

Smart Wheelchair Loan Project

Enabling Technology for Children

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Smart Wheelchair – Brief History and Background

An electrically powered wheelchair fitted with sensors and a computer.
Smart wheelchair can be fitted with a variety of seating systems.
Smart platform can accommodate most manual wheelchairs and static seats.
1987 – joint project between CALL Centre and Bioengineers in Edinburgh.
Continues to be developed by CALL Centre and manufactured by Smile Rehab.

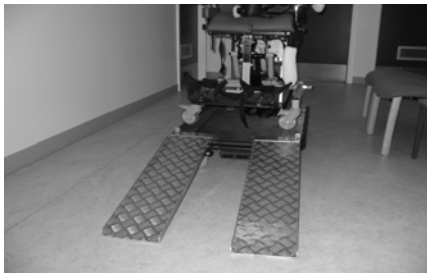
Smart Wheelchair



Smart Platform



Smart Platform



Background to Project

- Small group of children with complex disabilities being issued with EPICs.
- Fitting the most appropriate control system was not proving altogether successful.
- Already realised that these children would benefit from a period of time in a Smart chair.
- Started to look into a source of funding – aware that it would not be financed via NHS.
- Successful application to local Radio station.

Early Days of Project

- Currently have one platform and one wheelchair.
- Aim to have them out on loan most if not all of the time.
- Each loan period will be a full 4 months (holidays are taken account of).
- A second loan period can be requested depending on how many children are waiting.

Early Days of Project

- Importance of cooperation of school staff is impressed on referrers.
- Initial session will include a visit from myself and Paul Nisbet from CALL Centre
- Staff encouraged to keep an Activity Record every time the child uses the chair.
- Follow-up visits are arranged.

Early Days of Project

- Platform still out on first loan.
- Wheelchair has just come back and ready to go to second child.
- Result of first loan of wheelchair had a surprising outcome.
- It first appeared that the child would very quickly be eligible for an NHS chair.
- In the end it was withdrawn.

Hopes for the Future

- Hope to buy a third Smart wheelchair.
- Application already made for the funds.
- Will locate one in Fife and two between Lothians and Borders.
- Good recording of data will eventually demonstrate the advantages of the chairs.

