

CRUTCHES: SUPPLY AND FITTING - PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPT CHW

POLICY®

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- Crutches are sold to patients. We do not offer hiring of crutches.
- Correct sizing and safety checking of crutches should be done prior to sale.
- Purchase of crutches during business hours is via the Cashier or after hours at the Enquiries desk.
- An invoice can be raised by the Physiotherapy Department if family are unable to leave credit card details (after hours).
- The child should be instructed in safe mobilisation on crutches – see fact sheet “You and your crutches”.
- The aim is for safe and timely discharge, including full documentation of service provided.

CHANGE SUMMARY

- This is a routine policy review.
- Minor changes to payment methods have been made.
- Updated link to factsheet.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st November 2018	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Manager	Area/Dept: Physiotherapy

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Read Acknowledge Only – Physiotherapy department clinical and support staff (including Physiotherapy Assistants), Accident and Emergency staff and Orthopaedic ward staff should read and acknowledge they understand this document.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st November 2018	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Manager	Area/Dept: Physiotherapy

Policy

New crutches are sold to inpatients and outpatients. We do not hire crutches.

Procedure

Normal Working Hours Procedure

1. Ascertain weight-bearing status ordered by consultant/registrar
2. Supply new crutches of appropriate height and handle level
 - i. Top of crutch - three finger width under axilla
 - ii. Handle height – slight bend of the elbow when standing in a relaxed manner
3. Ensure crutches are safe – all wing nuts are tightened, the tips are not worn, the arm pieces are intact and the aluminium struts aren't bent.
4. Complete the form for purchase of new crutches and direct parent/guardian to the Cashier on Level 2 to pay for the crutches (Mon – Fri 0930 – 1500). The form is available outside the crutches cupboard in the physiotherapy department. See below for after hours procedure.
5. Teach patient appropriate sit to stand, progression on flat surface and on stairs. See fact sheet "You and your crutches".
6. Discuss supervision requirements with parent/guardian.
7. Discharge when mobilising safely.
8. Document each occasion of service in the patient's medical record.

1.1 After Hours Procedure

After 3.30pm Monday to Friday and during weekends or public holidays families may pay for crutches at the Enquiries Desk on Level 2 (cash only).

For Credit Card payment the parent/guardian completes their credit card details on the back of the crutches form and the physiotherapist forwards it to the Cashier who will send a receipt. If no credit card is available full contact details of the family should be recorded on the crutches form and given to the Physiotherapy Department Secretary who will organise an invoice to be sent to the family by the Physiotherapy Department. No physiotherapist is to handle cash.

Physiotherapy Service

Physiotherapists are available for supply and fitting of crutches Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm. There is a limited weekend orthopaedic service of 4 hours on Saturday and Sunday. Outside of these hours crutches will not be supplied and fitted.

Emergency Department

It is the responsibility of the Physiotherapy Assistants to ensure that the Emergency Department has a supply of crutches. Patients will be supplied and fitted with crutches and taught how to use them by Emergency Department staff.

Appendix: Fact Sheet

- Crutches - instructions for safe crutch walking: <http://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/fact-sheets/crutches-instructions-for-safe-crutch-walking>