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Purchasing Pre-owned Wheelchairs and Wheelchair Components

It is important to consult with the Occupational Therapist (OT) for more clarification before you purchase used/pre-owned products, as these purchases are often non-refundable. Ideally, if possible, arrange to pay a medical equipment vendor look over the privately purchased wheelchair/product to ensure it is in good working order before purchasing.

Some of the places you can purchase used equipment

- Several medical equipment vendors throughout Manitoba sell used products through consignment at a reduced cost
- Private sales at online marketplaces such as Kijiji, Facebook Marketplace

Potential advantages and disadvantages of purchasing used equipment from a medical equipment vendor

Advantages:

- The vendor may be willing to set up the wheelchair on site at the personal care home for the resident before you purchase it which will ensure that the O.T. can check the wheelchair for suitability (size, height, function of the resident in it) before you purchase
- You can ask the vendor to check if the wheelchair is in good working order before you purchase it
- Some vendors may offer a short warranty on used equipment
- Some vendors will sell you the wheelchair frame used, and you can then buy a new cushion and back support to use with it

Disadvantages:

- Although less expensive than buying new, purchasing from a vendor can sometimes be more expensive than buying from a private seller
- It is unlikely that you will find the exact type of wheelchair, seat cushion, and back support that the O.T. has recommended, if you buy all three in used condition
- When buying a used seat cushion or backrest, these products may be past their life expectancy (especially products made of foam) and therefore not provide the necessary support

Potential advantages and disadvantages of purchasing used equipment from a private seller

Advantages:

- You may be able to find wheelchairs/seating components at a better price and there may be more room for negotiation on pricing

Disadvantages:

- There is no guarantee that the product(s) you purchase will be appropriate for the resident. Advertisements by private sellers can be inaccurate, and the equipment you purchase may be the wrong size, height, or style that the O.T. has recommended and private sales are often non-refundable
- Private sellers may not allow you to trial the wheelchair/seating components or to have the products checked by the OT for appropriateness before you purchase
- Hygiene and infection control needs to be considered
- If buying a used cushion, it may already be past its life expectancy (especially ones made of foam) and not provide the necessary support or pressure-reducing properties