Dorset Wheelchair Service

ADVICE ON SAFE USE AND ADJUSTMENT OF BELTS, STRAPS AND HARNESSES TO COMPLY WITH MDA ALERT 2008/037 AND 2015/018

ALL BELTS, STRAPS AND HARNESSES SUPPLIED BY DORSET WHEELCHAIR SERVICE ARE NOT TO BE USED AS ANY FORM OF RESTRAINT.

Only use belts, straps or harnesses approved and fitted by Dorset Wheelchair Service or one of their Representatives.
The correct use of a pelvic strap is intended to help the user to remain safe, comfortable and well positioned in their wheelchair.
Before each use please ensure the belt is in satisfactory condition, is appropriate for the user and is adjusted correctly.

Correct adjustment of Lap and Pelvic Straps
Ensure the occupant is sitting correctly, i.e. Fully back in the seat and the pelvis is as upright and level as possible.
1) Position the strap so that the hip bones can be felt above the strap. Generally the strap should be fixed to the wheelchair so that the straps sit at an angle of approximately 45° to the seat base with a snug fit over the pelvis or upper thighs.
2) When fastened and adjusted properly it should just be possible to insert the flat of the hand between the belt and the user.
Correct tension should:
   i) Not result in unnecessary discomfort or distress or constant marking to the user. (Over tight)
   ii) Should not allow the user to slide down between the belt and seat. (Too loose)

The lap or pelvic strap should be the first belt fastened and the last belt undone!

Correct adjustment of Harnesses
This relates to upper torso straps, vests and harnesses:
1) All harnesses should only be used in conjunction with a correctly adjusted pelvic strap.
2) All harnesses should be adjusted according to the manufacturer’s recommendation.

Cleaning and Maintenance
All straps and harnesses should be inspected for wear, tear, damage and security before fastening. The belt, strap or harness should be cleaned, checked and maintained according to manufacturer’s instruction supplied at time of issue. Webbing can be cleaned with warm soapy water with a little disinfectant added. Avoid getting water inside metal buckles and ensure all webbing is dry before reusing.

WARNING
During transportation the user should be restrained independently of the wheelchair by a suitably approved occupant restraint system. The belts, harnesses and straps supplied by the wheelchair service may be used in addition to, but never as a substitute for, an approved passenger restraint system.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION OR INSTRUCTIONS PLEASE CONTACT DORSET WHEELCHAIR SERVICE ON 01202 892874