

Medical Adaptations Policy

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Prepared By	
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Objectives

The Medical Adaptations Policy aims to ensure that the Association effectively administers referrals from Social Work for medical adaptations that will enable disabled tenants to sustain their tenancy. Our objectives include:

- providing a prompt, efficient and cost effective medical adaptations service;
- supporting the independence and dignity of tenants by undertaking adaptations to their existing properties so that they can sustain their tenancies;
- ensuring that the Association carries out adaptations that are appropriate to the tenant's needs and therefore, utilised to their full potential;
- acknowledging that in some instances construction type and financial constraints may prohibit the successful adaptation of a property and in such circumstances providing appropriate housing options advice;
- ensuring that the Association makes best use of its housing stock and resources available by allocating vacant adapted houses to tenants with similar medical needs;
- procuring appropriately qualified contractors to install medical adaptations within the homes of tenants;
- ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to so that the Association complies with its duties in relation to medical adaptations and does so efficiently, effectively and economically;
- operating an effective monitoring system, including audit trails and reporting systems that ensure compliance with the medical adaptations process;
- maximising grant funding available from the Scottish Government; and
- taking positive steps to inform and listen to tenants about continuous improvements to our medical adaptations service.

1.2 Compliance with Regulatory Standards

In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to medical adaptations by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following:

- Tenancy sustainment – tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.
- Value for money – tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

1.3 Expected Outcomes

Key outcomes of operating an effective Medical Adaptations Policy include:

- ensuring that tenancies are sustained;
- optimising customer satisfaction with the medical adaptations service; and
- delivering value for money.

1.4 Informing and Involving Stakeholders

We will promote our Medical Adaptations Policy through our newsletter, website and tenancy handbook. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult tenants in line with our Customer Engagement Strategy.

1.5 Corporate Fit

Legislation and best practice

We will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations, including:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, 2001 & 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (the “**GDPR**”);
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter

Our Medical Adaptations Policy is consistent with our:

- Corporate Strategy
- Business Plan
- Tenancy Sustainment Policy
- Housing Allocation Policies
- Housing Maintenance Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Financial Regulations
- Delegated Authority Policy

Equalities

Our Medical Adaptations Policy complies with CVHA’s Equality Policy to ensure equality of treatment for all tenants without discrimination or prejudice. At all times CVHA will therefore consider all tenants, regardless of sex, faith or religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical health, disability or marital status.

Confidentiality

CVHA recognises that confidentiality is important to tenants and will treat their tenancy information in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with CVHA's Openness and Confidentiality Statement.

Business Plan and risk management

Our Business Plan reflects that medical adaptations are necessary to support the needs of tenants with particular needs who are living within a CVHA tenancy. We seek to promote tenancy sustainment and mitigate against business risk through managing medical adaptations in an efficient, effective and economic manner.

Lead Officer

The Investment Director has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Medical Adaptations Policy and the Housing Maintenance Manager is responsible for key aspects of the day to day service delivery with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.

The Board, via the Operations Committee, will receive regular updates on the implementation of the Medical Adaptations Policy so that they can have assurance that it is operating effectively in practice. The Audit & Risk Committee may also seek assurance in this regard.

Function / task	Responsibility
Medical Adaptations Policy – review, amendment & approval	Board
Medical Adaptations Procedures – development, monitoring & review	Investment Director and Housing Maintenance Manager to develop operational procedures that reflect the principles set out within the Medical Adaptations Policy.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES – MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS POLICY

2.1 Context

Through the Common Housing Registers (CHR), in the first instance CVHA will explore housing options for a tenant to transfer to a home more suited to their needs before considering adapting their current home. Similarly where CVHA has a vacant adapted property it will use the CHR to seek to match a household whose needs match the property.

CVHA recognises that in many instances, such as where a tenant's household is expected to have long-term needs and where there are established support networks, there may be a clear rationale for investing in adapting an existing property. The assessment and prioritisation of such cases will generally be carried out by occupational therapists. A property will only be adapted where other housing options have been ruled out, where there is budget available, where it is technically possible to adapt the property economically and where adapting the property makes best use of the housing stock in terms of meeting current and future housing needs. CVHA will maintain details of adapted properties within its property database and ensure that such information is accessible to Housing Maintenance, Housing Operations and Asset Management staff.

2.2 Division of responsibilities

CVHA is responsible for permanent adaptations to tenanted properties, which include:

- level access showers;
- provision of ground floor WC / bathing facilities;
- installation of lever taps;
- provision of permanent access ramps;
- handrails (internal and external);
- alterations to window or door widths; and
- non-slip flooring.

The above list is not exhaustive and other referrals may be considered on a case by case basis. For example, minor works under the value of £150 may be instructed by the Housing Maintenance Manager and paid for via CVHA's response repairs budget where it is considered reasonable to do so and where funding permits.

Generally CVHA will not approve or fund property extensions or major structural works and will do this only in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been discounted and where the Asset Manager considers it reasonable within the context of the Asset Management Strategy. Where funding is secured from alternative sources for such works, CVHA will not withhold its consent unreasonably.

Social Work is responsible for the provision of items classed as temporary, including:

- specialist bathing equipment;
- raised toilet seats;
- stair/bath lifts; and
- removable ramps.

2.3 Assessments for adaptations

Assessments are carried out and prioritised by the occupational therapist, or medical officer in cases of central heating requests.

CVHA will maintain a list of applicants graded in priority order based upon the referrals received from the occupational therapist. Due to limited funding, it may only be possible to progress referrals above a minimum points level of 18. Where referrals fall below this minimum, they will be retained for reference and may be funded only if additional resources become available. However should a tenant's condition change whilst on the medical adaptations waiting list, their points may be reviewed and an updated referral submitted by the occupational therapist or medical officer.

2.4 Funding

CVHA receives Stage 3 Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding to assist with the provision of aids and adaptations to tenants who have been identified as requiring assistance in the form of permanent medical adaptations to allow them to remain in their home.

Expenditure on medical aids and adaptations varies from year to year, based upon the needs of individual tenants and the availability of HAG. However for investment planning purposes, given the ageing population and other community care needs, it is envisaged that CVHA could potentially spend significant sums on disabled and adaptations through Stage 3 HAG funding.

CVHA will request funding through an annual submission to the Scottish Government. The assessment of funds required will be based upon current requirements and historic expenditure levels.

Medical adaptations will only be instructed where there is clear confirmation of funding / budget availability. The budget profile will be set to allow the management of spend as far as reasonably possible throughout the financial year, so that emerging urgent referrals can be considered. Where less resources are available than necessary, CVHA will consult with occupational therapists to consider alternative housing options, reduced specification or other priority cases that can be assisted within the funds available.

CVHA may choose to allocate resources for permanent medical adaptations to tenanted houses from its own response repairs budget or planned programmed renewals budget, where there is sufficient budget provision and a clear business case for such expenditure.

For new build developments CVHA will incorporate 'Housing for Varying Needs' (HFVN) standards. CVHA will also seek to engage with local authority partners early in the development process and, through the CHR, identify households with particular needs. Where reasonable, CVHA will endeavour to address any specific requirements at the initial design stage to ensure that those property types being constructed meet the requirement of the household and future generations. Any unidentified minor internal or external adaptations will be dealt with during the construction stage (with funding via Stage 2 HAG).

2.5 Value Added Tax

CVHA will claim VAT exemption where applicable. In such circumstances, tenants will be required to sign a VAT exemption certificate supplied by CVHA and this will be forwarded to the relevant contractor carrying out the adaptation works.