

Aspire Human Needs Fund

Making specialist equipment more accessible



Aspire

Supporting people with spinal injury

Incurring a spinal cord injury can be life changing, but you can still lead a full and rewarding life.

Over the last 25 years Aspire has worked with thousands of people throughout the UK and Ireland – creating independence, choice and opportunity.

We provide a number of services to people and families affected by a spinal cord injury.

This brochure explains how you can benefit from the Human Needs Fund.

About Aspire

Aspire is a national charity that works with people with spinal cord injuries, providing practical support and advice to help them regain their independence.

We provide the following key services:

Aspire's **Human Needs Fund** offers grants to people with spinal cord injuries to help them buy the specialist equipment needed to live a more independent life.

We provide a number of specially adapted **Houses** which serve as accommodation for patients newly discharged from hospital, and their families, while permanent, accessible accommodation is being arranged.

Aspire's **Independent Living Advisors** give practical support to people by sharing advice on how to live a more independent life. We work with patients in Spinal Injury Centres around the country, providing accurate information and 'signposting' patients and their families to the best services and information for their needs.

We also provide **Assistive Technology** facilities at Spinal Injury Centres which help people use computers, regardless of their level of injury.

Aspire's head office is the **Aspire National Training Centre (ANTC)** in Stanmore, Middlesex. The ANTC is a leading innovator in accessible and inclusive fitness and sporting activities.

Many of our British paralympians and national squads train at the ANTC, and we are delighted that the ANTC has been chosen as one of the training venues for the 2012 London Paralympics.

Our research at the **Aspire Centre for Disability Sciences** has led to groundbreaking work on relief of pressure sores, fertility services and the development of technologies which can greatly assist independent living.

Through our **Campaigning** we have developed links with Westminster, Whitehall and the media on a range of important issues including wheelchair provision and accessible housing. We continue to act as advocates for positive change and improvement in these and other areas.

All of Aspire's services are paid for entirely through charitable income and project-based funding. We run a number of exciting fundraising activities throughout the year so there are lots of opportunities for friends and families to get involved.

Please see the other brochures in this series for further information about our services: Independent Living Advice, Aspire Housing Programme and Assistive Technology.

Please see page 7 for our contact details.



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About our Human Needs Fund

Aspire's Human Needs Fund offers grants to people with spinal cord injuries. Through the Fund we may be able to help you purchase the specialist equipment you need to live a more independent life.

A shortfall in NHS provision of equipment, such as suitable wheelchairs, remains one of the biggest obstacles facing people with spinal cord injuries. Aspire is campaigning to increase funding to stop this shortfall, but in the meantime our Human Needs Fund exists to make sure you have access to

important equipment that can increase your independence and quality of life.

Over the years we have helped hundreds of people purchase specialised equipment ranging from lightweight or powered wheelchairs to stair climbers, recliner beds and personal computers.

If you would like to apply for a grant from the Human Needs Fund, please contact the Human Needs Administrator on 020 8420 6707 or email humanneeds@aspire.org.uk.

Alternatively, you can speak with our Independent Living Advisors or download the guidelines and grant application form from our website www.aspire.org.uk.

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Mary's story

After an accident, Mary incurred a spinal cord injury and became paralysed from the waist down. Mary was only 45 at the time and was well into her teaching career. Naturally, she wanted to get back to work as soon as possible to continue in a job she felt so passionately about. Throughout her time in hospital Mary was motivated by her desire to get back into the classroom.

Unfortunately, the wheelchair Mary received from the NHS was bulky and heavy. Using it all day made her tired and it was difficult to manoeuvre between the school desks to help

her students. She couldn't even get in and out of her car on her own; the wheelchair was having a really detrimental effect on her independence.

Lightweight wheelchairs are expensive to buy and this was not something Mary could afford. She heard about Aspire's Human Needs Fund through a friend and decided to apply for a grant. Aspire part-funded her new lightweight wheelchair and helped her source the rest of the funds from her school. Now that she has a wheelchair that meets her requirements, Mary is independent again and flourishing in her career.



Bob's story

Bob was a keen designer and a computer whizz. When a freak accident left him paralysed and without the use of his arms and hands, Bob felt his life was over.

Whilst in the hospital, Bob discovered Aspire's Assistive Technology Facilities and realised he could still use a computer through voice activated controls. Furthermore, a special mouth-operated mouse gave him the fine control required for design work.

Bob was eager to continue using the equipment when he left hospital but, with

numerous other things to take care of, he simply couldn't afford it. Bob applied for a grant from the Human Needs Fund and was given part-funding for the computer equipment he needed. Aspire's fundraising department also gave him guidance on how to raise money, helping his friends and family to raise the balance. Using the specialist computer equipment gave Bob a new lease of life and enabled him to get back to work.



“The Human Needs Fund provides funding for wheelchairs, assistive technology, mobility aids and other pieces of specialist equipment that improve independence”

FAQs

How do I apply for a grant?

There are three ways you can apply for a grant from the Human Needs Fund:

- Download the guidelines and application form from our website www.aspire.org.uk
- Speak to one of our Independent Living Advisors at the Spinal Injury Centre
- Contact our Human Needs Administrator on 020 8420 6707 or email humanneeds@aspire.org.uk

What can I apply for?

The Human Needs Fund provides funding for wheelchairs, assistive technology, mobility aids and other pieces of specialist equipment that improve independence.

Is there anything you don't fund?

All applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. However, we are unlikely to fund applications for standing wheelchairs, passive exercise equipment, house adaptations, holidays or vehicles.

How does Aspire decide what to fund and how much to give?

The Human Needs Fund is administered by a panel on behalf of Aspire and includes two Aspire Trustees and other experts on spinal injury, disability and independent living. The panel decides what to fund based on the following priorities (in rank order):

- Re-establishing independent mobility
- Enabling further education or employment
- Enhancing access to leisure and recreation
- Maintaining independent mobility

How long does the process take?

Once you have given us all the necessary documentation we aim to respond with a decision within four to six weeks.

Is it means tested?

No, our Human Needs Fund is not means tested.

If you part-fund, will you help me raise funds to make up the difference?

Yes, the Aspire fundraising team can help you with ideas for fundraising and advice on how to approach other charities and gain support from your community.

What if my financial position changes?

If you are subsequently awarded a compensation payment, Aspire would encourage you to pay back the grant so that others can benefit.

How to contact us?

Telephone

Aspire Housing	020 8420 8950
Aspire Human Needs Fund	020 8420 6707
Aspire Independent Living	020 8420 6735
Aspire Assistive Technology	020 8420 6735

Email

Aspire Housing	housing@aspire.org.uk
Aspire Human Needs Fund	humanneeds@aspire.org.uk
Aspire Independent Living	advice@aspire.org.uk
Aspire Assistive Technology	technology@aspire.org.uk

Support Aspire

If you would like to make a donation to Aspire or find out how else you can support us please call 020 8420 6703 or visit www.aspire.org.uk

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Please contact:

Tim Palmer

tim.palmer@penningtons.co.uk
01256 407100

Philippa Luscombe

philippa.luscombe@penningtons.co.uk
01483 791800

Aspire



Supporting people with spinal injury

Wood Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4AP
Tel: 020 8954 5759 Email: info@aspire.org.uk
www.aspire.org.uk