

Health, Wellbeing & Local Government Committee

HWLG(3)-25-09 Paper 3 : 25 November 2009

Letter from Joanne Davies regarding evidence for the Inquiry into wheelchair provision in Wales.

I am a parent who will be attending the above meeting and Mr Keith Bowen has asked me to forward some of the relevant issues I wish to address:

The time from measurement and referral to actual delivery of wheelchair can be so long that by the time the chair is delivered it is too small.

The chair is sometimes delivered but still requires adjustment and this can take many months , so the chair is out of use, though desperately needed.

No regular wheelchair reviews without starting referral process again.

Wait to be seen following referral can be up to 2 years.

Even if a member of ALAC staff comes to the area they only see one child at a time [in spite of a 2 hour journey].Therefore,children in the same area or school who have waited equally as long do not get seen when ALAC services are operating in their area.

No longer possible to arrange clinics co-ordinated by the Occupational Therapist with all children travelling to one place to meet ALAC staff. This used to happen very successfully in the past.

ALAC Services do not appear to want to co-operate with private fundraiser's and wheelchair charities. This partnership appears to be totally dependant on parents.

Referrer is not always informed of decisions or appointments, so that when the chair is issued it does not always take into account the different locations it will be used in, e.g. it can affect a person's ability to transfer in the school toilet.

Applications for powered wheelchairs can be turned down without the child ever being seen or the assessment they are asked to undertake can be wholly inappropriate,e.g.. an adult assessment.

If a child is in desperate need for a new chair or buggy even when the child is at risk this request can be denied as a priority. They may have gained written documentation from orthopaedic surgeons, pediatric consultants and OT's which claim the contrary but they still feel they have the expertise to deem this evidence otherwise.{Without ever meeting the child!}.

I realise this is an extensive list but I felt bound to include it all as the evidence speaks volumes.

Regards,

Mrs Joanne Davies