



Holidays

Planning your holiday

There are a number of things you need to consider when planning your holiday and choosing your destination. The aim of this factsheet is to help make your planning a little bit easier.

Choosing your destination

You might already have an idea of where you would like to travel. If so, there are a number of organisations you can call for advice. You will find their contact information later on in this factsheet.

If you are undecided, or if you haven't got a holiday provider in mind, there are many organisations who specialise in accessible holidays. You can find a list of some of them in this factsheet. Through these companies, you can seek advice on your destination or type of holiday (cottage holiday, theme park break, abroad beach holiday, cruise, Disney holiday, and so on) and they can provide guidance on which hotels or locations might be the most suitable for your needs.

Depending on how far you would like to travel, there may be some resorts or locations which might be more suitable for your mobility needs. Consider first how much travelling you would like to do, whether there is a way you would prefer to travel and who you would like to travel with, as this can help you choose your destination.

Equipment

Think through what equipment you need for your holiday. For example, do you need a raised toilet seat, a mobile hoist or a wheelchair? Can you take it with you or do you need to hire or borrow some equipment?

When booking through an accessible holiday provider, it is always worth asking them if they are able to hire equipment on your behalf as part of your holiday package. Of course, you should always check that the equipment available is suitable for you before agreeing to any charges.

British Red Cross

Will sometimes lend equipment for medical purposes.

Tel: 0844 8711111

Email: information@redcross.org.uk

Web: www.redcross.org.uk

Disabled Living Centres

Can provide information and advice on hiring equipment.

Tel: 0161 832 9757

Email: general.info@assist-uk.org

Web: www.assist-uk.org



National Mobility Hire

Offer long- or short-term hire solutions to mobility needs.

Tel: 08700 949 808

Email: enquiries@nationalmobilityhire.com

Web: www.nationalmobilityhire.com

Mobility Equipment Hire Direct

Offers long- and short-term mobility equipment rental. They are able to hire equipment in the UK as well as abroad.

Tel: 0800 994 9000

Web: <http://www.mobilityequipmenthiredirect.com/>

Always get an assessment done before purchasing.

Wheelchairs

If you use a manual wheelchair, it's worth having it checked before leaving for your holiday to lessen the risk of any breakdowns during the trip. Consider taking a spare inner tube, a puncture repair kit and any other tools that might be useful.

If you are using a powered wheelchair, consider whether it is essential to take it. Don't forget to also take the charger and an adapter suitable for the country you are travelling to. Have the wheelchair checked before you leave to minimise the risk of a breakdown during your holiday. Try to find out in advance if there is anywhere you can have your wheelchair serviced should something happen during your trip. If you are travelling within the UK and have a breakdown then the local wheelchair service repairs may be able to help.

If you are travelling by air, check with the airline about transport of the wheelchair. Always make sure your travel or home insurance also covers your powered wheelchair or any other equipment you need to take on your holiday.

Some hotels will have manual wheelchairs available for hire, but these are often first come, first served. If you use a wheelchair infrequently but aren't sure if you will need one while on holiday, it is worth checking with your potential accommodation to see if they have any available.

If you will be travelling to a theme park on your holiday, it is a good idea to check their accessibility provision. Some theme parks in the UK and abroad provide manual wheelchairs for hire, but these can rarely be booked in advance. Mobility scooters can be hired at some theme parks, including Disney World Florida, but this is rare in the UK.

If you are going on a beach or countryside holiday, it is worth thinking about how you are going to navigate the terrain. Some beach hotels provide beach wheelchairs for rent, and most countryside resorts (for example, Center Parcs) have pathways that you can stick to if your wheelchair is unsuitable for grassy or muddy areas. It is always worth calling in advance to make sure you will be able to get out and about easily.



Insurance

When taking out travel insurance with your holiday provider, always check that it covers medical treatment and does not exclude 'a pre-existing medical condition'.

Travel insurance is essential when going abroad. It is often worth shopping around to make sure you get best value for money. Make sure your travel insurance covers cancellations and loss or damage of property, including any equipment. Equipment can sometimes be covered through your home insurance, so it's worth checking your home insurance policy too.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal for insurance companies to charge a disabled person more for an insurance policy without evidence that proves that the disabled person is a greater risk than a non-disabled person. If you are travelling within the European Economic Area and Switzerland, you need to get a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The Department of Health, working with the NHS Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA), provides the EHIC free of charge. This card replaces the older E111, which is no longer valid. You can apply for a card over the phone on **0845 605 0707**, online on www.ehic.org.uk or get an application form from the Post Office.

The insurance providers listed below specialise in catering for disabled people or people with a pre-existing medical condition.

Muscular Dystrophy UK cannot endorse any particular insurance company; you need to make sure that you are happy with the company you choose.

Able2travel

Specialists in providing travel cover for people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Telephone: 01892 829501

Email: enquiries@voyagerins.com

Web: www.able2travel.com

All Clear Travel Insurance Services

Offers travel insurance for everyone regardless of age, medical conditions or travel destination

Telephone: 01708 339026

Web: www.allcleartravel.co.uk

Chartwell Insurance

Provides low-cost travel insurance for people with a pre-existing medical condition.

Tel: 0800 089 0146

Email: info@chartwellinsurance.co.uk

Web: www.chartwellinsurance.co.uk

Columbus Direct

Offers specialised travel insurance for people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Telephone: 0800 068 0060

Email: admin@columbusdirect.com

Web: www.columbusdirect.com



Freedom Insurance Services Ltd

Specialises in providing travel insurance to people living with pre-existing medical conditions.

Tel: 01223 446914

Web: www.freedominsure.co.uk

Freespirit

Provides low-cost travel insurance for people with a pre-existing medical condition as long as you are fit to travel. A doctor's letter is required.

Tel: 0800 170 7704

Email: contact@freespirittravelinsurance.com

Web: www.freespirittravelinsurance.com/

Insurancewith

Provides travel insurance to people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Tel: 020 3829 3875

Email: insurancewith@infinityinsurance.co.uk

Web: www.insurancewith.com

The Insurance Helpline

Provides travel insurance for people with a pre-existing medical condition.

Tel: 0141 248 9787

Email: questions@theinsurancehelpline.org.uk

Web: www.theinsurancehelpline.org.uk

Website with insurers listed: www.the-insurance-surgery.co.uk

Holiday finance

There are a number of trusts and voluntary funds available, which may be able to contribute towards the cost of a holiday. Some of these organisations are listed below.

Local authorities (social services departments) may also be able to offer some assistance.

The Family Fund

May be able to offer assistance for holidays to disabled children under 16 in the UK.

Unit 4, Alpha Court

Monks Cross Drive

Huntington

York, YO32 9WN

Tel: 01904 550055

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Web: www.familyfund.org.uk

FHA - The Family Holiday Association

This is a holiday charity for families in need, which may provide funding for a one-week holiday in the UK. Applications should be made between October and November for the following year as funds tend to be spent by March.

3 Gainsford Street

London SE1 2NE



Tel: 020 3117 0650

Email: info@FamilyHolidayAssociation.org.uk

Web: www.fhaonline.org.uk

3H Fund (Helping Hands for Holidays)

Organises subsidised group holidays for disabled children and adults. It also provides grants, when available, to families on low income. Grants are sometimes limited to specific areas of the UK or to a particular demographic.

B2 Spelding Business Park

Langton Road, Speldhurst

Tunbridge Wells

Kent TN3 0AQ

Tel: 01892 860 207

Email: info@3hfund.org.uk

Web: www.3hfund.org.uk

Muscular Dystrophy UK has produced a factsheet called *Dream trips and wishes for children and young adults*. You can get the factsheet from our Information and Support Line on **020 7803 4800** or Freephone **0800 652 6352**. You can print it from our website: www.muscular-dystrophy.org/factsheets

Advice on holidays and travel

Tourism for All is a voluntary organisation that provides free information and advice to disabled adults and children, carers, single parent families and elderly people. It provides details about accessible accommodation, transport, special interest holidays, insurance and respite care. It also publishes a range of information sheets about holiday places in the UK and the rest of the world.

Tourism for All tries to match a person's specific needs with information held on its computer database, once a holiday questionnaire form has been completed. It covers holidays offered by commercial organisations and holidays organised by voluntary groups in the UK and abroad.

Some of the hotels and self-catering accommodation inspected and listed by Tourism for All are offered at discounted rates for members through its reservation line **0845 124 9973**.

Tourism for All

Pixel Mill

44 Appleby Road

Kendal

Cumbria LA9 6ES

Tel: 0845 124 9971

Email: info@tourismforall.org.uk

Web: www.tourismforall.org.uk



Providers of accessible holidays

Access Travel

Specialises in holidays for disabled people and provides wheelchair accessible accommodation abroad. Special aids, adapted vehicles, nursing and care are also available at some locations.

Tel: 01942 888 844

Email: office@access-travel.co.uk

Web: www.access-travel.co.uk

Bond Holidays

An accessible hotel just off the Blackpool coast, which specialises in catering for guests with disabilities.

Tel: 01253 341218

Email: sales@bondhotel.co.uk

Web: www.bondhotel.co.uk

Safehands Holidays

A company with a portfolio of accessible hotels. Safehands can also offer care solutions to guests travelling without their usual carers.

Tel: 0333 999 8888

Email: sales@safehandsholidays.co.uk

Web: www.safehandsholidays.co.uk

Break

Provides holidays and respite care for disabled children, young adults and families with special needs, at centres in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

Tel: 01603 670100

Email: reception@break-charity.org

Web: www.break-charity.org

Calvert Trust

Has three centres for activity and outdoor holidays in the UK. Specialises in activity holidays for people with disabilities.

Exmoor Tel: 01598 763 221

Kielder Tel: 01434 250 232

Keswick Tel: 01768 772 255

Web: www.calvert-trust.org.uk

Enable Holidays

Provides overseas holidays for disabled people their families and friends.

Tel: 0871 222 4939

Email: info@enableholidays.com

Web: www.enableholidays.com

Holidays with Help

Organises holidays for large groups of people with disabilities. It has a team of volunteers that assists the guests on location.

Email: holidayswithhelp@gmail.com



Web: www.holidayswithhelp.org.uk

Disabled Holidays

Arranges holidays in the UK, abroad or on cruises, for people with mobility needs. The team will also arrange accessible trips to Disneyland Paris and Disney World Florida, theme park breaks and can arrange for additional support and care for some holidays booked through their website.

Tel: 0161 804 9898

Web: www.disabledholidays.com

Jubilee Sailing Trust

Aims to promote integration of disabled and able-bodied adults through adventure tall ship holidays. It also has a youth scheme for 16- to 25-year-olds.

Tel: 023 8044 9108

Email: info@jst.org.uk

Web: www.jst.org.uk

Limitless travel

Provides accessible package holidays and tours.

Tel: 0800 069 8060

Email: holidays@limitlesstravel.org

Web: www.limitlesstravel.org

PHAB UK

Organises accessible activity holidays for adults and children. Courses cover subjects such as art, pottery, music, drama, photography, canoeing and horse riding.

Tel: 020 8667 9443

Email: info@phab.org.uk

Web: www.phab.org.uk

SHARE Holiday Village

A fully accessible holiday site for individuals and families in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 028 6772 2122

Web: www.sharevillage.org

Vitalise

Provides breaks for disabled people and their carers in centres across the UK. It also provides 24-hour on-call personal care. Abroad holidays are also available.

Tel: 0303 303 0145

Web: www.vitalise.org.uk

For more information about travel agents, tour operators and camping, you can visit the following websites:

www.accessibletravel.co.uk

www.canbedone.co.uk

www.goodaccessguide.co.uk

www.directenquiries.com



Remember, it is always advisable to check all the details listed in brochures and travel guides to make sure that the holiday and/or accommodation is suitable for your individual needs.

Other useful contacts

Carry My Luggage

Provides luggage delivery with a door-to-door service for UK, Europe, USA and other worldwide destinations.

Tel: 0845 009 0362

Web: www.carrymyluggage.com

Matching Houses

A house exchange website where people with disabilities swap houses with others who have the same accessibility needs.

Web: www.matchinghouses.com

New Jumbulance Travel Trust

Makes it possible for people with mobility needs to travel on holiday and day trips. Provides rental coach ambulances equipped with stretcher beds, reclining seats, accessible toilets, oxygen and a hydraulic lift for easy access. Available for day trips or holidays in the UK and some European destinations.

Tel: 01582 765423

Email: info@jumbulance.org.uk

Web: www.jumbulance.org.uk

Disability Rights UK

Publishes a range of books about living with a disability, including guides to planning holidays and transport. Also sells the Radar Key and guide which gives the holder access to over 9,000 accessible toilets in the UK.

Tel: 020 7250 8181

Web: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Tryb4ufly

Offers disabled adults and children the opportunity to try seating and transfer options before they fly, with the help of a trained occupational therapist.

Tel: 020 8770 1151

Web: www.tryb4ufly.co.uk

Alert cards

If you are travelling in the UK and will be further away from your normal care provider, it might be a good time to check if Muscular Dystrophy UK has an alert card for your condition. You can see the current list of alert cards we have available [here](#). If you would like to order one, you can do so by calling us on **020 7803 4800** or freephone **0800 652 6352**.



Disclaimer

While every reasonable effort is made to ensure that the information in this document is complete, correct and up-to-date, this cannot be guaranteed and Muscular Dystrophy UK shall not be liable whatsoever for any damages incurred as a result of its use. Muscular Dystrophy UK does not necessarily endorse the services provided by the organisations listed in our factsheets.

Here for you

The friendly staff in the care and support team at the Muscular Dystrophy UK's London office are available on **0800 652 6352** or **info@muscular dystrophyuk.org** from 8.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday to offer free information and emotional support.

If they can't help you, they are more than happy to signpost you to specialist services close to you, or to other people who can help.

www.muscular dystrophyuk.org