

Newsletter

New customer services manager



I have been with the wheelchair service for just over nine years. I have a soft spot for people and am always willing to help and lend a friendly ear. The team in Lincoln are all very supportive of each other and I am very lucky to be a part of it.

When I first started with the wheelchair service, I had no understanding of the service at all. It wasn't until I spent time learning about what we do and the service we offer that my passion grew. It's very satisfying and heart-warming knowing that we make a difference to someone's life. NHS contracts were all new to me and the learning curve was steep. However, I knew within a few months that I was in a job I would love and it would continue to motivate me to do my best for both our clients and my team. Seeing and speaking to the clients, expressing their gratitude for the independence we have given them back when we have provided a chair, inspires me to try and do it all over again tomorrow and to be a part of delivering a great service.

Outside of work, well, I am a South African girl, so I make Biltong and Boerewors (South African sausage) as a little hobby. The team here call me a feeder as I am always bringing something in that I have knocked together, or it could just be the mum in me that wants to feed everyone!

I have a granddaughter who is five. Ella and I spend as much time together as we can, and I can safely say being five again from time to time has its rewards!

I love to walk in the countryside which is breath-taking on this lovely island. My dream destination is a train journey through Scotland.

Non-eligible pathway

The NHS has criteria for who should be able to receive an NHS wheelchair and so sometimes AJM has to refuse requests for wheelchairs. We have now established a pathway that will allow those that are non-eligible for an NHS wheelchair to obtain a wheelchair through AJM at a competitive price.



If you or someone you know has been refused a chair and you would like to know more about how to obtain a wheelchair, you can contact our clinical commercial service by email:

ccs@ajmhealthcare.org.

We are also delighted to be working with the charity, Little Miracles, which provides support to families with children with additional needs, disabilities and life-limiting conditions. The staff from Little Miracles have been supporting families to find charity funding for children who are not eligible for a wheelchair or buggy from the NHS, but where the chair would make a difference to the child and/or their family. As well as supporting children who are not-eligible for an NHS chair, they have also been able to identify funding for children to upgrade their NHS chair through the personal wheelchair budget scheme.

If you would like to know more about Little Miracles and how they support families in Lincolnshire you can find out more by going to their website:

<https://www.littlemiraclescharity.org.uk/>

The are able to provide support in lots of ways not just finance and provide support for children and young people up to the age of 25.

For those over 25 years old it is sometimes possible to find funding for wheelchairs through charities or through other benefits for more information please contact:

Sue Harris, Partnership and Engagement Manager
sue.harris@ajmhealthcare.org

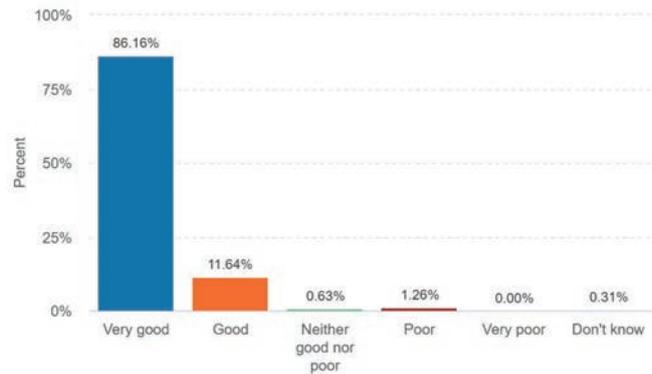
If you have a story you'd like to share in the next newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. Contact the customer service team or email your partnership and engagement officer, Sue Harris, at sue.harris@ajmhealthcare.org

Survey feedback

All our service users are invited to complete a survey after each visit or appointment.

If you would like to complete a survey it can be found at

NHS Friends and Family test: overall, how was your experience of our service?



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/LincsWCS-survey/>

Between 1st October 2021 and 31st January 2022, 318 people completed the survey.

97.8% said the service was good or very good.

We asked for suggestions for how we can improve our service; there were 3 suggestions for improvement.

- *Improve communication between customer services and the engineers as they don't always seem to have the information I gave to customer services*
- *Improve waiting times*
- *Improve communication from the Personal Wheelchair Budget Team*

We incorporated these comments into our continual improvement process and will discuss communication in our team meetings.

We constantly review our waiting lists and try to deliver the wheelchairs or do repair as soon as possible. However, like the rest of the country we have been experiencing some problems with supply chains. We are working with our suppliers to ensure that AJM is given accurate information about delivery times so that we can pass this information onto our service users.

We have recently recruited some new staff into our Personal Wheelchair Budget team this will improve communication and speed up waiting times.

We also received some great comments:

I only phoned yesterday and all very prompt and efficient service.

Took the time to help with my driving skills and really boosted my confidence. The service has been very good.

Knowledge of chair was good, repaired it quickly with parts.

Service user forums

AJM Healthcare is really keen to involve service users in the development of the NHS wheelchair service.

We have established a service user forum to which any service user, carer or organisations representing service users are welcome to attend.

We also have a commissioner from the Clinical Commissioning Group and an involvement officer from Healthwatch.

At the moment, all the meetings are held online using Zoom.

At our service user forums, we share information about what changes we are making. We invite members of the forum to make suggestions for how we can improve and then work together to find solutions. Members of the forum have helped us to develop our website and write a service user guide that is now given to new wheelchair users.

If you would like to know more about the forum, please email

Sue Harris, Partnership and Engagement Manager
sue.harris@ajmhealthcare.org

We have run a referrer training event every other month for around the last year now.

We do this because it helps to increase the accuracy of the referrals we receive and this means we can deliver more wheelchairs to more people right first time, and without delays waiting for simple assessments.

From May, we will be delivering these as 'in-service' training to some of our larger referrer groups, including our local hospitals' occupational therapy departments and our stroke outreach service.

We have made over 50 places available on these courses so far and have take up across another approximately 50 referrers in the next 6 months.

A day in the life of... Martin Nicholls



What is it that interested you about working in healthcare and joining the wheelchair service?

I joined customer service two years ago as a temp on a four-week contract. I had no idea how much was involved in working in wheelchair services. I very quickly found how much I enjoyed working here and was offered a permanent position.

I have now moved to Stores Team Leader. My work history is engineering, lift manufacturing and fitting.

What motivates you to get up in the morning?

Most mornings my first motivation to get up is my two greedy cats crying outside my bedroom window for their breakfast. I'm a very open person so every day is a chance to meet people to learn something new. I enjoy helping people and support a couple of charities which I hope makes a difference to peoples' lives.

What does a typical work day look like for you?

Our working day is 8am until 4.30pm and we do 1 late shift per week 9.30am until 6pm. My role as stores team leader is very varied, it involves organising the stores and parts, making sure we have the right parts and scheduling the work load of the technicians to make sure wheelchairs are delivered in good working order.

Hobbies and interests. What do you do to unwind?

I'm a massive collector of signed sports memorabilia. I started as a hobby as a child collecting autographs at football and rugby matches and it just grew and grew until it now fills my garage.

My rugby playing days have long gone, but I do go and watch the Leicester Tigers home games and a massive All Blacks fan. Boxing is my biggest love and I've done a lot of charity work with various boxers over the years.



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