

Funding awarded for more Changing Places toilets in NHS hospitals

Thousands of severely disabled people will benefit from new government funding, which is expected to more than double the number of Changing Places toilets in NHS hospitals across England.

Changing Places are toilets with additional equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently, including adult-sized changing benches and hoists.

Over £500,000 has been made available to 10 trusts across England today to start work on 16 new facilities, with a further £1.5 million available to bid for.

There are currently just over 50 of these facilities on the NHS England estate. With this first share of funding, it is expected that the total number of Changing Places in hospitals will eventually increase to over 100.

The Minister for Care, Caroline Dinenage, is calling for [more trusts to bid for the funding](#) and also for all new hospital facilities to include a Changing Places facility in their plans.

People with severe disabilities, such as muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis, and their carers say Changing Places facilities can be life changing and allow them to go out in public or attend hospital appointments without fear or stress.

In the absence of Changing Places facilities, disabled people and their carers face:

- limiting what they drink to avoid needing the toilet when they are out – risking dehydration and urinary tract infections
- sitting in soiled clothing or dirty nappies until a suitable toilet is found or they return home
- having to be changed on a dirty toilet floor
- manually lifting someone out of their wheelchair – risking safety
- reducing their time out of the house – restricting their social lives

The announcement forms part of cross-government work to improve accessibility. [The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government \(MHCLG\) consulted last year on proposals that would add Changing Places toilets to more than 150 new buildings a year](#), including shopping centres, supermarkets, cinemas, stadiums and arts venues.

The proposals would add the facilities to specific new, large buildings commonly used by the public, as well as those undergoing building works. MHCLG intends to respond to the consultation in spring this year.

Minister for Care Caroline Dinenage said:

People with severe disabilities deserve to live with dignity and independence, but lack of access to adequate toilet facilities can be a huge challenge. Hospitals, like all public spaces, have a duty to cater for people with disabilities – who risk discomfort, embarrassment and even injury without access to a Changing Place.

This funding will make a real difference to tens of thousands of people and their carers who use NHS hospitals and I am delighted that trusts can begin building work as soon as possible, with further funding still available.

While today will help us to double the number of Changing Places in NHS trusts, we still have far to go – I expect every hospital development to include a Changing Places facility in their future plans.

Lorna Fillingham, Changing Places campaigner, said:

My 9-year-old daughter is disabled, she has physical and learning disabilities that mean she may never be toilet trained. When she was a baby her toileting needs were catered for, but as she has grown older, in most places, including my local hospital, they no longer are.

Like many other disabled people she really needs Changing Places toilets, with a loo, adult changing bench and a hoist. I have had to physically lift her, using manual moving and handling techniques that I would not have been allowed to use when I used to work as a nurse, and which puts both myself and my daughter at the risk of physical harm.

Changing Places change lives and should be in place in every NHS hospital for dignity, for safety, for comfort. I'm pleased the government is taking action to improve accessibility and hope more trusts apply for funding and have a Changing Places facility built at their hospital.

Trust	Funding
Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	£105,000
University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	£51,000
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	£34,000
Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	£35,000
Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	£40,000
Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust	£35,000
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	£97,000
West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust	£60,000
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals	£50,000
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	£17,000