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# Policy Statement

To ensure appropriate management of Territory Equipment Program (TEP) items of assistive technology.

# Policy Purpose

TEP aims to provide prescribed items of assistive technology to assist eligible residents of the Northern Territory with a permanent or long-term functional impairment, to enhance their safety and independence, and to assist them to live and participate in their community.

This policy has been developed to transition the former Disability Equipment Program (DEP) to a service model for the provision of assistive technology for people with afunctional impairment, within a contemporary service system model and within existing funding.

This policy introduces the requirements for the management of items of assistive technology including repair and maintenance, retrieval, replacement and trial pools of the TEP.

# Policy Details

## Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the TEP policies and procedures.

## Policy content and Implementation

TEP manages centrally located pools of new and re-issue items of assistive technology. All TEP items have an identification sticker with the item’s TEP ‘T’ Number and the TEP Work Unit contact details.

TEP maintains responsibility for all TEP items including review; pick up/delivery; and repair and maintenance. The TEP assistive technology category and specific exclusions are outlined in the TEP PO-3 Access to Services Policy.

Items will not be issued without TEP approval; client contributions paid in full (if required); and a signed client acceptance of responsibility form.

## Management of Stock

Items in stock are available for immediate issue to eligible clients approved for TEP assistance.

Stock items may be new or re-issued.

To effectively manage TEP stock in each region, TEP ensures that:

* items of assistive technology are stored in a secure environment and protected from the elements;
* items are clearly identified with a TEP identification sticker and assigned TEP Number; and
* TEP Stock List items are maintained at the minimum level.

## Repairs and Cyclical Maintenance

TEP engage local repair and maintenance (R&M) providers to carry out repairs in some regions. Only items nominated for R&M on the TEP Approved Equipment List will be repaired or undergo cyclical maintenance. All other items requiring repair will be considered for replacement.

To effectively manage repairs and cyclical maintenance of TEP items, the TEP ensures that:

* clients are advised of their responsibility to carry out regular cleaning and daily care maintenance at the time of application;
* clients receive a timely response to repair requests by the TEP Work Unit or R&M Provider;
* alternate access to an item of assistive technology is facilitated wherever possible for any item required to be repaired or maintained off site;
* only reasonable and economically viable repairs and maintenance are carried out; and
* repairs covered by the manufacturers’ warranty are not duplicated.

The TEP recognises that items of assistive technology can breakdown anywhere and anytime. Emergency breakdown repairs are considered similar to general repairs however support is prioritised and repairs can be provided on site by the R&M Provider in some regions. Roadside assistance is not provided by the TEP. Clients with the support of family or a carer can undertake minor repairs, such as puncture repairs, however prior approval is required for any modifications.

The TEP will not assume the cost of repairs for items subject to neglect (unusual wear and tear). This condition is accepted by clients at the time of application.

## Review of Allocated Items

The regular review of allocated items of assistive technology is required to ensure items are still required, meet the client’s needs and are not in need of replacement or repair. The TEP Clinical Guidelines include recommended review times for specific items.

Generally, an initial review will be conducted by the Approved Prescriber at the time of delivery or within four weeks of issue. Subsequent reviews are then carried out between four to 12 weeks and at 12 months or as identified in the relevant Clinical Guidelines.

## Replacement

Replacement items of assistive technology may be issued when the same item (make and model) is required by the client and:

* the item is not nominated for repair and maintenance;
* it is more economical to issue a new item of assistive technology than to pay for repairs; or
* the item is damaged or lost through no fault of the client.

Reassessment by an Approved Prescriber is required if an alternative item is requested. The normal TEP prioritisation and client contribution arrangements apply. Items that have been replaced are required to be returned to the TEP.

Approved Prescribers contact and discuss appropriate assistive technology use with clients that require a second repair or replacement within a twelve month period. Further replacement within this time is at the discretion of the regional TEP Cost Centre Manager.

TEP will not assume the cost of replacement for items of assistive technology subject to neglect (unusual wear and tear). This condition is accepted by clients at the time of application.

## Re-issue

Items that are replaced, no longer required or no longer meet clients’ needs are required to be returned to the TEP. Items are then assessed for re-issue suitability before being appropriately cleaned, serviced and refurbished (as required), and returned to stock. Items that are not suitable for re-issue may be used for parts or disposed of as appropriate.

The TEP RG-1 Re-Issue Guidelines support decision making relating to re-issue of items of assistive technology. The guidelines outline basic rules and conditions for re-issue and include a checklist for consistent application. Consideration is given to:

* age;
* condition and stakeholder acceptance;
* accumulated cost of repairs and maintenance over the last five years;
* estimated cost to refurbish and repair to an appropriate standard;
* compliance with appropriate Australian Standards; and
* length of time in storage.

Low cost personal care items, voice amplification devices and any other exclusions outlined in the Re-issue Guidelines will not be re-issued.

## Pick Up/Delivery, Cleaning and Freight

The TEP will arrange for pick up/delivery and cleaning of TEP items as required.

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| Quality Assurance |
|  | **Method** | **Responsibility** |
| **Implementation** | Document will be available for all staff via the PGC. | PGC Administrators |
| **Review** | TEP policies will be reviewed every three years and TEP procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure continuous quality improvement. | Senior Manager Community Allied Health & Aged Care Services, TEHS  |
| **Evaluation** | Adverse events will be recorded in the patient’s notes and Riskman. | Senior Manager Community Allied Health & Aged Care Services, TEHS |
| **Compliance** |  |  |

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| Key Associated Documents |
| **Key Legislation, By-Laws, Standards, Delegations, Aligned & Supporting Documents** | TEP Policy and Procedure ManualTEP GL TEP Glossary |
| **References** | EnableNSW – New South Wales[www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au](file:///D%3A/Documents%20and%20Settings/TIMES%20SEAT/TIMEs%20SEAT%20Review%20Implementation%20Project/Ministerial%20Correspondence/DD2012_5433%20CE%20Brief%20DEP%20Implementation%20Approval/DEP%20Policies/www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au)State-Wide Equipment Program (SWEP) – Victoria[www.swep.bhs.org.au](file:///D%3A/Documents%20and%20Settings/a114/Local%20Settings/Ministerial%20Correspondence/DD2012_5433%20CE%20Brief%20DEP%20Implementation%20Approval/DEP%20Policies/www.swep.bhs.org.au)ACT Equipment Scheme ACTES – Australian Capital Territory[www.health.act.gov.au](file:///D%3A/Documents%20and%20Settings/a114/Local%20Settings/Ministerial%20Correspondence/DD2012_5433%20CE%20Brief%20DEP%20Implementation%20Approval/DEP%20Policies/www.health.act.gov.au)Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) – Queensland[www.health.qld.gov.au/mass](file:///D%3A/Documents%20and%20Settings/a114/Local%20Settings/Ministerial%20Correspondence/DD2012_5433%20CE%20Brief%20DEP%20Implementation%20Approval/DEP%20Policies/www.health.qld.gov.au/mass) |

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| Definitions, Acronyms and Alternative Search Terms |
| Term | Description |
| **TEP Approved Equipment List** | A list of specified items of assistive technology each having clinical guidelines and conditions for prescription. |
| **TEP Stock List** | A list of stock items from the TEP Approved Equipment List detailing the minimum number of items to be kept per regional stock location. |
| **Stock** | New or re-issue items available for issue from the TEP stock locations. |
| **Re-issue item** | Item returned to stock and deemed suitable for client use. |
| **Repair (General)** | [Restoration](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/restoration.html) of a broken, damaged, or failed item of assistive technology or part to an acceptable operating or usable [condition](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/condition.html) or state to ensure continued functionality. A repair is not likely to extend the normal life of the item. |
| **Cyclical Maintenance** | Activities undertaken on a recurrent basis to conserve the [condition](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/condition.html) of an item of assistive technology while compensating for normal [wear and tear](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/wear-and-tear.html). |
| **Emergency Breakdown Repair** | Repair works of an emergency nature required to ensure continued use of essential items of assistive technology e.g. repair of an item essential for client safety in their home. |

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| **National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards** |
| cid:image001.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Clinical Governance | cid:image002.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Partnering with Consumers | cid:image003.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infection | cid:image004.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Medication Safety | Comprehensive care iconComprehensive Care | cid:image006.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Communicating for Safety | cid:image007.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Blood Management | cid:image008.jpg@01D658ED.D030F090Recognising & Responding to Acute Deterioration |
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