Computer Access Service

Information for patients
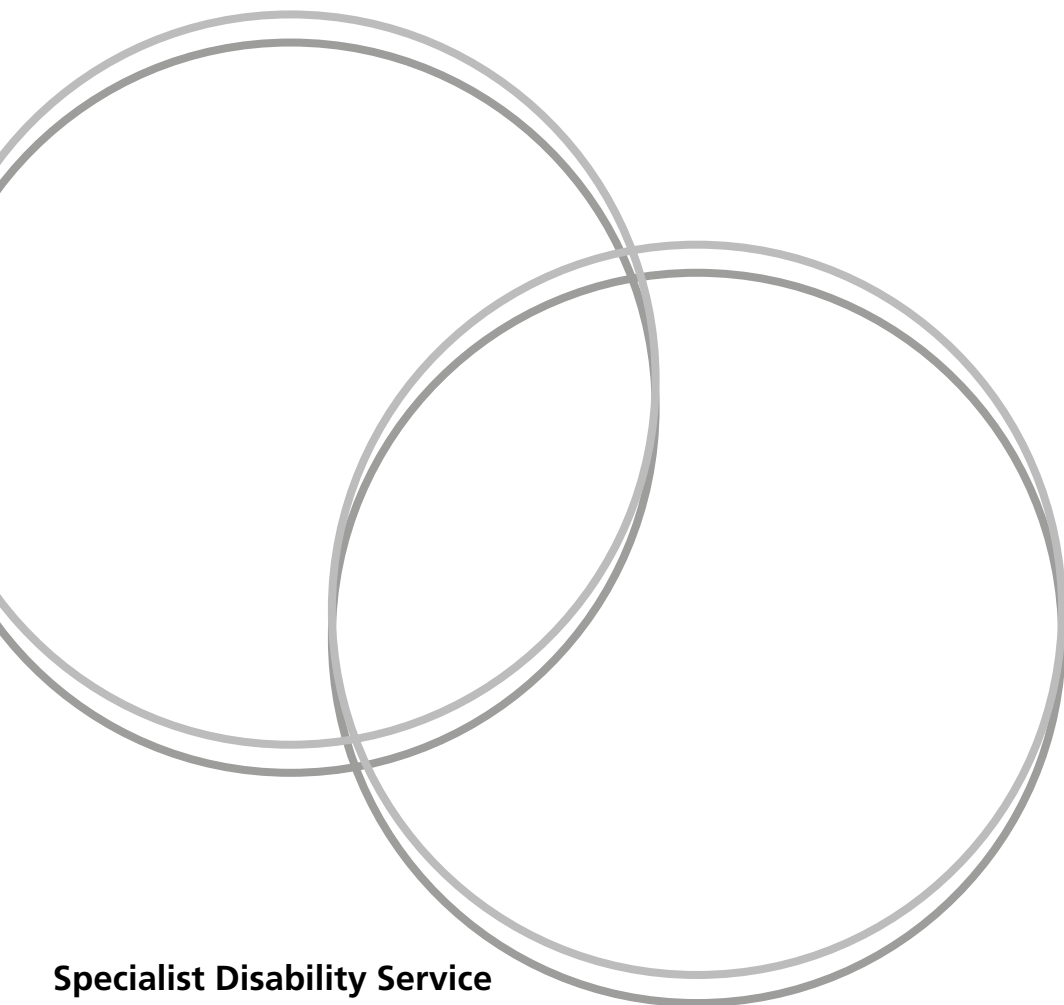
Specialist Disability Service

The Computer Access (CA) Service is for people who have difficulty accessing a computer by conventional means (keyboard / mouse / touchscreen) as a result of a physical disability. The referral criteria and levels of service are defined by NHS England (see 'Useful documents' overleaf).

What computer access methods are available?

The most appropriate method of accessing the computer will be determined for each individual user at the assessment. Options that may be considered include:

- alternative keyboards
- alternative mice (e.g. trackball, joystick, touchpad, head tracking, eye gaze)
- accessibility software (e.g. onscreen keyboards, word recognition, speech recognition)
- switch access (select options on the computer by pressing a button with a small movement such as shaking a head or moving a finger)
- computer positioning.

What does the CA service provide?

Users eligible for the full CA service can expect the following.

- The referral will be acknowledged within 10 working days.
- If the referral is accepted, an assessment will be carried out.
- Recommendations from the assessment will be confirmed in writing.
- If appropriate, a trial of sample equipment will be arranged to determine if provision is suitable.
- If provision is recommended, the equipment will be installed. We aim to complete installation within 18 weeks of the referral being accepted (dependent on liaising with other agencies).
- Training in use of the equipment will be provided.
- The equipment will be regularly maintained (typically by an annual service visit).
- Ongoing technical support will be provided in case of malfunction.
- Periodic reviews will be carried out to identify if the equipment needs adjusting.

If users are not eligible for the full service, we may still be able to provide an assessment and recommendation, but we will not be able to provide any equipment. Please contact us to discuss individual cases.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for the full service, users must:

- be registered with a GP in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, or Buckinghamshire (including Milton Keynes)
- have a severe disability with upper limb impairment (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis, Spinal Cord Injury, Motor Neurone Disease, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, severe arthritis, acquired brain injury, severe stroke…)
- be unable to access their computer through standard means (mouse, keyboard, touchscreen)
- require access to information technology (IT) to support independence and daily living
- have a level of computer literacy adequate for the tasks they wish to be able to achieve
- be motivated to use a computer device.

Users who meet these criteria are eligible irrespective of age or place of residence.

For those with variable conditions, the above criteria can be applied with regard to anticipated needs.

Are there any exclusion criteria?

We are not able to offer this Computer Access service if:

- the primary purpose is for work or education
- the primary difficulty with access relates to a visual or hearing impairment
- social, environmental or other circumstances are inappropriate.

We are unable to fund the following:

- the computer device itself
- standard or non-specialised computer access equipment
- training in general computer or IT use.

How are referrals made?

Referrals are made by completing and returning the Specialist Disability Service referral form (see 'Useful documents' below). Referrals should be made by health and social care professionals. Self-referrals can be accepted, but must be endorsed by a health and social care professional.

Useful documents

NHS England Service Specification for Complex Disability Equipment: Environmental Controls

https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/complex-disability-equiptment-environmental-controls-all-ages.pdf

Specialist Disability Service referral form

www.ouh.nhs.uk/oce/referrals/documents/SDS-referral-form.docx

Contact details

Tel: **01865 227 447**

Email: **specialist.disabilityservice@nhs.net**

Website: **www.ouh.nhs.uk/oce/services/specialist-disability-service.aspx**

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.