

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This manual has been produced to assist prescribers in the assessment and application process for the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) and the Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS). It contains lists of aids and equipment available through the Scheme, application procedures for prescribers and general information on the Scheme such as its aims and objectives.

The manual is available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and on the internet website at [www.health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass)

## 2. PRIVACY STATEMENT

The information collected in the MASS and SSS application processes is being collected by Queensland Health to assess the applicant's eligibility for subsidy funding for the supply of aids and equipment and to assist MASS in processing the application. This is authorised under MASS, which administers the Scheme.

Queensland Health protects the applicant's privacy by collecting, using, storing and disclosing the personal information it holds about the applicant in accordance with **Information Standard 42A (IS42A)** which sets out the privacy rules that apply to Queensland Health.

The applicant's information may be disclosed to the applicant's prescribing health professional for further clinical management, their carer or to those parties requiring the information to provide the applicant with the aids and equipment and services (e.g. suppliers and repairers) the applicant is entitled to receive through MASS, or if required or authorised by law.

The applicant's information will not be disclosed to any other third parties without the applicant's consent.

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.

For more information on the Queensland Health Privacy Policy, visit the website at [www.health.qld.gov.au/privacy/IS42A.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/privacy/IS42A.asp).

### 3. MAP OF QUEENSLAND



### 4. MASS SERVICE CENTRE CONTACT DETAILS

#### Brisbane Service Centre

**Address:**  
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

#### Cairns Service Centre

**Address:**  
8-10 Aplin Street  
Cairns QLD 4870  
**Postal Address:**  
PO Box 859  
Cairns QLD 4870  
**Phone:**  
07 4050 3500  
**Fax:**  
07 4031 3048  
**Email:**  
mass184@health.qld.gov.au

#### Mackay Service Centre

**Address:**  
12-14 Nelson Street  
Mackay QLD 4740  
**Postal Address:**  
PO Box 688  
Mackay QLD 4740  
**Phone:**  
07 4968 3931  
**Fax:**  
07 4968 3829  
**Email:**  
mass184@health.qld.gov.au

#### Townsville Service Centre

**Address:**  
138 Thuringowa Drive  
Kirwan QLD 4817  
**Postal Address:**  
PO Box 980  
Hyde Park QLD 4812  
**Phone:**  
07 4775 8000  
**Fax:**  
07 4775 8001  
**Email:**  
mass184@health.qld.gov.au

In addition to managing local enquiries, each MASS service centre focuses on a specific category of MASS services:

- Brisbane Service Centre focuses on all aspects of the Scheme, processing applications from all specific categories of aids and equipment and other designated activities in addition to spectacles through the Spectacle Supply Scheme
- Cairns Service Centre focuses on continence aids services
- Mackay Service Centre focuses on oxygen, communication aids, medical grade footwear and orthoses services, including all associated northern repairs and maintenance for communication aids
- Townsville Service Centre focuses on equipment services, such as daily living and mobility aids, including all associated northern repairs and maintenance for daily living and mobility aids.

#### **4.1 Clinical Advisory Services**

To assist prescribers to meet applicants' needs, MASS has clinical advisors allocated to the following service areas:

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

For advice or discussion regarding these aids and equipment contact:

#### **Continence Aids Services**

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Principal Continence Advisor | (07) 3136 3665 |
| Continence Advisor (Cairns)  | (07) 4050 3500 |

#### **Equipment Services**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Principal Mobility Aids Advisor          | (07) 3136 3524 |
| Principal Daily Living Aids Advisor      | (07) 3136 3524 |
| Clinical Advisor, Equipment (Townsville) | (07) 4775 8000 |

#### **Oxygen and Specialised Services**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Principal Medical Advisor, Oxygen, Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses | (07) 3136 3510 |
| Principal Clinical Advisor, Communication Aids                         | (07) 3136 3510 |

## **5. AIM OF MASS**

MASS provides access to subsidy funding for the provision of MASS endorsed aids and equipment to eligible Queensland residents with permanent and stabilised conditions or disabilities. The range of MASS aids and equipment is selected to assist people to live at home and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation. Aids and equipment are subsidy funded either on a permanent loan basis, private ownership or through the purchase of consumables.

The Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS), administered by MASS from 1 January 2008, provides a comprehensive range of free basic spectacles for eligible Queenslanders

## **6. OBJECTIVES OF MASS**

The objectives of the Scheme are to ensure:

- eligible people have access to subsidies available through the Scheme
- effective management of existing resources
- provision of a subsidy funding model of service that is not intended to provide full need
- equitable and consistent service to assist as many eligible people as possible
- enhanced consumer service
- provision of safe and appropriate aids and equipment through a subsidy funding model
- a consistent and equitable prioritisation process
- a streamlined application process for clients requesting spectacles through SSS.

## **7. PRINCIPLES OF MASS**

MASS will provide subsidy funding for aids and equipment that are:

- primarily needed for use in the home environment
- compatible with the person's home environment
- the most cost efficient and effective basic item available to adequately meet the person's needs within the home environment
- suitable for the person in terms of function and safety
- a reflection of the person's preference within the approved MASS list of aids and equipment
- consistent across the state in subsidy levels and ranges of aids and equipment available
- provided on permanent loan as the property of Queensland Health except in those specific incidences as indicated in the relevant sections of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual

SSS will provide a comprehensive range of free basic spectacles to eligible Queenslanders.

## **8. ELIGIBILITY**

### **8.1 Age Eligibility**

MASS considers adults are 16 years of age or over and that children are younger than 16 years of age. Eligibility varies according to the aids and equipment subsidy funded.

For specific eligibility criteria, refer to the relevant MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual sections on specific categories of aids and equipment, which should be read in conjunction with this section.

### **8.2 Persons Administratively Eligible for Assistance**

A person eligible for assistance from MASS must:

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- be a permanent resident of Queensland
- hold in their own right\*\* (i.e. applicant's name shown on the concession card) one of the following concession cards that details the applicant's current residence in Queensland:
  - Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card
  - Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Pensioner Concession Card (if not eligible through DVA for the requested MASS aids or equipment)
  - Centrelink Health Care Card
  - Queensland Government Seniors Card
  - Centrelink Confirmation of Concession Card Entitlement Form (accepted for the initial application only, with a copy of the actual card being provided to MASS within 3 months).
- \*\*Children do not require a card in their own name. Their administrative eligibility for MASS will be determined based on their being named on their parent's card and verification of the parent's eligibility for Pension Concession or Health Care Benefits.
- provide MASS with a copy of both sides of the relevant eligibility concession card OR a completed MASS 84 Proxy Access to Centrelink Information Form signed by the applicant.
  - This form authorises Centrelink to confirm with MASS the current status of Commonwealth benefits and other details as they pertain to concessional entitlement. This involves electronically matching details provided by the applicant to MASS with Centrelink or DVA records to confirm whether the applicant is receiving a Centrelink or DVA benefit. This ongoing consent is effective only for the period that the applicant is a customer of MASS. Consent may be revoked at any time by providing written notice to MASS, however the applicant will need to provide a copy of both sides of the concession card to MASS or the applicant may not be eligible for any assistance provided by MASS. A brochure is available from Centrelink that provides more details about the Centrelink confirmation eServices or on Centrelink's website at [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)
  - NB Queensland Government Seniors Card holders will need to provide MASS with a copy of both sides of the card
- have a permanent and stabilised condition or disability which restricts activities in the home environment
- meet the clinical eligibility criteria applicable to each section of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual for the requested aids and equipment
- have documented in the application to MASS by the prescribing health professional, clinical justification from a functional and clinical needs perspective, as to why the aids and equipment are required
- be able to appropriately store and maintain the aids and equipment.

Other eligibility considerations are:

- eligibility for the Contenance Aids Assistance Scheme (CAAS) administered by the Department of Health and Ageing and/or the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Scheme (CRS) does not exclude eligibility for state funded MASS assistance. Both CAAS and CRS emphasise workplace assistance i.e. for the workplace not the home
- if a person has a Workcover, third party, public risk or any other form of compensation or insurance claim for injuries for which MASS assistance is requested. The person

must undertake to repay MASS the cost of any MASS assistance if the person obtains a settlement.

For specific eligibility criteria, refer to the relevant MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual sections on specific categories of aids and equipment, which should be read in conjunction with this section.

### **8.3 Persons not Eligible for Assistance**

Persons in receipt of assistance or funding for medical aids and equipment under one or more of the following State or Commonwealth government funded programs are not eligible for MASS assistance:

- Workcover
- Department for Veteran's Affairs (DVA) - (if eligible through DVA for the requested MASS aids or equipment)
- Commonwealth residential care facility recipients categorised as high or low care for oxygen, and high care for other aids and equipment
- Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) program recipients.

Persons covered under one or more of the following categories are not eligible for MASS assistance:

- hospital inpatients - except if the aids and equipment are required for public hospital discharge
- public hospital medical grade footwear and orthoses referral persons
- palliative care eligible persons
- Ostomy Association eligible persons
- persons in receipt of compensation or damages in respect of the disability for which the aids and equipment has been prescribed. This may include insurance, compulsory third party and Workcover claims. Interim subsidy funding assistance may be available through MASS. Reimbursement must be made to MASS on settlement of any claim
- persons in receipt of compensation or damages provided to fund ongoing need for aids and equipment. This is irrespective of continued possession of administrative and clinical eligibility criteria for MASS
- children under the age of 5 years of age for continence pads and nappies.

MASS appreciates that aids and equipment it provides will be used for community access activity outside the home environment. However, 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, where their use is for transitional purposes or for training.

Refer to eligibility criteria for spectacles in the Spectacle Supply Scheme Guidelines.

### **8.4 Ongoing Eligibility**

When a person is no longer administratively or clinically eligible for MASS assistance (e.g. no longer holder of a MASS recognised concession card) the person can choose to return



permanent loan aids and equipment to MASS or have ownership and responsibility for the aids and equipment transferred to them.

The person must advise MASS in writing of their situation, and request that the specified MASS permanent loan aids and equipment be transferred to their ownership. MASS will respond, outlining the conditions that apply to the MASS decision.

MASS will not fund any further maintenance and repairs, modifications or accessories of aids and equipment transferred to private ownership.

MASS ownership conditions will apply i.e. should the person become MASS eligible again, MASS will not provide similar permanent loan aids and equipment within a five year period from the date of the former supply by MASS.

### **8.5 Eligibility though the Spectacle Supply Scheme**

SSS provides a comprehensive range of basic spectacles to eligible Queensland residents.

## **9. SUBSIDY FUNDING**

MASS has limits on the level of subsidy funding provided for categories of aids and equipment or specific aids and equipment. MASS subsidy funding is not intended to meet the person's total needs, rather to assist as many people as possible.

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.

### **9.1 Co-payment**

Where an applicant and their prescriber select a MASS approved aid that exceeds the maximum MASS subsidy funding, a co-payment arrangement may be entered into with MASS subject to conditions of co-payment arrangements.

If an applicant requests an aid primarily for use in the home environment but with accessories and/or modifications other than those approved through MASS, the applicant may contribute funds to purchase such accessories and/or modifications, if prior approval has been obtained from MASS. Approval will require clinical justification as per the usual MASS application process.

### **9.2 Conditions of Co-payment Arrangements**

Conditions of co-payment arrangements are that:

- MASS reserves the right to not provide assistance (subsidy funding) towards an aid that is not a MASS approved aid, is not on the MASS Standing Offer Arrangement, is not recyclable, or which does not meet appropriate Australian Standards or International Standards Organisation standards required by MASS

- co-payment arrangements between a third party and a MASS applicant are acceptable however, the MASS co-payment arrangement will be with the applicant. 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 for the aid associated with reasonable use within the home and community as listed in sub section - Repairs and Maintenance that MASS Will Pay
- the MASS client will be expected to pay for repairs and maintenance as listed in sub-section - Repairs and Maintenance that MASS Will Not Pay
- before MASS issues a commercial order to a supplier for an aid, the applicant must provide MASS with a statutory declaration to indicate agreement to their co-payment responsibility
- the applicant will make their co-payment direct to the supplier
- MASS does not reimburse co-payments.

## **10. 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 must conform to the Australian Standards for wheelchair use. MASS does not pay costs associated with this requirement.

## **11. PRESCRIBER ROLE**

MASS operates through a prescriber model, in that designated MASS prescribers for each category of aids and equipment, in consultation with the applicant, submit an application on behalf of the applicant to MASS for consideration of subsidy funding assistance.

For MASS prescriber groups, refer to the Designated Prescriber Chart at the conclusion of each section of the relevant MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

### **11.1 Prescriber Responsibilities**

#### **11.1.1 General Information**

Prescribers:

- are responsible for the accuracy of the prescription/application
- have current registration with their relevant state Registration Board
- familiarise themselves with the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual
- refer to additional prescriber responsibilities in the relevant Sections of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual, which should be read in conjunction with this section
- ensure that the applicant is fully involved in the prescription/application process

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- make the applicant aware of the scope of the service provided by MASS, including the eligibility criteria and conditions of supply, such as co-payment responsibilities
- advise the applicant that a waiting list may apply when demand for subsidy assistance exceeds available MASS resources
- ensure that they do not indicate to the applicant that MASS approval will be automatic and that they will receive the aid through MASS
- must advise the applicant of all available options
- make 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

### **11.1.2 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
- consult with MASS clinical advisors, other experienced prescribers or experts as necessary to assist the prescription/application process
- provide additional information, if requested by MASS, in order to identify eligibility for specific funding allocations available to MASS.

### **11.1.3 Selection of Aid or Equipment**

Prescribers:

- provide information on the options/alternatives available
- where required, conduct an appropriate trial of the aid or equipment. Refer to the relevant section of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual
- take responsibility for the selection of the most appropriate aids and equipment for the applicant
- match the full functional assessment of the applicant's need with the most cost effective functional option subsidised by MASS that will adequately meet the applicant's need within the home environment
- 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
- provide information on possible cost implications that may be incurred as a result of MASS procedures or subsidy funding e.g. subsidy levels and applicant co-payment
- where the applicant's request and expectations differ from the prescriber's assessment and recommendation, the issues are to be resolved so that a satisfactory agreement is made between the prescriber and applicant regarding the applicant's needs and anticipated outcomes. This is to be finalised before application for the aids and equipment is forwarded 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.

### **11.1.4 Application Process**

Prescribers:

- provide justification of functional need for the requested aid and/or any accessories and/or modifications
- complete all application forms in detail to clearly explain the applicant's functional/clinical need for the chosen aids and equipment in the home and thus ensuring that the correct aids and equipment are supplied. This includes completion of the manufacturer's specification form (if applicable) and including any accessories and/or modifications to detail the product to be supplied to the applicant, irrespective of co-payment arrangements
- initial any corrections made on the application form
- keep records of the assessment, application and post delivery follow up and checks
- maintain records and information that would enable another prescriber to effectively take over management of the applicant's application and/or subsequent applications
- if separating as the prescriber, before the applicant receives the aids and equipment, arrange a new prescriber for the applicant and inform the applicant of this change.

### **11.1.5 Post Delivery Follow-up**

Prescribers:

- organise a post delivery check to ensure the aid meets the MASS client's functional requirements. Suppliers are required to provide aids and equipment suitably packaged and delivered.
- 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 and care instructions
- draw the MASS client's attention to the need for the aids and equipment to be maintained and stored appropriately and/or in accordance with the care instructions.

## **12. APPLICATIONS**

### **12.1 Overview**

MASS requires demographic, administrative and clinical information to be included on the application form. A further requirement is that both the prescriber and the applicant sign relevant sections of the application form.

The date used for the calculation of a person's position on the MASS waiting list will be the date the fully completed application form is received at the MASS service centre. Retrospective MASS funding will not be considered for private funding and similar arrangements.

Application forms must be fully completed by a MASS designated prescriber as nominated in the MASS Designated Prescriber Chart relevant to each Section of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

To identify the MASS application forms required for each category of aid or equipment, refer to the MASS Designated Prescriber Chart. This chart is at the conclusion of each of the relevant sections of the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

## **12.2 Incomplete Application Forms**

Application forms MASS considers to be incompletely documented 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. This applies to both initial and re-applications for both new applicants and existing MASS clients.

## **13. ACQUITTAL**

MASS may implement an acquittal process to ensure that the applicant receives the best possible service outcome. The aim of the acquittal process is to link payment of aids and equipment to satisfaction of the applicant and prescriber.

If the aids and equipment are not as required by the applicant or are not as prescribed by the prescriber, MASS must be notified immediately. The rectification of the situation is between the prescriber, applicant and the supplier.

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 and forwarded to MASS once signed by both the prescriber and applicant.

Prescribers should be aware that MASS will not pay to replace an item that has been inappropriately prescribed or is unsuitable for the applicant's home environment. MASS will refer these cases back to the original prescriber's agency for funding consideration.

## **14. STANDING OFFER ARRANGEMENTS**

MASS has Standing Offer Arrangements (SOA) for the supply of wheelchairs and wheeled walking aids, oxygen, continence aids and spectacles. The SOAs are formal arrangements, following a prescribed competitive offer and evaluation process, with commercial suppliers for the supply of these products at an agreed price for an agreed period.

SOAs are in place for the exclusive right to supply these products to MASS and must be used by MASS, regardless of the expenditure value of individual purchases or the cost that the product might be able to be obtained from alternative suppliers.

## **15. LIST OF APPROVED CATEGORIES OF AIDS AND EQUIPMENT**

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

Each of the following corresponds with sections in the MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

### **15.1 Communication Aids**

- Artificial larynges
- Speech generating devices

- Voice Amplification Devices

### **15.2 Contenance Aids**

- 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

### **15.3 Daily Living Aids**

- Bathboards (raised/backrest/extended and/or padded only)
- Non-mobile commodes
- Bathroom transfer benches
- Mobile floor hoists and slings
- Mobile overtoilet/showerchairs
- Accessories and/or modifications to mobile overtoilet/showerchairs
- Pressure redistribution mattresses

### **15.4 Medical Grade Footwear**

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

### **15.5 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

### **15.6 Orthoses**

- Spinal orthoses
- Lower limb orthoses

### **15.7 Oxygen**

- Oxygen concentrators
- Oxygen cylinders

### **15.8 Spectacles**

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

## **16. PRIORITISATION**

Demand for subsidy assistance may exceed available MASS resources and a waiting list may exist. Prioritisation criteria have been developed. Category 1 applicants are given priority over category 2 applicants.

Prioritisation categories relevant to waiting lists are as follows:

### **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
- 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 Continence Aids MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures section, which should be read in conjunction with this section.

## 16.1 Hospital Discharge

Applications for artificial larynges, mobility and daily living permanent loan aids and equipment required to enable a Queensland public hospital discharge to an applicant's home, may be processed without being subject to a waiting period. Supply of an aid will be dependent on the availability of the aid from MASS stock or from a supplier.

"Queensland public hospital discharge priority" is defined by MASS as when:

- the applicant meets administrative and clinical criteria as apply 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 supplier can deliver the aid to the applicant's discharge address or the hospital ward on or before the discharge date. If the requested aid is not available for immediate supply, the prescriber should investigate a similar, but appropriate aid from the same or other suppliers which is immediately available. MASS cannot guarantee early supply of an aid not available in MASS or a supplier's stock. If the aid is not available before discharge, the applicant may be subject to prioritisation or a waiting list as for a community applicant.
- ensure that the proposed discharge date is provided
- mark the application form clearly "Hospital Discharge"
- ensure that the application form is received by MASS at least 5 working days prior to the discharge date.

In the situation where the required aid cannot be determined or the prescriber does not have sufficient time to fulfil MASS administrative and clinical criteria for hospital discharge priority, the prescriber should:

- investigate suitable temporary measures for an aid until the applicant can be fully assessed and an application completed; and
- refer the applicant to a community health service for the assessment to be completed upon discharge from hospital.

## 17. MASS PLAQUE NUMBER – PERMANENT LOAN AIDS

Most aids that are provided on permanent loan have affixed a MASS identifying plaque carrying a reference number. This plaque must not be removed from the aid and the reference number (MASS Plaque Number) must be used when any correspondence occurs relative to the aid.

MASS will only be responsible for the most recent plaqued aid type allocated to a MASS client i.e. MASS will not be responsible for an aid that it has replaced.



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

## **18. MAINTENANCE INFORMATION – PERMANENT LOAN AIDS**

A *MASS Repair and Maintenance Information Booklet*, manual or powerdrive wheelchair or overtoilet/showerchair checklist, and *MASS 85 Permanent Loan Aid Information Sheet* will be forwarded to the MASS client whenever a new or replacement manual or powerdrive wheelchair or mobile overtoilet/showerchair is issued.

A *MASS 87 Artificial Larynx Care Information Sheet* will be forwarded to the MASS client whenever a new or replacement electrolarynx is issued.

A *MASS 88 Speech Generating Device Care Information Sheet* will be forwarded to the MASS client whenever a new or replacement speech generating device is issued.

A *MASS 88 Voice Amplification Device Care Information Sheet* will be forwarded to the MASS client whenever a new or replacement voice amplification device is issued.

Manufacturers should provide operational manual/information with any new aid.

The MASS client is responsible for the daily care and maintenance of the aid as outlined in the information provided with the aid.

MASS requires that its client read, retain and apply information received from MASS and suppliers/manufacturers and that they contact their prescribers if assistance is required. If prescribers are not able to provide assistance, they should refer the person to MASS or another service.

All plaqued equipment is expected to be serviceable for at least 5 years.

## **19. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE – PERMANENT LOAN AIDS**

MASS recommends that applicants, in consultation with their prescriber, pre-plan alternative arrangements for occasions when they may be without their aids and equipment or the aids and equipment requires repairs and maintenance.

In many cases repairs and maintenance can be performed within a day or two of the order being released by the local MASS service centre to a repair and maintenance supplier. However this will not always be the case particularly on weekends and public holidays.

### **19.1 Repairs and Maintenance that MASS Will Pay**

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 or safety issues occurring.

If repairs and maintenance are required to a MASS plaqued permanent loan aid, the MASS client is required to contact:

Local MASS service centre Brisbane (3136 3636), Mackay (4968 3931 - for communication aids only) and Townsville (4775 8000).

When contact is made, the MASS plaque number of the aid requiring repairs and maintenance must be quoted as well as a brief description of the repairs and maintenance required. The local MASS service centre will then issue a commercial order to have the repairs and maintenance performed.

MASS and repair and maintenance suppliers will refuse to accept unclean aids that are presented for attention.

### **19.2 Repairs and Maintenance that MASS Will Not Pay**

MASS will not pay for:

- repairs and maintenance to a privately owned aid
- repairs and maintenance to non plaqued aids
- repairs and maintenance to privately funded accessories
- repairs and maintenance to all or part of an aid that has been replaced
- repairs and maintenance to co-funded aids above those for the equivalent standard aid
- repairs and maintenance for which the person has privately paid (i.e. retrospective payments)
- repairs and maintenance that exceed the approximate average cost of basic repairs and maintenance for similar types of aids within the MASS fleet
- repairs and maintenance resulting primarily from use of the aid as an outside transport system (e.g. motor vehicle) or primarily from community access use
- repairs and maintenance without prior contact and authorisation by MASS
- repairs and maintenance that are not undertaken by the supplier or its authorised agent or by a repairer authorised by MASS
- repairs and maintenance covered by warranty conditions
- the transportation of the person or other persons to and or from the repairer/supplier
- costs of alternative arrangements for the person while an aid is being repaired
- larger tyres and tubes on manual wheelchairs and mobile overtoilet/showerchairs
- damage caused by unreasonable use, misuse and inappropriate use of an aid
- damage caused to an aid by lack of maintenance and cleaning
- damage caused to an aid by the constant and/or continual soiling of bodily fluid (e.g. urine and faeces)
- accidental damage, loss or neglect of an aid
- cleaning of an aid.

### **19.3 Repairs and Maintenance Away from the Normal Residential Address**

Before departing for an extended period of time from the usual residence, the person should have a repairs and maintenance check of aids and equipment and seek knowledge of local support services at the new address.

When the person is within Queensland, MASS will continue to fund authorised repairs and maintenance of the aid but will not fund any freight or additional costs involved with transporting the aid to the repair supplier. MASS does not provide a breakdown service.

When the person is outside Queensland, MASS will not fund any repairs and maintenance, transport or freight costs relating to the aids and equipment.

#### **19.4 Aids Beyond Repair**

A replacement aid will be considered for subsidisation on written confirmation from a repairer/supplier that the MASS aid is not economical to be repaired. Reassessment and a complete application are required for any replacement aid. The normal MASS subsidy arrangements apply.

MASS does not provide aids on a temporary basis while a replacement aid is being prescribed and/or provided through MASS i.e. if a 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.

## **20. TRANSFERRING OUT OF QUEENSLAND**

MASS may allow the transfer of ownership of its aids and equipment to a person who moves residency 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 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.

## **21. TRANSFERRING TO HIGH CARE RESIDENTIAL CARE**

When a person with a Residential Classification Scale Level of 1 to 4 moves to a Commonwealth funded aged care facility on a permanent basis or receives an Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) funding package 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 an EACH funding 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 High Care Residential Care Facilities.

## **22. TAKING OVER OWNERSHIP OF AN AID**

### **22.1 MASS Transferring Ownership to a Person or Agency**

MASS ownership conditions will apply should MASS choose to transfer ownership of aids and equipment to a person or agency. MASS will provide a written response outlining the conditions of private ownership.

Ownership conditions will include:

- the person or agency being responsible for repairs and maintenance to the aids and equipment
- the person not normally being 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.

### **22.2 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 similar agencies to 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 Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

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.

### **22.3 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 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 letter from the owner of the aids and equipment (e.g. if owner is not the applicant) giving consent for MASS to take 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
- application to MASS as per the relevant Section of the Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual.

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

#### **22.4 Client Ownership Model for Specific Aids and Equipment**

MASS has a client ownership model for the following aids and equipment:

- bathboards
- bathroom transfer benches
- non-mobile commodes
- wheeled walking aids
- backup manual wheelchairs
- voice amplification devices

MASS will deem ownership to the applicant. 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.

### **23. 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 (except as per Sub Section 22.4 of these General Procedures) when it is no longer required, is unserviceable, is unsafe or has been replaced by a new aid.

### **24. 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 the hearing impaired.

### **25. 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.

Feedback can assist in resolving specific issues of concern. It also assists MASS to identify areas where there is an opportunity to improve services provided by MASS.

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.

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

### **25.1 Compliments and Complaints Mechanisms**

To assist the process, consumers are encouraged to provide factual and full information of their concern.

The compliments and complaints management process which MASS implements generally depends on the nature of the issue, as follows:

- Issues concerning the performance of MASS whilst providing its service. These types of issues are investigated and resolved, if possible, at local MASS level.
- Issues concerning the outcome of an application to MASS for assistance. These types of issues are reviewed by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel, and if necessary with co-opted health professionals who have a holistic knowledge of MASS client population, MASS procedures, and aids and equipment provided by MASS. The aim is to objectively review the issues of concern relative to MASS providing an equitable and consistent service to all applicants within the scope of assistance provided by MASS.

Complaints that cannot be resolved at the local level are referred to the MASS Executive Officer for consideration or appropriate referral to the Southside Health Service District Manager.

### **25.2 Client Satisfaction Feedback Form**

The Client Satisfaction Feedback form, available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and Internet website at [www.health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass) and from MASS service centres, may assist consumers to provide feedback to MASS.

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 Sub Section 4 'MASS Service Centre Contact Details' of these Procedures.

### **25.3 Supplier Performance Report Form**

The Supplier Performance Report form, available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and Internet website at [www.health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass) and

from MASS service centres, may assist prescribers or consumers to provide comment on suppliers of MASS aids and equipment or on the standard of MASS aids and equipment.

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 Sub Section 4 'MASS Service Centre Contact Details' of these Procedures.

The compliments and complaints management process that MASS implements generally depends on the nature of the issue, as follows:

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 MASS Executive Officer for consideration or appropriate referral to the Southside Health Service District Manager.

## **26. APPEALS**

If a prescriber wishes to reapply or appeal the outcome of an application, this may be done in writing, by the prescriber, to the appropriate MASS Clinical Advisor or MASS Service Manager, with the provision of additional written clinical supportive information.

Should the applicant wish to appeal the outcome of an application, MASS will require the involvement of their prescriber or another MASS designated prescriber of the applicant's choice. MASS will require the prescriber to provide 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 reviewed by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel. If necessary MASS will co-opt health professionals who have a holistic knowledge of MASS client population, MASS procedures, and aids and equipment provided by MASS.

The aim is to objectively review the issues of concern relative to MASS, providing an equitable and consistent service to all applicants within the scope of assistance provided by MASS.

Appeals which are rejected to the appellant's dissatisfaction are referred to the MASS Executive Officer for consideration or appropriate referral to the Southside Health Service District Manager.

## **27. ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS**

**MEDICAL AIDS SUBSIDY SCHEME (MASS)  
STATEWIDE PRESCRIBER PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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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, available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service (QHEPS) and Internet website at [www.health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass) and from MASS service centres, may assist prescribers or consumers to report any incident of potential risk that may have occurred involving MASS subsidised aids or equipment.

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 Sub Section 4 'MASS Service Centre Contact Details' of these Procedures.