



CHOOSING A HEALTH EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER

There may come a time when you or a loved one will need health equipment to remain safely at home.

Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) and Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) offer a number of programs that provide health equipment to eligible Nova Scotians through the provincial health system. NSHA and DHW contract certain suppliers to provide this equipment and check to make sure that they meet set standards. You can get more information by calling toll-free at 1-800-225-7225 or visiting <http://www.nshealth.ca/content/health-equipment>

There are also private companies and organizations who offer comparable and additional health equipment and supplies outside of the provincial health system. If you choose to purchase or obtain the services of a private supplier, it is important you get the information you need to make informed decisions.

Before you choose a health equipment supplier, you should know that:

- NSHA **cannot** endorse or recommend any specific suppliers.
- Private companies **are not** monitored or audited by NSHA or DHW.
- You pay for the full cost of services or equipment that your health plan or insurance doesn't cover.

Before you choose a health equipment supplier, you should:

- Work with a health care provider to determine the appropriate health equipment.
- Figure out how much money you have to spend on the equipment or services you need. *If you have insurance*, ask your insurance company what they cover.
- Make sure the supplier takes the time to answer your questions and leaves you feeling confident in your purchase. A good supplier will not make you feel pressured into making a purchase.

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Ask:

- About the qualifications (education, experience and training) of the staff and the support they will provide. You may want to see proof of these qualifications.
- For references from current and past clients.
- To try before you buy. Do they allow an in-home trial and/or work with your health care provider to determine whether the equipment is right for you?
- To see a written statement describing all services and costs included in the price (special adaptations, set up, accessories, delivery and repairs in the warranty period). Read it carefully before approving any purchase or service work.
- For copies of any policies, including the return policy, maintenance or replacement of equipment policy.
- What are the hours of operation? Is there an emergency number or after hours service number?
- Do they provide delivery and installation? How long will it take to receive the equipment?
- About the follow up provided after your purchase. Will they instruct you on how to use the equipment? Provide regular maintenance?
- About repairs during the warranty period and warranty exclusions. Is the equipment shipped elsewhere for servicing? If the device needs repairs, do they provide loaner equipment?

To find a health equipment supplier:

- Check Caregivers Nova Scotia www.caregiversns.org. Their Resources page provides a list of providers and services available in each region of the province. You can also call them at 1-877-488-7390.
- Call 211 or visit ns.211.ca
- Look in the Department of Seniors' Positive Aging Directory. Visit <https://novascotia.ca/seniors/directory/> for an online copy or to request a print copy.
- Ask family and friends who they recommend and look online for local services.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau for ratings, verified Customer Reviews and information to help you avoid scams: call 1-877-663-2363 or visit www.bbb.org/atlantic

**Health equipment can make a big impact on your life;
be sure you get what's right for you.**