

Equipment Grant Scheme – Guidance Notes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Transverse Myelitis Society (TMS) exists to support people living with Transverse Myelitis (TM) and related conditions and their families and carers by:
- Providing or assist in providing information, support and advice,
 - Raising the awareness of the public and medical professions of Transverse Myelitis and its related conditions and
 - Other charitable means as deemed appropriate.
- 1.2 In line with these aims, the Equipment Grant Scheme enables people (adults and children) living with TM or a related condition to access funding for equipment which aids in their rehabilitation, care and/or quality of life.
- 1.3 This document should be used in line with the Equipment Grant Scheme application form. Both documents are available on the TMS website at www.myelitis.org.uk/help-from-the-tms.html.

2. Aims of scheme

- 2.1 This scheme outlines the circumstances in which a grant may be available to ensure appropriate use of the TMS's resources and allocation of those resources in line with this guidance.
- 2.2 This guidance will be reviewed at the end of 2014 and thereafter annually by the TMS Committee to ensure it is meeting its stated aims and that TMS's resources are being used appropriately.

3. Financial resources available

- 3.1 The starting budget available for an equipment grant from July through December 2014 is £6,000. It is funded entirely through voluntary donations to and fundraising activities for the TMS. The TMS has not received any Government or statutory service funding for this work.
- 3.2 The TMS approves applications on a 'first come first served' basis until the budgeted monies have been spent.
- 3.3 A grant will be awarded according to the criteria listed in section 4.
- 3.4 The TMS will normally provide grants on a shared-funding basis. This means the applicant will normally contribute to the cost of the equipment and/or take responsibility to raise other funds toward the cost.

4. Criteria to receive a grant for equipment

4.1 The prospective recipient of an equipment grant could be an adult or child.

4.2 ‘Applicant’ refers to an adult making an application on his/her own behalf or a parent making an application for his/her child’s needs.

4.3 The following criteria will apply to all applications.

- The prospective recipient of the grant
 - Has received a diagnosis of Transverse Myelitis, Acute Disseminated Encephalomyelitis, Neuromyelitis Optica, Optic Neuritis, or an original diagnosis of Transverse Myelitis that has been re-diagnosed as Multiple Sclerosis.
 - Is resident in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.
 - Is a member of the TMS. In the case of a child ultimately benefiting from the grant, the parent is a member of the TMS. To become a TMS member, for which there is no cost, an on-line application can be completed at <http://membership.myelitis.org.uk/>
- A health or social care professional has carried out an assessment that has identified a need for the provision of the equipment which can aid the individual’s rehabilitation, ability to self-care, and ability to maintain or increase independence and/or quality of life.
- Statutory funding has been thoroughly explored by the applicant and/or his health or social care professional, carer or representative. Copies of documentation demonstrating statutory decision-making will be useful as part of the application.
- The equipment being requested is not provided by statutory services.
- An application form has been fully completed by the prospective recipient of the grant if s/he is an adult, or if s/he is a child, by a parent.
- Can provide a quote and supplier for the piece of equipment being requested.
- The applicant can make a contribution towards the cost of equipment for which s/he is requesting the grant. This contribution can come from the applicant’s own personal financial resources or other sources of funding. If making a financial contribution towards the cost of the equipment is an issue, the applicant should state that in the application form.

- If the applicant has sought funding elsewhere, s/he can give details of how much money will be awarded and by whom in the application form.
- As the applicant will be purchasing the equipment and therefore own it, any costs for any assessment, installation, set-up, and ongoing maintenance of the equipment, and ongoing insurance is his/her responsibility.
- An equipment grant can be provided for equipment that has been purchased within one month prior to the application being made or will be purchased within a month of receiving the grant. In either case, a copy of receipt of purchase will need to be given to the TMS so it can demonstrate in its financial records how the charity's funds have been allocated.
 - If the applicant purchases the equipment first, then submits his/her application, s/he needs to include a copy of receipt of purchase with his/her application. Equipment must have been purchased with a month prior to the application being made. No grants will be awarded for equipment purchased prior to 1 September 2014.
 - If the individual will purchase the equipment after receiving the grant, s/he should purchase the equipment within one month of receiving the monies. The applicant will also need to provide a copy of receipt of purchase to the TMS for its financial records.

4.4 The TMS will provide funding for specialist equipment (not supplied by statutory services) that can aid the individual's rehabilitation, ability to self-care, and ability to maintain or increase independence and/or quality of life including, but not limited to, Functional Electrical Stimulation equipment exercise equipment, physiotherapy equipment, or specialised wheelchair (for example, sports wheelchair).

4.3 A grant will not be provided for the following:

- Retrospective funding
- Equipment and adaptations that are a statutory responsibility
- Emergency healthcare needs that are a statutory obligation
- Household adaptations
- Funeral costs
- Legal costs
- Long term rental of items/equipment
- Respite care, respite breaks or holidays
- Complimentary therapies
- Travel to treatment being obtained privately in the UK or abroad
- Travel to NHS treatment
- Specialised and/or experimental medical treatment in the UK or abroad
- Equipment for use by health and social care professionals in any assessments or treatments
- Mortgage payments, household bills, furniture, household appliances or clothing
- Equipment used for the individual's employment
- Costs related to assessment, installation, set-up, maintenance and insurance for any equipment

purchased with funds awarded
through the Equipment Grant Scheme.

Alternative sources of funding for some of the above can be found in the document ‘Sources of Funding, Information & Support’ at www.myelitis.org.uk/help-from-the-tms.html .

5. Application process

5.1 The following outlines how the application process operates.

- The application form can be downloaded from www.myelitis.org.uk/help-from-the-tms.html .
- The applicant completes the application.
 - S/he has checked whether the equipment s/he is requesting is already provided by statutory services (local NHS trust or local council), and if it is, has applied to the appropriate body to obtain it.
 - This grant scheme aims to support purchase of equipment that is not covered by statutory services. If the applicant is applying to receive a grant to purchase equipment that is traditionally covered by statutory services, s/he should provide any supporting documentation that demonstrates the statutory services decision-making regarding the individual’s application to them.
 - If the applicant has already purchased the piece of equipment as stated in section 4.3, s/he must provide a copy of receipt of purchase with his/her application.
 - Having a medical, healthcare or social care professional complete a section of the form to verify the need for equipment is optional, yet highly recommended. This confirmation from a suitably qualified third-party strengthens the application. It helps to ensure that the equipment the applicant wants to purchase actually meets the applicant’s present and future needs. If the applicant is unable to obtain this, s/he can state the reasons for this in the application form. Sometimes a health/social care professional may want to charge for the time it takes to complete a form and this cost is the applicant’s responsibility. To ensure this part of the process moves quickly, it is recommended the applicant completes as much of that section as s/he can, i.e. contact details, so all that the health/social care professional has to do is insert his/her reasons and sign it.
- The applicant submits the completed application form and any supporting documentation to Jean Anthony, Treasurer of the Transverse Myelitis Society.
 - By email – jean.anthony@myelitis.org.uk
 - By post - 101 Broad Lane, Hampton, Middlesex, TW12 3BQ
- Jean Anthony will send the application form to the members of the sub-committee that reviews Equipment Grant applications. This sub-committee consists of three members of the TMS Committee.

- The Equipment Grant Scheme Sub-committee will review the application against the criteria outlined in section 4 and make a decision.
- If the sub-committee cannot make a decision due to the application form being incomplete, they require more information or they have a question, they will contact the applicant.
- Once a decision is made, the sub-committee will inform the applicant.
- If a decision has been made to award the applicant a grant, the applicant will need to inform Jean Anthony of his/her bank account details.
- Jean Anthony will then initiate transfer of the monies to the applicant's bank account.
- If the applicant is purchasing the equipment after receiving the grant, s/he does so within a month of receiving the grant and sends Jean Anthony a copy of the receipt of purchase.
- The applicant will be given the opportunity to provide feedback to help the TMS monitor the Equipment Grant Scheme.

5.2 The following outline considerations regarding timings.

- An applicant should allow for the time it will take for the medical, healthcare or social care professional to complete their section of the application form.
- Although the TMS will endeavour to reach a decision on each application as quickly as it can, the applicant should allow approximately 3 weeks for a decision to be reached and communicated.
- As there can be lead times on ordering equipment, particularly if equipment is being adapted or specially made, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure s/he times his/her application appropriately.

6. Exceptional circumstances

6.1 Under exceptional circumstances the TMS may fund outside the criteria outlined in this policy. Exceptional circumstances are defined as:

- Statutory services will not meet the request, even though it is required to do so and there has been a substantial delay in the applicant having the necessary equipment they need.
- Potential for breakdown in care between the person living with TM/ADEM/NMO and their carer.
- Over-riding clinical factors exist, i.e. the person has been severely affected by TM/ADEM/NMO.

- Person with TM/ADEM/NMO is in severe financial difficulties.
- Health or social care professional or support group leader is aware of other exceptional circumstances.

6.2 If the applicant thinks that his/her case qualifies as exceptional in any way, then s/he should provide the reasons for this and any additional relevant information in the application.

6.3 Requests for equipment which involve exceptional circumstances will be reviewed by the TMS Committee.