

A child or young person (C/YP) up to the age of 18 years with a substantial and long-term disability is entitled to request a service. The condition(s) must be of a nature which significantly affects the C/YP's ability to carry out normal activities of daily living in the home environment and/or imposes abnormal demands on the carer/family where the disability is expected to last 12 months or more.

1. C/YP and birth or adopted parents must be permanent residents in Kent.
 - a. Where a C/YP has been placed permanently with foster carers in Kent by another local authority (LA), they will remain the responsibility of the placing LA. **NB:** The foster carers may be eligible to apply for Disability Facilities Grant (DFG) for C/YP from the local borough/district in which they are resident.
 - b. Where a C/YP has been placed for adoption by another LA with a family residing in Kent, they will remain the responsibility of the placing LA for 3 years from date of adoption (As per Regulation 17 of Adoption and Support Services Regulations 2005. **NB:** They may be eligible to apply for DFG from the local borough/district in which they are resident.
2. As defined in The Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term (more than 12 months) adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (See Office of Disability Issues HM Government Equality Act 2010 Guidance)
3. Under "The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996", DCSOT Service determine if eligible adaptation works could be necessary and appropriate to access essential facilities as defined by the Act.
4. Equipment and adaptations are provided only to the main residence. Advice maybe offered to facilitate access to additional addresses.

Referral can be made by involved professionals, parents/carers or the young person.

Professionals can send IAR/SARF to Front Door service via email frontdoor@kent.gov.uk or by phone 03000 41 11 11; Parents/carers/young people can self-refer via phone or email to Front Door service as above or they can contact their social worker to request an internal OT Referral is placed on Liberi.

NB: Parental Consent or consent from a young person who is 16+ with Mental Capacity is essential for referral to DCSOT service as we are a "by consent" service and not an emergency service.

When a C/YP experiences a disability albeit physical, learning, behavioural or multiple disabilities, the first expectation is that treatment, rehabilitation and or training will be considered to support the child's development. If a professional identifies that independence cannot be achieved without equipment/adaptation or is not expected to be achieved, then a referral to DCS OT for an assessment of eligible needs is appropriate.

DCS OT will assess the Person, the Environment (home) and his/her Occupations (activities of daily living) and if and how equipment and adaptations can improve the situation:

- The Person's disability: is it fixed or changing? Could it improve with treatment, time or adaptive management? Will the condition deteriorate?
- The Home Environment - Options that family can achieve for themselves e.g. re-organising rooms/house move. Are major or minor adaptations necessary and appropriate to facilitate independence and or reduce demands on family or carers?
- The Occupations (Activities of daily living) – How environmental changes may or may not impact on Activities of daily living: changing routines or approaches to a task; Specialist assessments e.g. bathing or moving and handling or housing needs assessment (HNA) etc.
- Signposting to other services and resources e.g. NHS or charities.

During the OT assessment, Health, Education and or Social Care professionals will be consulted to achieve an appropriate outcome for the C/YP. E.G. Is C/YP able to benefit from a behaviour programme; or is C/YP's mobility able to improve from medical intervention?

DCS OT service will consider need for specialist equipment or adaptations to the home to facilitate access to:

1. Access in, out and within the property
2. Access to the garden where feasible
3. Access to bedroom, washing facilities and toilet
4. Access to preparing a hot drink and essential food
5. Making home safe for C/YP and others in home.

When undertaking an assessment and considering recommendations, DCS OT will assess for the most modest option to meet the essential needs.

1. Prescribed Specialist Equipment may be offered to C/YP between ages of 2yrs and 18yrs.
 - a. Equipment will be provided from within local Equipment Providers Stock in the first instance. If equipment needs to be purchased this can be done via local equipment provider or via direct payment made to parent/carer. (See KCC Direct Payments for Equipment Policy)
 - b. Items that are readily available from internet or high street shopping for universal use (e.g. touch screen tablet, chairs or potties), will not be provided. Similarly, small portable aids, such as for dressing or feeding, are not provided as families are expected to make reasonable adjustment to provide for their child's welfare.
2. Adaptations to the home to ensure access to essential facilities as above.
3. Moving and Handling Assessments; the OT will initially advise on minimising risks, demonstrating techniques and prescribing equipment to support good and safe moving and handling. A full Moving and Handling Plan will be provided where applicable.
4. Housing Needs Assessments/Reports can be provided for families who need to move because their child's disability cannot be met in their current home, or it can be offered to assist a family choosing to move and who need to identify a suitable home. A Property Viewing can be undertaken to advise if a property is suitable or might be adaptable. This will only be undertaken if Housing Needs Assessment has been done previously and family are likely to buy or be offered a house by a landlord. We are not able to undertake house searches on behalf of a family.

We are unable to assess for or provide equipment for use outside the home or that is provided by other statutory authorities:

1. Specialist beds/cots – NHS provide as per their assessment and criteria.
2. Car Seats/Safety Harness's for use in the car – Family to self-purchase as outside the home.

3. Wheelchair/buggy / mobility aids – NHS provide as per their assessment and criteria.
4. Postural Seating – NHS provide as per their assessment and criteria.
5. Specialist equipment for children under 2 yrs. – NHS provide as per their assessment and criteria.
6. Where the request is for therapeutic treatment only- NHS provide as per their assessment and criteria.
7. Where the need is related to social factors e.g. parenting, difficulties with siblings, overcrowding etc. – Advice and guidance to be sought from Early help, Children’s Social Services and or Housing Services

Additional Services:
Fostering & Adoption

DCS OT undertake environmental assessments for potential foster and adoptive carers to advise on suitability of the home environment for access for a disabled child or young person. An OT report is provided to indicate what if any adaptations might be required. Where applicable DCS OT will also consider carer’s health and previous knowledge of care and suggest equipment/adaptations needed to support them. This assessment is requested by the Social Worker (SW), who is undertaking Form F Assessment, as soon as possible, and before carers are presented to Panel.

In the event of a child and carer matching, OT can assess to give specific recommendations to meet child’s needs in that foster or adoption placement. If the placement is for short breaks, it is expected that equipment will be transported with child. If additional equipment is required, it should be purchased by case managing team via their usual decision-making process – e.g. DCS Decision Making Panel.

Referral is made by fostering SW or child’s SW using OT Referral form on Liberi electronic database.

Residential Homes

DCSOT can advise a residential care home for a Kent Disabled C/YP, on the equipment needs. If a home employs their own OT, we recommend they liaise with DCSOT prior to undertaking their assessments.

- The first choice will be to look to the care home using their existing stock of equipment.
- The second choice will be to consider options the home can purchase that may be used with other residents.
- The third option is that equipment required is so bespoke it cannot reasonably be used by others. KCC will consider an application to fund suitable provision. In this instance we need an explanation of why other options do not meet the need and how this option does. If Kent is purchasing equipment, we would consider it part of our stock and so it needs to return to Kent stores when not needed by the assessed C/YP.

NB: DCSOT would consider what our stock of recycled equipment has available prior to purchase. Therefore, funding approval must be sought prior to purchase.

Servicing and Maintenance of Kent owned equipment in placements outside Kent needs to be considered and, where appropriate, the arrangement should be purchased directly from the manufacturer.

Referral is made by child’s SW via Liberi following contact from Residential Home or associated OT.