapy team.



## TO OPEN THE WHEELCHAIR

If the chair is of a folding frame design, it can be folded for storage or ease of transportation.

To open the chair, push the armrests as far apart as possible. Push down on the side edges of the seat, keeping your fingers facing inwards.

**Never put your fingers between the frame and the seat.**



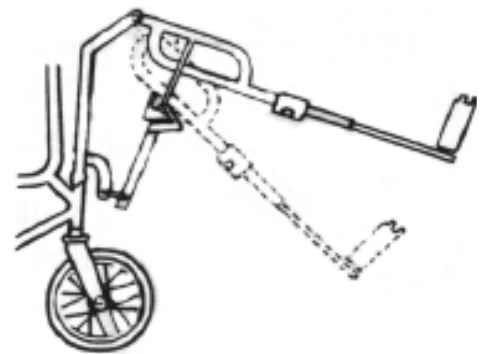
## TO CLOSE THE WHEELCHAIR

Turn footplates upright and footrests out to the sides or remove completely. Grasp the middle of the seat canvas at front and back. Pull upwards until the chair is fully closed.



## SWINGING DETACHABLE ELEVATING LEGRESTS

These support the whole leg in any desired position and may be adjusted individually for length and elevation. To raise the legrest, simply lift it to the desired position where it will lock automatically. To lower the legrests, de-activate the locking catch and lower the legrest to the position you require, then release the locking catch to secure the legrest in place.



Extra care must be taken when self-propelling or pushing a chair with legrests straight out in front, due to the risk of the legs being bumped or knocked.

When using a wheelchair fitted with elevating legrests, you need to be aware that you require a larger space to turn the chair around in.

## TRANSFERRING TO AND FROM A WHEELCHAIR

Your Occupational Therapist will assess and practice which method you will be safest using:-

### The most common method of transfer is:- SIDEWAYS

If the wheelchair is fitted with detachable armrests, you need to remove the armrests when transferring to or from the chair/bed using a sideways transfer.



1. Lift and swing the footrests back out of the way.
2. Position your wheelchair alongside the seat, bed, car etc. and apply the brakes.
3. Remove the armrest
4. Your feet should be on the ground, not the footplates.
5. Bending slightly forward, push yourself up and pull yourself across onto the bed/chair/car seat.

It can also help to slide along a smooth board, such as a transfer board.

**There are alternative ways to transfer. Your Occupational Therapist will advise and practice this technique with you.**

## GENERAL SAFETY ADVICE

### STOWING A WHEELCHAIR IN A CAR BOOT

To stow away your wheelchair in a car boot:

1. Apply brakes.
2. Remove all accessories - straps, cushions and removable parts such as armrests and footrests.
3. Fold chair, if possible.
4. Position chair parallel to boot.
5. Bend your knees, keeping your back straight.
6. Grasp the chair by the frame and lift into boot.



It may help if you balance the chair on the edge of the boot, then slide the chair in. Alternatively, it may be positioned behind one of the front seats in a 4-door vehicle.

## GOING DOWN A KERB (WITH ASSISTANCE)

1. Position the chair square to the kerb.
2. Grip the handles firmly.
3. Place one foot on the tipping lever and push down.
4. Balance the chair on its rear wheels, so that the front castors are clear of the kerb and move forwards.
5. Gently lower the chair with the rear wheels against the kerb, while supporting some of the chair's weight.
6. Gently lower the front wheels.

Alternatively, for heavier users or older helpers, the wheelchair can be taken down the kerb backwards. Lower the back wheels onto the road first, then lower the front castors.



## GOING UP A KERB (WITH ASSISTANCE)

To get up a kerb with an attendant, again look for a ramp, or dropped kerb nearby. If there is neither:

1. Position the chair square with front wheels almost touching the kerb.
2. Grip the handles firmly, and place one foot on the tipping lever.
3. Push down on the tipping lever and at the same time pull the handles towards you, balancing the chair on its rear wheels and lifting the castors off the ground.
4. Push the chair forwards until both front wheels are on the pavement.
5. When the rear wheels touch the kerb, lift the chair gently onto the pavement.



Alternatively, turn the wheelchair so that the rear wheels are against the kerb. Keeping a firm grip on the handles, tip the wheelchair backwards to balance on the rear wheels. Pull the wheelchair up onto the kerb (this movement requires greater strength on behalf of the attendant).

## **WHEELCHAIR MAINTENANCE**

Users and their attendants should never attempt major repairs or modifications other than routine checks and cleaning. For any repairs or specific servicing please contact your Occupational Therapy department, the telephone numbers are on the rear of this booklet.

### **CLEANING**

Upholstery and metal parts should be wiped over regularly with a soft cloth, and any soiling, such as spilt food or mud should be cleaned off with warm water and a small amount of washing up liquid. If need be, a mild solution of antiseptic can be applied to the upholstery. Allow wet parts to dry before folding and storage NEVER store away a damp chair.

Metal and chrome plated parts may be cleaned with a wax or silicone spray polish, but this should not be used on the upholstery.

### **WHEELS**

Check the free running of the wheels and castor rotation. Excessive wobble or rock is an indication of wear and should be brought to the attention of your Occupational Therapy Department. For wheels with metal spokes, check that these are tight and undamaged. They should be equally tight. This can be done by running the back of your finger over them; they should all have the same tone or pitch.

Finally, the wheels should run true when spun and not wobble.

### **BRAKES**

Check that the nuts, bolts and screws are tight and the brake pad grips firmly on the tyre.

### **UPHOLSTERY**

Check that the screws holding the canvases are tight and do not swivel.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

There are many different varieties of wheelchair to suit different occupants' and attendants' needs. Therefore, whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this manual, there may be discrepancies between descriptions given in this manual and the design and configuration of your chair, and its accessories.

If you have any questions not answered in the manual. Contact your Occupational Therapy Department.

Under no circumstances should you or any other person attempt to carry out any major repair or modification to the wheelchair.

This wheelchair has been loaned to you by the hospital Occupational Therapy Department; please return it when you no longer require it.

This wheelchair is the property of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and should be returned to one of the following Occupational Therapy Departments:-

**Occupational Therapy  
Worcestershire Royal Hospital  
01905 760170**

**If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.**



## **Patient Experience**

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

## **Feedback**

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

## **How to contact PALS:**

**Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: [wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net)**

## **Opening times:**

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.