rwk goodman

Cerebral Palsy Guide

EDITION 8 | SUMMER 2026

Featuring

Foreword by Tegan Vincent-Cooke

Cerebal Palsy Plus

Bristol City Cerebral Palsy Football Club

Flamingo Chicks

Chloe Tear

Contents

Little Champions

Please follow the RWK Goodman Birth Injury team's Instagram page, @little__champions!

At Little Champions, we post a wide variety of content (much like the contents of this guide):

- Uplifting stories about children and young people with disabilities
- Promoting charities, businesses and communities
- Information posts about relevant medical conditions, with tips and suggestions for management
- Information posts explaining relevant medical terms
- Information posts regarding pursuing a claim in clinical negligence for birth injuries

We love to hear and celebrate everyone's story at Little Champs, so feel free to send us a message.

We also work closely with the Maternal Injury team at RWK Goodman, whose Instagram page is @whataboutmums. Their work focuses on pursuing claims for maternal injuries (i.e., injury to the mother during pregnancy, labour and/or delivery).

LITTLE CHAMPIONS

WHAT ABOUT mum?

We are delighted to introduce RWK Goodman's latest edition of the Cerebral Palsy Guide.

When I was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, my parents could never have imagined where life would take me.

Today, I am proud to represent Jamaica in Para Dressage on the international stage, while also working as a content creator, presenter, producer and public speaker. Alongside training and competing with my horse, I spend much of my time sharing stories, raising awareness around disability, and encouraging people to see possibility rather than limitation.

Like many people with Cerebral Palsy, my journey has not always been straightforward. There have been challenges, setbacks, and moments where I have had to adapt and find a different route forward. However, one of the greatest lessons I have learned is that disability does not define what we are capable of achieving. Our paths may look different, but our dreams, ambitions and potential are no less significant.

Horses became a huge part of my life from a young age. What began as a passion developed into a career and sporting journey that has taken me across the world. Through para dressage, I found confidence, independence and a community that believed in me. Alongside sport, I discovered a love for storytelling and communication. Whether through presenting, podcasting, social media or public speaking, I am passionate about creating conversations that help people feel seen, heard and understood.

That is one of the reasons I am delighted to introduce this edition of the Cerebral Palsy Guide. For parents, receiving a diagnosis or navigating life with a child who has Cerebral Palsy can sometimes feel overwhelming. There can be so many questions, uncertainties and decisions to make. Resources like this guide are invaluable because they bring together practical information, expert advice and lived experience in one place.

"One of the greatest lessons I have learned is that disability does not define what we are capable of achieving. Our paths may look different, but our dreams, ambitions and potential are no less significant."

My hope is that this guide provides reassurance as well as information. While every person's experience of Cerebral Palsy is unique, there is a vast community of individuals, families, professionals and advocates ready to offer support. No one should feel that they have to navigate the journey alone.

To parents reading this, I would encourage you to focus not only on the challenges your child may face, but also on the opportunities ahead. Celebrate every milestone, no matter how small it may seem. Encourage your child's interests, nurture their confidence and allow them the space to discover who they are. Sometimes the most extraordinary achievements begin with someone simply believing that they are possible.

To young people with Cerebral Palsy who may read these pages in the future, know that your future is not defined by a diagnosis. Your story is still being written, and there are countless ways to make your mark on the world.

I am grateful to the team behind this guide for their continued commitment to supporting families and sharing knowledge. I hope that within these pages you find practical guidance, encouragement and hope for the journey ahead.

Tegan Vincent-Cooke
Para Dressage Athlete for Jamaica, Presenter, Producer, Content Creator and Public Speaker

www.teganvincentcooke.com

GETTING THE RIGHT SUPPORT

Support groups and online communities

Sometimes, supporting a child with cerebral palsy can feel like an emotional rollercoaster. Psychological support can come in various forms, for example: talking to others who have shared experiences; reaching out to family and friends; and seeking advice from professionals. There are also charities with useful resources on getting the best emotional support.

Speaking to others in a similar situation can be a real comfort and reduce feelings of loneliness. Local support groups can be a good place to start; and your health visitor may be able to give you some ideas of groups in your locality.

Cerebral Palsy UK (Facebook group)

Cerebral Palsy UK is a private group on Facebook. It has 9.3K members who are affected by CP in some way and is a great way of connecting with others who can share their own experiences and advice.

Here for Hemi (Facebook group)

Here for Hemi is a private Facebook group for families affected by hemiplegia, which can be a consequence of cerebral palsy. They arrange meet-ups across the UK, so that children with hemiplegia can make friends with one another.

Gov.uk

The government website has a useful search facility for finding local support groups of children, young people and their families.

gov.uk/find-a-community-support-group-or-organisation

Mind – Side by Side (Online community)

Mind is a mental health charity in England and Wales. Side by Side is Mind's online community where you can listen, share and be heard. The online community allows you to post, comment and private message.

sidebyside.mind.org.uk

SCOPE – Forum (Online community)

SCOPE runs an online community and hosts events, allowing parents of children with disabilities the opportunity to meet and talk with other parents.

forum.scope.org.uk

GETTING THE RIGHT SUPPORT

Advice and professional emotional support

Sometimes it is helpful to talk to a professional, someone who understands your situation but does not know you personally. The following charities provide mentoring and confidential one-to-one services for parents and carers of children affected by cerebral palsy and other disabilities.

Contact – Listening Ear

As well as providing a huge amount of advice on topics from managing money to sleep,

Contact has a Listening Ear Service to provide emotional support for parents facing the extra

challenges of caring for a child with disabilities. The Listening Ear Service offers one-to-one

telephone appointments with a family support adviser.

contact.org.uk/help-for-families/listening-ear

Caudwell Children

Caudwell Children provides a family support network which includes telephone, email and face-to-face emotional and practical support to families.

caudwellchildren.com/families

Cerebra

Cerebra provides advice to children living with a brain condition and their families. They have a useful guide on managing anxiety in children with intellectual disability.

cerebra.org.uk/download/anxiety-guide-a-guide-for-parents

Carers UK

Carers UK provides expert information and advice to carers and helps carers to access the support they need.

carersuk.org

The Brain Charity

The Brain Charity provides free emotional support for anyone affected by a neurological condition (including cerebral palsy), and to their carers, friends and family. They offer free six-week counselling courses.

thebraincharity.org.uk/service/counselling

Changing Faces

Changing Faces offer one-to-one social, emotional and psychological counselling and support sessions to people of all ages in the UK with a condition that affects their appearance or creates a visible difference. Appointments are carried out over the phone or via video call, which means anyone from across the UK can access the service.

changingfaces.org.uk/services-support/counselling-support

GETTING THE RIGHT SUPPORT

Siblings

Siblings can play an important role in looking after their brother or sister with additional needs, acting as both a vital care giver and chief playmate. It is crucial that their emotional needs are met too.

Sibs

Sibs describes itself as the only UK charity for children and adults who are growing up with a disabled brother or sister. They provide information and support for siblings of all ages.

sibs.org.uk

SCOPE

SCOPE's website contains some really useful tips on supporting the siblings of a child with disabilities.

scope.org.uk

Staying informed

Some parents find it helpful to stay informed on their child's condition and up-to-date on the latest research.

CanChild

CanChild is an international resource for children with cerebral palsy and their families. Following interviews with parents on their experiences of raising a child with cerebral palsy from early childhood into young adulthood, they have prepared an excellent guide "by parents for parents," providing tips for raising a child with cerebral palsy.

canchild.ca/resources/23-if-i-knew-then-what-i-know-now-parents-reflections-on-raising-children-with-cerebral-palsy

Peeps - HIE Awareness and Support

Peeps is the UK's dedicated charity for families affected by Hypoxic-Ischaemic Encephalopathy (HIE), providing information, practical support, and a community for parents, carers, and loved ones. A key part of Peeps' work is supporting mental health and emotional wellbeing, recognising the significant impact that an HIE diagnosis and journey can have on the whole family.

Peeps offers free peer support, connecting families with trained volunteers who have lived experience of HIE. These conversations provide a safe, understanding space where people can share their feelings, ask questions, and feel less alone. Support is available through one-to-one conversations, online groups, and community networks, helping families build connections with others who truly understand their experiences.

In addition, Peeps funds counselling, trauma therapy, and group therapy programmes for those affected by HIE. This can be access in person or online.

The charity ensures that no family has to face their journey alone.

peeps-hie.org

Cerebral Palsy Cymru

Cerebral Palsy Cymru is a Welsh charity and specialist therapy centre that supports children and young people with cerebral palsy and related neurological conditions, as well as their families. The organisation's mission is to improve the quality of life of children across Wales by providing expert therapy, early intervention programmes, and emotional and practical family support. Its services include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy, alongside advice, advocacy, and education for parents and carers. The charity also works closely with healthcare professionals and schools to ensure children receive coordinated support that helps them participate more fully in everyday life.

The charity works through a family-centred and evidence-based approach, placing parents and carers at the heart of decision-making and therapy planning. A major focus is early intervention, particularly through the "Better Start, Better Future" service for babies at high risk of cerebral palsy.

cerebralpalsycymru.org

The Silverlining Brain Injury Charity

The Silverlining Charity describes itself as a "welcoming free to join community for everyone affected by brain injury." The community offers so many opportunities to make friends, learn new hobbies, and have fun.

Their four pillars are Kindness, Creativity, Opportunity and Shared Hope, and these feed into everything they do.

They run various exciting programmes, such as music therapy, rowing, film clubs, and goodwill work. In fact, members of the Silverlining community have been on several outreach trips to Namibia, supporting local communities by teaching skills to children and working on essential renovations to buildings.

In 2024, the charity helped to prepare an illustrated children's book called "The Woodland Friends," which is intended to highlight the many different consequences of brain injury (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social and physical), in an uplifting way that children can understand. They have a free PDF of the book on their website.

thesilverlining.org.uk

Children's book: heyzine.com/flip-book/88874b4711.html#page/1

Allsorts and YuGo

Allsorts is charity based in Gloucestershire, and their mission is to provide accessible everyday experiences for disabled children, young people and their families. They organise hundreds of events and opportunities every year: from play groups and quiz nights, to trips to the theatre and museums.

It is a wonderful way for children with all types of needs to make friends with one another, and for families to connect and share fun experiences.

allsortsglos.org.uk

Their sister charity, YuGo, supports disabled children and young people in accessing sport and exercise. They run fitness classes and after-school clubs for anyone who feels that mainstream classes are "not for them." They even run one-to-one sessions, online yoga classes and dance clubs!

yugo.org.uk

HELP WITH FUNDS

Statutory support

Local Authority support

Local Authorities have a duty to provide any non-medical care services to children who are disabled.

This provision may include equipment, transport assistance, home adaptations and respite care. To access these services, ask your Local Authority for an assessment of your child's needs. After carrying out the assessment your Local Authority may identify specific needs and then must arrange for all the services to be put in place to meet those needs.

The help and support that the Local Authority decides to give your child is set out in a care plan which should be discussed and agreed with you before being implemented.

Cerebra

The charity Cerebra has useful information sheets on accessing Local Authority support in England and Wales.

cerebra.org.uk/download/social-care-in-england

cerebra.org.uk/download/social-care-in-wales

Respite care and short term breaks

We all need a break from time to time. Your Local Authority may be able to provide 'respite care' or 'short term breaks' for your child. Short term breaks may involve someone looking after your child in your own home or your child enjoying some time in a day care facility or residential accommodation.

Your Local Authority must set out its respite care services in a document called a 'Short Breaks Services Statement'. You can ask your Local Authority for a copy.

A little bit of respite care can have a really positive impact on the whole family so take advantage of this provision if you can.

School transport

The Education Act 1996 identifies four categories of children who are entitled to free transport:

1. Children who live outside the 'walking distance';
2. Children from low income families;
3. Children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of the nature of the route; and
4. Children who can't reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problems.

Your child may fall in categories one to four. The walking distance to school is two miles for children under the age of eight and three miles for children aged eight and over.

However, many children with cerebral palsy are likely to be eligible under category four which applies if your child:

1. Is aged between five and sixteen years old; and
2. Has special educational needs, a disability or mobility problems; and
3. Cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of these needs.

Each child will be assessed on an individual basis to identify their particular transport requirements.

To apply for school transport visit:

gov.uk/apply-school-transport-for-child-with-special-educational-needs-sen

The Cerebra charity has a really useful guide on accessing school transport:

cerebra.org.uk/download/school-transport-in-england

cerebra.org.uk/download/school-transport-in-wales

Personal wheelchair budget

Since December 2019, adults and children who need a wheelchair can access a personal wheelchair budget. Personal wheelchair budgets are a new provision, designed to give people greater choiceover the wheelchair provided. People can add their own money or money from charities to their personal wheelchair budget to purchase their wheelchair of choice. The size of a personal wheelchair budget is assessed on an individual basis depending on a person's needs.

england.nhs.uk/personal-health-budgets/personal-wheelchair-budgets

Disabled Facilities Grant

Your Council may be able to provide a grant of up to £30,000 in England and £36,000 in Wales to make adaptations to your home such as widening doors; installing ramps, hoists or stair lifts; or providing a downstairs bathroom. Depending on your income or savings, you may have to pay towards the cost of the work but children under the age of 18 can receive a grant without their parents' finances being taken into account.

gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants

Disability Living Allowance for Children under the age of 16

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children is designed to help families with the extra costs of looking after a child with a disability. DLA is not means tested and does not have a negative effect on other benefits you may be claiming. From April 2024, you can receive up to £184.30 per week depending on your child's needs. DLA is one benefit made up of two components: A care component and a mobility component. In order to be eligible for the care component your child must need more care than a child of the same age who does not have a disability. The care component can be claimed from any age.

To be eligible for the mobility component, your child must have difficulty moving about and be at least three years old.

DLA claim forms are available by phone **0800 1214 600** or can be downloaded from the government website:

gov.uk/government/publications/disability-living-allowance-for-children-claim-form

The advantage of requesting a form by phone is that your child's DLA may be awarded from the date that the form is requested. If you download the form from the website, the DLA is only awarded from the date that the completed form is submitted.

Filling in the form can be daunting. The charity Cerebra has a really useful step by step guide on completing the questions:

cerebra.org.uk/download/disability-living-allowance-dla-vc

Personal Independence Payment for adults aged 16-64

If you or your child are over 16, you can apply for a Personal Independence Payment (PIP), a tax-free benefit known formerly as Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for adults.

gov.uk/pip

Carers' Allowance and Carers' Credit

As a carer of a child or adult with cerebral palsy, you may also be entitled to direct financial support from the Government, such as a Carers' Allowance, Carers' Credit, certain employment rights and respite care/ short breaks.

gov.uk/carers-allowance

Motability Scheme

If your child gets the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance you may be eligible for the Motability Scheme. The Motability Scheme enables people to use their government-funded mobility allowance to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair.

motability.co.uk

Blue Badge Parking Scheme

Blue Badge holders can park in disabled parking spaces and other spaces. Different rules for Blue Badge holders apply in different towns. If your child receives the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or is registered blind, they will automatically qualify for a Blue Badge. However, if your child has great difficulty walking and is not yet old enough to qualify for the mobility component of DLA, it is still worth applying because Blue Badges can be awarded on a discretionary basis.

gov.uk/apply-blue-badge

Wheelchairs and equipment

Whizz-Kidz

Whizz-Kidz is a charity that provides a range of mobility equipment to children and young people. The equipment they provide includes manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs, buggies, trikes and sports wheelchairs.

whizz-kidz.org.uk

Children Today

Children Today provides money for specialised equipment for children and young people up to age 25. They can provide grants for electric wheelchairs, walking aids, adapted trikes, adapted car seats, sensory equipment, hoists and sleeping equipment.

childrentoday.org.uk

Family Fund

Family Fund provides grants for families in the UK who are raising a disabled child or a child who is seriously unwell. You can apply for grants for all sorts of things that you feel would make a difference to your child's life. Some popular grants include sensory toys, computers and play equipment but they also provide grants for activities.

familyfund.org.uk

Cheyne Charity

The Cheyne Charity for children with cerebral palsy accept requests for funding for equipment such as seats, standing frames, tricycles, powered mobility, computers and respite breaks.

cheynecharity.org

Newlife

Newlife can provide funding for beds, buggies, wheelchairs, seating systems and other equipment.

newlifecharity.co.uk

The Boparan Charitable Trust

The Boparan Charitable Trust is a national charity and accepts applications for disability equipment, treatments, therapies, and household essentials. Further information about the items they fund can be found on their website and they are happy to discuss applications before you submit them if you are unsure about the criteria.

theboparancharitabletrust.com

Peeps

Peeps supports families affected by hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy (a lack of oxygen to the brain), which can cause cerebral palsy. Peeps provides grants of up to £800 for various pieces of equipment.

peeps-hie.org/research-projects/equipment-support

Independence at Home

Independence at Home provides grants for equipment, home adaptations and essential household items.

independenceathome.org.uk

Tree of Hope

Tree of Hope is a charity that helps children and young people with a disability by supporting families to raise the funds they need for specialist therapy and treatment that is not available on the NHS.

treeofhope.org.uk

Designability – Wizzybug Scheme

UK innovation charity Designability provides the Wizzybug Scheme, offering free powered wheelchairs to young disabled children across the UK, because there shouldn't be any barriers to independent movement and play.

Created with children, Wizzybug has a fun coloured design and is intended for children to experience independent movement, whatever that looks like, explore and play. You don't need to have a confirmed diagnosis, clinical referral or pass a driving competency test to apply for a Wizzybug.

Wizzybug is suitable for children aged approximately 14 months to 5 years old who are unable to walk, may find it difficult to walk for a prolonged period of time, or who fatigue easily. Applications are assessed by our friendly in-house clinical team, and it should take no longer than 16 weeks from applying to collecting your Wizzybug.

Wizzybug has a no tools adjustment system so it can grow with your child at home, is small enough to fit through a standard doorway and in the boot of a small car when disassembled. Technical and clinical support is available throughout the time Wizzybug is with your family and when your child outgrows it, we'll collect it and refurbish it for the next child.

Designability also operates a fund to support families with the cost of travelling to your handover appointment. They believe financial situation should never be a barrier to accessing vital equipment for disabled children.

designability.org.uk/assistive-solutions/wizzybug

HELP WITH FUNDS

Holidays

Kids in Action

Kids in Action provides support to children and young adults with special needs. They have three caravans in a holiday park in Great Yarmouth, complete with wet rooms and ramps. These 'homes away from home' come with central heating and double glazing – not to mention the swimming pool, crazy golf and entertainment available at the park. Kids in Action have recently merged with Ellie's Haven, offering a fully equipped holiday home in Looe, Cornwall too.

kidsinaction.org.uk

Dream Makers

Dream Makers provides respite holidays in mobile holiday homes in Torquay, Devon. The homes are equipped for the use of children with disabilities and their careers, with walk in showers, wheelchair ramps, hoists and much more.

dreammakerschildrenscharity.co.uk

Bendrigg Trust

Bendrigg Trust is a specialist residential activity centre based in beautiful Cumbria. They offer fully inclusive accessible activity breaks for groups, families and adults of all abilities. Activities they offer include climbing, canoeing, caving and cycling. They also have a pretty magical sensory room. Check out their YouTube Channel for videos of all the action!

bendrigg.org.uk

Therapies

Boparan

The Boparan Charitable Trust accepts applications for funding for therapies including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and behavioural therapy.

theboparancharitabletrust.com

Raising money

Some families affected by cerebral palsy have been successful in raising money for particular pieces of equipment or therapy through fundraising. There are a couple of platforms online that make this possible:

Crowdfunder

crowdfunder.co.uk

Go Fund Me

gofundme.com

EQUIPMENT

Equipment for everyday

There is a huge range of equipment on the market designed to make life easier. Your occupational therapist and physiotherapist will be best placed to advise you on the best equipment to fit your child's specific needs and circumstances.

We work with specialist neuro-physiotherapists, occupational therapists and chartered electronics engineers in the field of assistive technology to ensure our clients receive the best possible equipment to maximise their potential.

Below you will find more information on some of the equipment available and details of the pieces of equipment that our experts are recommending.

Aids to assist mobility

Mobility aids for people with cerebral palsy range from simple orthoses and walking frames to specialist powered wheelchairs. Finding the most appropriate and comfortable mobility aids for your child is vital for their growing independence, self-esteem and quality of life. Your physiotherapist and occupational therapist will understand your child's particular needs and be able to recommend the best equipment.

Assisted moving

The Wizzybug is a powered wheelchair for disabled children under 5, for use inside and outside. Their Wizzybug Loan Scheme provides these fun-coloured wheelchairs to young children across the UK for free.

designability.org.uk

Assisted sitting

Assisted sitting has the benefit of providing postural support. The right sitting support will depend on your child's individual needs, and you should always seek advice from your own therapy team, but our physiotherapy and occupational therapy experts have been recommending:

The Panda Future R82 which comes in two different versions. The standard version is for children who need support around their arms and shoulders. The active version is for children who require a little extra freedom of movement.
etac.com/en-gb/uk/products/paediatrics/seating/r82-panda-futura/seating/r82-panda-futura

The P-Pod by the Specialised Orthotic Services. This is the ultimate beanbag for children and adults and provides high levels of postural support.
specialisedorthoticservices.co.uk/product/p-pod

Assisted standing

A standing frame allows a child to maintain their hips and knees in a more extended and aligned position. Standing increases load bearing through the joints and aids hip development, digestion and circulation whilst providing pressure relief. If your child is able to stand with support, your therapy team can advise you of the most suitable standing frame to suit your child.

Leckey upright standing frames
Leckey has a range of upright standing systems for all ages with different ability levels.
leckey.com gives a full list of suppliers.

Assisted moving

Moving is important for exercise, exploration and fun. As cerebral palsy affects everyone in different ways, the right mobility aids will depend on your child's abilities.

Mobility aids include:

- **Walking sticks** which can help with standing, walking and weight bearing. Some have tripod bases to provide more support, and they are available in a variety of materials and at a range of prices.
- **Forearm crutches** can help those who need help to balance while walking.
- **Two-wheeled walkers** (with four posts) enable slower speeds and more control for those who struggle to maintain balance. Some walkers include built-in seats to enable the user to go from sitting to standing, and others include chest supports to help control the trunk. For those who cannot support their full body weight, suspension walkers include a harness attached to an overhead frame.
  A motorised lift adjusts what weight is borne.
- **Wheelchairs** are suitable if your child cannot walk, or cannot walk for sustained periods.
- **Manual wheelchairs** are cheaper than powered wheelchairs, but require the user to have some strength in their upper body and arms.
- **Powered wheelchairs** come with several different features depending on your needs and budget. They suit those with 13 little upper body control or strength. They are heavier than manual wheelchairs but enable you to get about quickly and easily.
- **Running bikes and adapted trikes** may be suitable for your child and provide a great way of getting around and having fun at the same time.
- **A Smile Smart Wheelchair** is a wheelchair training system which enables the wheelchair user to drive and control their own wheelchair using a tracking system. The wheelchair can also be attendant controlled as needed.

smilesmart-tech.com

The Zippie TS Folding and TS Rigid is a tilt in space wheelchair for children. Available with either a folding or rigid wheelchair frame, built-in growth and compatible with many seating and positioning solutions.

recare.co.uk

Everyone is different in terms of their ability to move about and your child's occupational therapist and physiotherapist will be best placed to advise you. Here is some of the equipment our experts are recommending:

A Kaye Walker can be used as both a walking training device and a community walking aid.

rms-rehab.co.uk

The Innowalk is a motorised standing device which allows children to exercise in an upright, weight bearing position.

madeformovement.com

A Petra Running Bike can be used from ages three to four through to adulthood and allows the user to propel themselves along using their feet on the ground.

Supplied by **rms-rehab.co.uk**

All-terrain wheelchairs and adapted trikes

There are many adapted tricycles on the market and our physiotherapy experts recommend:
Tomcat range **tomcatuk.org**
RMS Rehab range **rms-rehab.co.uk**

An adapted trike may help your child exercise and make physiotherapy more fun. For differently-abled adventurers with a passion for the outdoors, there is a range of all terrain wheelchairs on the market. Here are just a few examples:

The Trikinetic K2 is a lightweight, all terrain manual wheelchair that has been designed for everyday use, from cobbled town streets to mud and gravel. It is pretty transportable too as it can fold down and fit into a regular car.

trekinetic.com

The Sandpiper is a manual all terrain wheelchair which is at the less expensive end of the scale. Its large balloon like tyres make it perfect for gliding over soft sand, mud and even snow.

allterrainwheelchairs.co.uk

The Mountain Trike is described as an all-terrain, self propelled, sleek and versatile all-terrain wheelchair. This wheelchair can be driven with just one hand and features hydraulic disc brakes. In terms of transportability, the chair can be folded up into a cube and easily transported in the boot of a car.

mountaintrike.com

Assisted transfers

Lifting a child can become back breaking work and a hoist to assist with transfers can make a huge difference. Hoists or lifts can come as slings, seats and platforms to help people with cerebral palsy to move around spaces where it's difficult to operate wheelchairs or walkers. Your occupational therapist will have a wealth of knowledge on hoists to fit your child's particular needs and we recommend speaking to them about the right hoist for you. Here are some of the hoists that our occupational therapy experts recommend:

The Symmetrikit Skyframe is an ideal permanent hoisting system and can be wall or ceiling mounted although free standing options are available.

symmetrikit.com

Molift Smart Mobile Hois is a hoist that is designed to be easily wheeled and transported to where it is required. It is perfect for home or travel. It folds up without using any tools.

etac.com

The ProMove Sling is an incredibly light and portable moving and handling device that provides an alternative when you cannot access a hoist.

promove.uk.com

Aids to assist with drinking

For children who have a safe swallow, some of the families we work with have got on well with the Munchkin Miracle360 trainer cup:

munchkin.co.uk

Or the Nuby Sipeez 360 degree wonder maxi cup:

uk.nuby.com

Aids to help sleep

Sleep is essential for all of us. It may be that your child would benefit from a specialist bed to help their sleep. Everyone is different and your occupational therapist will be able to advise you on the best bed for your child. Some of the specialist beds available on the market are below:

The Bakare Klearside Bed is suitable for both children and adults. It allows your child full visibility around the room and you full visibility of your child without having to look over the top of the bed rails.

bakare.co.uk

The Pippen Traveller bed is a safe portable bed which is ideal for staying overnight away from home.

kinderkey.co.uk or livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Safesides Bed Surrounds are inflatable bed surrounds which create all round protection.

livingmadeeasy.org.uk

The Symmetrisleep Sleep system enables people with movement difficulties to learn to lie straight by providing support where necessary when a person is lying down.

symmetrikit.com

Orthoses and supportive footwear

Orthoses are tailored braces that support and strengthen affected areas, such as feet, ankles and knees. They are prescribed and fitted by your child's health team.

Getting shoes and boots to fit with orthoses can be a challenge. Some of the children we work with have got on well with:

- The easy dressing range at Marks and Spencer **marksandspencer.com/l/kids/easy-dressing**
- Piedro Boots **piedro-uk.co.uk**
- Billy Footwear **specialkids.company/collections/billy-footwear**
- Nike FlyEase **nike.com/gb/flyease**
- Butler boots **thelakesorthotics.co.uk/our-products-butler-boots**

The London Orthotic Consultancy provides bespoke orthosis for many different conditions including cerebral palsy, with clinics in Kingston upon Thames; Bristol; Cambridge; Romford; and Manchester.

londonorthotics.co.uk

Aids for swimming

A Chailey Buoyancy Aid supports the head and stabilises the whole upper body. Supplied by Therapy World:

therapyworld.org.uk

Incontinence swimwear can be essential and is supplied by Incy Wincy:

incywincy.net

Aids to help bathing

Astor Bannerman provide a range of height adjustable baths and accompanying devices such as powered seats and side doors to make bathing easier.

astorbannerman.co.uk

The Jiraffe Hygiene Toileting System has been designed to solve the toileting challenge. It is a seating system that can be wheeled over a toilet to allow the user to toilet in an upright position.

jiraffe.org.uk

The Sangenic Easiseal Pad Disposal Unit provides a hygienic way of disposing of nappies and incontinence pads.

avica-uk.com/cp/incontinence_disposal_unit_sangenic_easiseal_standard/EA502

A WashPod is a modular wetroom that is designed specifically to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. One of its primary benefits is that it can be installed quickly and easily.

EQUIPMENT

Assistive technology

We work with chartered electronics engineers in the field of assistive technology who advise us on the best and latest technologies on the market. Such technologies include special controls for powered mobility, communication aids, environmental controls and access to computers.

The purpose of assistive technology is to help someone with physical disabilities to function in the real world at a level that their level of understanding allows. The larger the gap between a person's physical skills and their cognitive abilities then, generally speaking, the more assistive technology is needed to fill the gap and help that person to fulfil their potential.

Your child's therapy team will be best placed to answer any questions you have on assistive technology to suit your child's ability but set out below is some of the technology on the market:

Aids for communication

Communication is key to so many things we do in life. Many people affected by cerebral palsy have difficulties with communication and can benefit from technology to aid communication. Here are some of the options currently available:

- **Electronic communications boards:** Electronic communication boards are like tablets with a choice of pictures, letters or words that a person can use to express themselves although the device does not actually produce any recognised speech.
- **Speech generating devices:** A more advanced version of electronic communication boards are speech-generating devices. With a speech generating device, the technology translates its user's instructions into speech that others can easily understand.
- **Eye tracking devices:** When a person is unable to use their fingers to select words or images on a communication board, eye tracking devices can come into their own. Eye tracking technology follows where a person's eyes are moving so a word can be selected without having to touch a screen.

The BIGmack communication aid is a simple device which speaks a pre-recorded phrase when hit. It is easy to record speech or music into the BIGmack.

inclusive.co.uk

The Grid Pad 12 is a computer designed for communication. It has a 15 hour battery life and straight forward controls. It is designed for Grid 3 software for communication and environmental controls.

thinksmartbox.com

Tobii Dynavox has a range of communication software packages to suit every developmental level.

SnapScene is one such package designed for young children at the beginning stages of learning communication who do not speak or who are difficult to understand.

GRID3 is a flexible piece of software which can be set up to meet the developmental level of the individual.

tobiidynavox.com

A **Talking Mat** is a visual or digital space made up of communication symbols and can be a great form of support to people with communication difficulties.

talkingmats.com

Aids for typing and writing

Many people with cerebral palsy lack the fine motor skills required to use a regular keyboard or write with a pen; and technology has been developed to make typing and writing easier.

Some writing technology is at the simpler end of the spectrum. These include steadying devices that can be attached to a pen or pencil to help a person with shaky movements; or a pen that is weighted; or a desk that can be adjusted for height or angle can help someone optimise their position for writing.

At the more advanced end of the spectrum is speech recognition typing software than can be tuned into the user's own voice or the voice generated from their speech generating device.

Environmental controls

Some people with cerebral palsy benefit from an intercom and remote latch to let people in the house and many companies such as Yale, Lock Monster or Smartlock have remote locks available.

Our assistive technology experts recommend AbleNet Powerlink Control Unit as an environmental control device which enables the user to turn mains powered devices on and off.

odelmobility.co.uk

Sensory equipment

Sensory equipment enables children to develop their senses by exploring different sounds, sights and textures. Sensory equipment may include fibre optics, bubble tubes or even a magic carpet. A magic carpet is an interactive resource which projects moving images on to any surface allowing children to engage and play.

Magic carpets are available to buy:

sensoryguru.com/product/mobile-magic-carpet

Some charities and centres have magic carpets available for use during sensory sessions including:

Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity

dvlcc.org.uk

Gympanzees is a Bristol based charity which offers the use of sensory rooms. They also have a lending library where families can borrow sensory equipment. There is a whole range of toys and equipment available on their website which is well worth a look.

gympanzees.org/our-home/lending-library

Second-hand equipment

You may be able to find suitable second hand equipment for your child. There are a couple of Facebook groups which specialise in second hand equipment including:

Special Needs Equipment ~ Buy Sell Swap UK ONLY

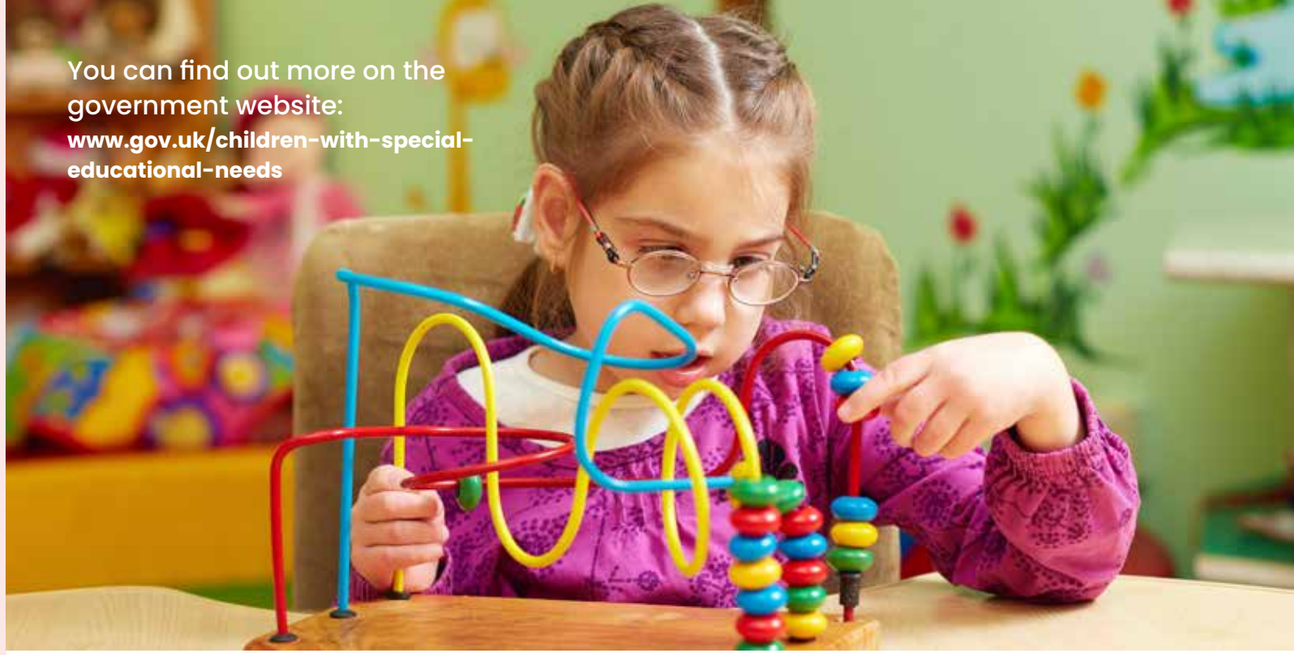
facebook.com/groups/SNEUK

Disabled Gear

facebook.com/DisabledGear

You may be looking to donate equipment that you are no longer using. The charity Through the Roof has a programme called Wheels for the World which accepts wheelchairs and mobility aids to provide much-needed mobility to adults and children across the globe.

throughtheroof.org/international-mission/wheels-for-the-world/



You can find out more on the government website:
www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs

Special education

Many children with cerebral palsy require additional support to help them learn. Guest author, Caroline Barrett is a Partner at Rook Irwin Sweeney. She shares her experience about accessing special education both during childhood and after the age of 19:

1. What should I do if my child has special educational needs?

"Special educational needs" means that a child has a learning difficulty or disability so that they require special educational provision. A learning difficulty or disability means that a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or that they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the same facilities as others in a mainstream school. If your child meets this criteria then they will have special educational needs.

Local authorities have a duty to identify children who have special educational needs, and health authorities also have a responsibility to ensure that children with special educational needs are identified.

If a child has special educational needs, it means that they will require some additional provision in school to help them achieve their potential.

2. What should my child's school be doing to support them?

All schools need to ensure that they do not discriminate against children with disabilities. They may also need to make reasonable adjustments, such as adjustments to policies and practices within the school, to ensure that children are properly included and catered for.

Schools will also need to ensure that children receive additional support where this is required. This could be additional support from a teaching assistant, or some support from a therapy service, or some adaptations to materials and resources in the classroom. "SEN Support" is the term used to describe the support that schools must provide to children where they do not have an EHC Plan. SEN Support comes with a framework which means that schools must "Assess, Plan, Do, Review". This means that your child should have a plan which clearly sets out what support the school will provide them with, and this will be implemented and regularly reviewed.

3.What is an Education, Health & Care Plan ("EHCP")?

An EHCP is a legal document which sets out a description of a child's special educational needs and the provision they require to meet those needs. It also contains details about healthcare and social care support that the child needs.

EHCPs can look slightly different in different local authority areas, however all EHCPs will contain the following sections:

Section A – a description of the child's and parent's wishes, the child's story, and what is important to them.

Section B – a description of the child's special educational needs/

Section C – a description of the child's healthcare needs

Section D – a description of the child's social care needs

Section E – the educational outcomes that it is hoped the child will achieve within the next stage of education

Section F – the special educational provision that is necessary to meet the child's needs as described in Section B

Section G – the healthcare provision that is necessary to meet the child's healthcare needs as described in Section C

Section H – the social care provision that is necessary to meet the child's social care needs as set out in Section D

Section I – the name or type of school placement that the child will attend

Section J – details of any personal budget that has been agreed

Section K – a list of important advice and documents that have been referred to in the document

An EHCP is an important document as it provides a child with legal rights to access all of the special educational provision that is set out in Section F of the plan. It is important that this provision is specific, detailed, and quantified, in order to ensure your child will have access to the provision they are entitled to.

4. How do I get an Education, Health & Care Plan for my child?

Not all children who have special educational needs will require an EHCP. Many schools can meet a child's needs within their own financial resources. However an EHCP will be issued where it is "necessary" in order to meet a child's special educational needs.

This is a question of degree. Where children require a high level of input which goes beyond what a school can reasonably provide, then an EHCP will be necessary. An EHCP is maintained by the local authority, rather than by the school, and the local authority will provide additional funding to the school to ensure that all of the provision can be delivered.

The first step in getting an EHCP is to make a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment ("EHCNA"). A request for an EHCNA can be made by the child's parents or by the school. The local authority must agree to carry out an EHCNA where it thinks that it "may" be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child in accordance with an EHCP. It is helpful to provide evidence to the local authority as to what the child's needs are, and what kind of support you think they need, in order to show that this test is met.

If the local authority agrees to carry out an EHCNA, it will consult with parents, the child's school, and any other people reasonably requested. It will also need to obtain relevant evidence such as a report from an educational psychologist. Once this advice has been obtained, the local authority will then make a further decision about whether it is necessary to issue an EHCP for the child. If it is necessary to issue an EHCP, the local authority will issue a version of the plan in draft for parents to provide comments on. At this stage parents can also request what school they want the child to attend, and ask for it to be named in the EHCP.

5. How often should an EHCP plan be reviewed or amended?

An EHCP needs to be reviewed every 12 months. The school will normally make the practical arrangements for the annual review meeting. The local authority will be invited but might not always attend. Parents, teachers, and any therapists working with the child will also be invited to attend and to consider how things have gone that year. The school will compile paperwork for the annual review and will send reports and notes to the local authority following the meeting.

Following each annual review the local authority will issue a decision confirming whether it intends to make any changes to the EHCP, or whether it will not make any further changes to the EHCP that year. Parents have a right of appeal against any decision that is made.

It is sometimes necessary to hold an urgent annual review where a child's needs have changed or there is a need to change school placement, and in those cases an additional request can be made for an urgent annual review.

6. What are my rights of appeal?

Parents will have a right of appeal against the following:

a. A refusal to carry out an EHCNA

b. A refusal to issue an EHCP following completion of an EHCNA

c. Any final issued EHCP where you do not agree with the contents of the plan. You can currently appeal against the educational elements of the EHCP (Sections B, F, and I). You can also appeal against the social care and healthcare elements as well, although the Tribunal can only make non-binding recommendations about health and social care provision.

d. A refusal to amend an EHCP following annual review; and

e. A decision to cease to maintain an EHCP.

Appeals are heard by a specialist Tribunal called the First Tier Tribunal for Special Educational Needs and Disability. You will have 2 months from the date of a decision letter from the local authority in order to lodge an appeal at the Tribunal. You will also need to contact a mediation advisor in most cases before you lodge an appeal.

7. What are my options for schooling my child with special educational needs?

The majority of children with special educational needs attend mainstream schools. It is very unusual for children without EHCPs to attend special schools. For children without an EHCP, parents can apply for admission to a school in the usual way, following the local admissions procedures.

For children with EHCPs, there is still a presumption in favour of children attending mainstream school. Where a mainstream school is requested by a child's parents, the local authority must ensure that the child has access to a mainstream school unless it would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for others and it cannot take any reasonable steps to prevent this.

When an EHCP is being finalised by a local authority, parents will be asked to put forward a choice of school. This school will then be named in Section I of the EHCP. A local authority must follow parents' preference for which school should be named in the EHCP, unless this would be unsuitable to meet the child's needs, or it would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or incompatible with the efficient use of resources (i.e. the parent's choice is more expensive than an alternative option which could also meet the child's needs). Parents can request either mainstream or special schools, and these can be maintained, non-maintained, or independent settings.

8. What are the education options for my child after they reach the age of 19?

EHCPs can be maintained up until the age of 25. However there is no automatic right for EHCPs to remain in place and it will need to be shown that it is necessary for the EHCP to be maintained and that there are still educational outcomes to be met.

EHCPs only apply where a young person remains in further education, and do not apply to higher education settings.

Young people over the age of 19 might attend college on a full-time or part time basis, or they might enrol in an apprenticeship scheme. Residential colleges are also an option for young people where there is evidence that this is necessary to meet needs, and this can often further independence. Courses for young people with disabilities often focus on helping them becoming as independent as possible and preparing them for adult life.

About Caroline Barrett

Caroline Barrett is a Partner at Rook Irwin Sweeney. Caroline is a public law specialist who advises on education, social care, and mental capacity law. She has significant experience in advising disabled people and their families on public law decisions that affect them, and she helps them to enforce their legal rights.

To reach Caroline Barrett, please email enquiries@rislaw.co.uk

Caroline Barrett | Rook Irwin Sweeney - Public Law. Human Rights.

TREATMENT, THERAPIES AND CARE

Physiotherapy

Children with cerebral palsy may benefit from a wide range of treatment and therapies to assist them in reaching their full potential. Your child's paediatric team will be able to advise you on what is best for your child. Below is a summary of some of the treatments and therapies available.

Physiotherapy can be hugely beneficial to children with cerebral palsy. It can improve motor development; ease stiffness; aid postural alignment and prevent the development of contractures.

Physiotherapists give manual therapy to affected muscles using their hands, but also teach physical exercises that stretch and strengthen muscles. They also offer advice on using and caring for aids and orthoses, such as special arm and leg braces that help to stretch muscles.

Your child should have access to physiotherapy through their healthcare team or through their school. Alternatively, you can find a chartered physiotherapist near you by using the search function on the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy website:

csp.org.uk/public-patient/find-physiotherapist

Heather Epps is a physiotherapist specialising in hydrotherapy and paediatric neurological physiotherapy.

aquaepps.co.uk

Lindsey Hopkinson is a paediatric physiotherapist with particular expertise in treating children with conditions such as cerebral palsy and acquired brain injury.

wanderlusttherapyforkids.com

Bristol Neurophysio specialises in the assessment and treatment of individuals with neurological conditions. They provide specialist physiotherapy treatment for the management of cerebral palsy for patients of all ages.

bristolneurophysio.co.uk

Top To Toe Physiotherapy has three centres in Bristol and the surrounding area. They offer treatment to improve strength and mobility, as well as treatment for pre- and post-SDR surgery.

toptotoephysiotherapy.co.uk

The Movement Centre is a UK charity and specialist physiotherapy treatment centre in Oswestry, dedicated to supporting children and their families affected by movement

the-movement-centre.co.uk

Hydrotherapy or aquatic physiotherapy

Hydrotherapy is a specific type of treatment conducted by trained therapists for people with cerebral palsy that takes place in warm swimming pools or specialist hydrotherapy pools.

Guest author, Dr Heather Epps, is a paediatric and adult neuro physiotherapist who specialises in hydrotherapy. She shares her experience on the benefits of

hydrotherapy to children with cerebral palsy:

There are many benefits of hydrotherapy for children with cerebral palsy. Muscle spasticity, dystonia and stiffness are reduced and relaxation occurs because of the pressure of the water against the body, the effects of heat on the muscles, the reduced effort required to be upright, and tone influencing physiotherapy techniques and handling whilst the body is fully supported by buoyancy. At the same time, pain is reduced as muscles are stretched and moved whilst in a relaxed state and because of the weightlessness of limbs with reduced stress and weight going through the joints.

Many children can stand and step when in water with the help of the physiotherapist with a better walking pattern than when they have to lift their body weight against gravity or are reliant on a supportive walker. It is easier to balance without the fear of falling when seated or standing as the pressure of the water around the body and turbulent drag with movement allow more time to respond and right the body, preventing injury.

Movement can be increased, muscles strengthened and head and trunk control challenged by using the properties of water alongside physiotherapy techniques in this unencumbered environment. Children have complete freedom of movement out of their equipment without the same limitations posed on their bodies by their muscle tone and reflex activity on land. In particular, it is less effortful to initiate, maintain and sustain movement, body and limb positions and postures.

Physiotherapists use the properties of water so that it is possible to move or be moved from one position to another (e.g. rolling, sitting up from lying down, standing from sitting, step ups) in the water before these transitions can be achieved on land. Some movements and positions can be experienced in water (such as on the stomach) that are not tolerated out of the water, or are not safe.

Many parents report that their child sleeps better, has less constipation, less pain and stiffness, reduced muscle tone and dystonic movements and is easier to handle, position and move after their hydrotherapy session. The hydrotherapy pool is a multi-sensory environment and, with exercise, can be used to help children to regulate, improve their gross motor skills, muscle strength, balance and body awareness and develop confidence. As it is less effortful to move in water, children with cerebral palsy can exercise for longer than on land. There are very positive heart and lung functional effects with the increased physical activity children can undertake in water, from kicking their legs to propelling or even swimming. Breath control and coordination caused by the pressure of the water against the chest wall and the increased flexibility of the spine assist voice production and swallow with specific water confidence and breathing techniques. Most importantly, children can undertake activity and exercise that has therapeutic benefit without realising how hard they are working because it is fun.

About Heather Epps

Heather and her team provide weekly treatments and/or intensive rehabilitation blocks of hydrotherapy for children and adults with cerebral palsy in their warm-water hydrotherapy pool at Lymden Hydrotherapy and Physiotherapy Centre (LHAP) in Reigate, Surrey. The clinic has specialist equipment including poolside and ceiling track hoists and shower trolleys that can be raised and lowered to assist with changing, showering and transferring into and out of the pool.

Heather also provides assessments and reports, training and advice for families, carers and professionals, and pool design and development consultation.

aquaepps.co.uk

Lymden Hydrotherapy & Physiotherapy (LHAP), based in Reigate, Surrey, boasts a purpose-built hydrotherapy pool with state of the art accessibility equipment, which opened in 2021. Regular and intensive hydrotherapy courses are available.

lhap.co.uk

Hippotherapy

Hippotherapy or horse therapy uses the natural movement of a horse to provide therapy to the rider. The repetitive and rhythmic movements of the horse encourage the rider to achieve balance and posture while providing sensory stimulation.

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Equine Activities (ACPEA) can provide details of suitably qualified therapists who can provide hippotherapy:

acpea.org

Riding for the Disabled Charity primarily provides therapeutic horse riding, but some of their centres are also able to facilitate hippotherapy with a trained therapist:

rda.org.uk

Get Ahead Physiotherapy

Get Ahead Physiotherapy is a rehabilitation and neurophysiotherapy centre for all ages, based near Cheltenham and Gloucester.

In addition to regular physiotherapy for children with cerebral palsy, they provide the necessary physio sessions following SDR surgery.

They ensure that sessions are fun and engaging, whilst also being goal-focussed.

They boast a specialist, fully-accessible clinic which opened in June 2023, and contains state-of-the-art equipment for all needs.

If your child's needs require it, they offer home, school and nursery visits within Gloucestershire and the surrounding area. They also provide sessions at local hydrotherapy pools and leisure facilities.

Their work does not stop with the child: they also work with parents and carers to ensure that physio can be integrated into the weekly routine, so that physiotherapy happens beyond scheduled sessions.

getaheadphysio.co.uk

"Over the past year I have been working with Kerry and her team. Kerry provides far more than 'what it says on the box'. Her vast knowledge and experience has shown me that she is a key part to my recovery. I can't thank Kerry and her team enough for their continued support. Thank you!"

(Testimonial from a client of Kerry Richardson, director of Get Ahead Physiotherapy)

Occupational therapy

Occupational therapists can help babies, infants, children and young people grow, learn, have fun, socialise and play – so they can develop, thrive and reach their full potential.

Occupational Therapists can be found in the social services and/or housing departments of Local Authorities and in the paediatric teams located in the NHS. There are also a number of independent OTs that can be found on the Royal College of OTs' website:
rcotss-ip.org.uk/find

Guest author, Jo Turnbull, shares her experience as an OT:

Having worked as an Occupational Therapist for thirty years I am passionate about the difference OT's can make to the lives of children and adults with cerebral palsy. An OT will work alongside other members of the therapy team to help improve a child's physical, cognitive and social skills.

'Occupation' to an OT is any activity that is meaningful to someone. OT's will help chiday-to-day cerebral palsy develop the skills they need to participate in day to day life using activities, assistive devices and/or adaptations. OT's will look at all areas of daily life from self care tasks such as eating and drinking or getting washed and dressed, to improving a child's ability to play, learn at school or socialise with friends.The types of Occupational Therapy treatment are wide ranging depending on needs but may include:

- Improving a child's fine motor skills, useful for feeding, writing or playing.
- Advice, equipment or splinting to support a child's posture when undertaking activity or to minimise discomfort and the risk of joint contractures.
- Assisting with manual handling advice and recommendations of technviques and equipment.
- Assessing for adaptations at home or school to create an accessible environment (and enabling access of statutory disabled facility grant funding).
- Sensory Integration to assist children with sensory processing issues and the provision of a sensory diet that children can use at home and school.
- Adapting tasks, teaching and training carers and school staff and providing advice and support on equipment.

About Jo Turnbull

Jo is an independent Occupational Therapist who has spent her career working with children and adults in health, social care and the private sector. Jo holds an absolute belief that Occupational Therapy makes a positive difference to both individuals and local health and social care services. Jo maintains her clinical practice alongside her consultancy work and is an associate with Bush & Company Rehabilitation and is the OT associate for West Midlands Association of Directors of Adult Social Services.

Email: jo@iotherapy.co.uk

Transforming rehabilitation through play: Neurokinex Kids

Thank you to Neurokinex Kids for telling us a bit about what they do at their Bristol centre:

Neurokinex Kids provides specialist paediatric neurorehabilitation across three UK centres, including a facility in Bristol. Our experienced multi-disciplinary team works collaboratively with children and families to deliver personalised rehabilitation programmes.

At Neurokinex Kids, we believe every child deserves to experience the joy of movement, growth and discovery, no matter the challenges they face. For children living with cerebral palsy (CP), targeted, intensive rehabilitation can make a meaningful difference to functional ability, quality of life and long-term health.

The art of Activity-Based Rehabilitation

Our Neurokinex Kids programmes are built around Activity-Based Rehabilitation (ABR) - a personalised, evidence-informed approach that emphasises high-repetition, task-specific activity and supported weight-bearing movement. Unlike traditional therapy, ABR aims to activate the entire neuromuscular system, focusing on restoring movement patterns, building strength and promoting neuroplasticity. Beginning this type of rehabilitation early can be transformative for children, supporting physical development and helping maximise function as they grow.

While research into paediatric ABR continues to evolve, studies of intensive, goal-directed therapy for children with CP suggest that frequent, task-specific practice can improve motor function. Gains we frequently see in young clients include sitting, balance and motor skill development when therapy is delivered with sufficient intensity and duration.

Unique protocol

Where appropriate, our paediatric ABR programmes incorporate additional techniques. Of particular note is Locomotor Training, a unique protocol developed by the NeuroRecovery Network following advances in understanding that the spinal cord can interpret sensory information BELOW the level of injury and generate a response. Locomotor Training is designed to awaken the dormant nerve pathways by repetitively stimulating the muscles and nerves in the lower body, helping retrain the spinal cord to 'remember' the stepping pattern.

Making it fun

Neurokinex Kids therapy is fun for children thanks to our purpose-built Neurokinex Kids space at Bristol which has been designed specifically to harness the power of playful activity during rehabilitation. Bright, safe and adaptive, it encourages children to engage wholeheartedly in their rehab, often without realising how hard they're working! Providing a fun, soft play feel for their rehab sessions builds a positive relationship with therapy. Meanwhile, it creates a safe space for kids to explore their function and independence through movement after injury.

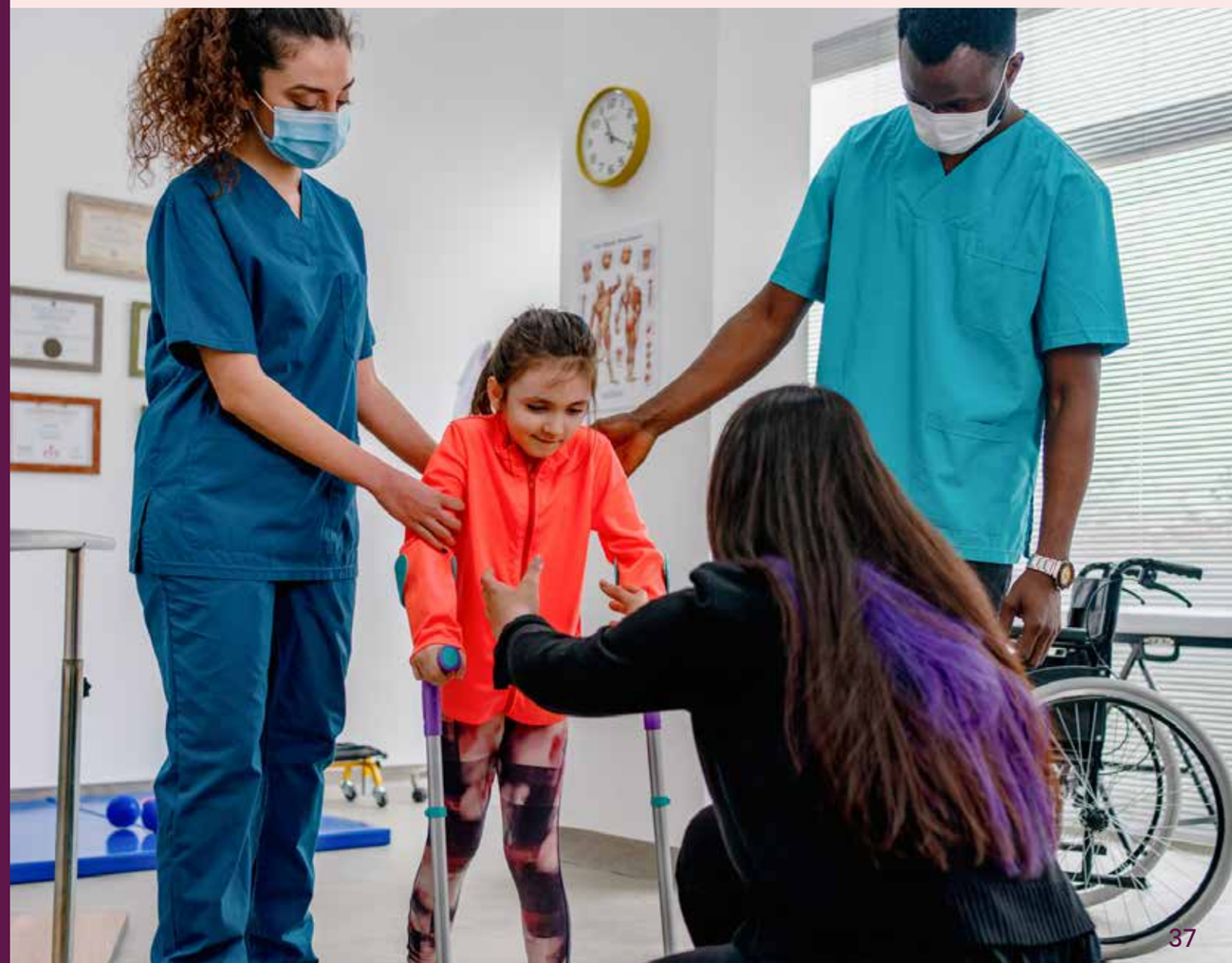
Our specialist teams combine this playful environment with cutting-edge protocols including stimulation and support systems, adapting activities to meet each child's goals. Using toys, games and soft-play equipment, we create sessions that feel like play, not work because children often learn best when they're having fun.

Tailored to each child

Every programme is tailored to suit each child, with potential benefits including improved motor control, better balance and strength, enhanced cardiovascular health and increased independence. Above all, ongoing rehabilitation through ABR supports continuous development as the child grows and develops, reducing the risk of secondary complications.

We ensure children train out of their wheelchairs in supported standing and stepping positions. Using body weight support, our specially trained therapists guide the child's legs at a real-world walking speed. At the same time, sensory information from the legs and trunk is continually fed back to the nervous system through stepping motion, therapist guidance and contact between the feet and the walking surface. This repeated sensory input helps the nervous system relearn the motor patterns associated with walking.

Neurokinex Kids empowers families with a structured, creative and child-centred approach rooted in the latest neurological rehabilitation principles. In this way, we help children with CP not just reach their goals but redefine them.



TREATMENT, THERAPIES AND CARE

Speech and language therapy

A child with cerebral palsy may benefit from speech and language therapy if their condition affects the muscles in their neck, face, or mouth, or if they struggle to understand and interpret speech and language. Assessments usually take place as soon as a language or speech delay is suspected. A trained speech and language therapist can help a child with cerebral palsy to overcome the following problems:

- Coordinating and controlling speech muscles
- Difficulty swallowing (dysphagia)
- Drooling
- Reduced ability or an inability to form sounds and words
- Difficulty with speech and comprehension
- The effects of a hearing impairment

The treatment your child will receive will depend on their specific needs as they grow and develop.

Marie Couch is a speech and language therapist who works with older children and young adults with communication difficulties.

theautismservice.co.uk/clinicians/marie-couch

Michelle Whitton specialises in communication problems associated with cerebral palsy and acquired brain injury.

bushco.co.uk/michelle.whitton

Ruth Merritt is an independent speech and language therapist specialising in the field of deafness.

therapyinspiration.com

TREATMENT, THERAPIES AND CARE

Clinical neuropsychology

Neuropsychology is about understanding the links between brain function, cognitive abilities, emotions and behaviour.

The SCRN register lists clinical neuropsychologists recognised by the UK's professional body of psychologists:

bps.org.uk/specialist-register-clinical-neuropsychologists

Guest author, Professor Ingram Wright, Clinical Neuropsychologist, shares his experience of how neuropsychology input can benefit children with cerebral palsy:

For many children with cerebral palsy there is a risk that we might make assumptions about a young person's level of ability. This sometimes means that we pitch things at too high a level or, alternatively that we underestimate their abilities. Alongside the difficulties with movement that characterise cerebral palsy there can be additional problems with learning and memory, attentional difficulties, visual information or language processing problems.

Sometimes cerebral palsy can be accompanied by difficulties that are so severe they might be considered as an additional diagnosis such as ADHD or Autism.

Clinical Neuropsychologists are skilled in undertaking assessments which children who have cerebral palsy. They will also be interested in the perspectives of parents, teachers and the young person themselves. An experienced neuropsychologist can provide advice about the best way to support a child's learning and developmental needs, help them to manage difficult feelings and give parents and teacher advice about positive approaches to managing behaviour that can be challenging. Neuropsychologists will often undertake a formal assessment of your child. Typically children enjoy the assessments which involve a variety of puzzles or mental challenges that work around the motor difficulties.

About Ingram Wright

Professor Ingram Wright is a Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologists specialising in neonatal and childhood brain injury. He has worked in the NHS for over 25 years and in medico-legal practice for 20 years. Ingram spends the majority of his time in an NHS role as lead for Psychological Health Services at a large NHS Trust in Bristol. Ingram is also Chair of the British Psychological Society's Division of Neuropsychology with responsibility for promoting the specialist skills of neuropsychologists and ensuring that the public are informed in seeking the best quality neuropsychological advice and support.

TREATMENT, THERAPIES AND CARE

Conductive education

Conductive education teaches people with motor disorders how to move and do everyday tasks independently, whilst also supporting the development of cognitive and social skills. It was originally developed for children with Cerebral Palsy; but it has since expanded to support adults with Cerebral Palsy as well as individuals with other motor disorders.

Sessions focussed on movement often involve breaking down everyday actions into smaller steps. Such actions include sitting up, transferring weight, balancing, and maintaining good posture. The teachers (known as "conductive educators") may provide directions as to how to carry out movements by focussing on different body parts in isolation. The conductive educators may also use drums during sessions, to guide movement through rhythmic counting.

Conductive educators take a holistic view of each person, meaning they look beyond just physical movement. They consider how physical abilities are connected to and impacted by emotional wellbeing, social interaction and psychology. They aim to develop motivation and self-esteem, and everyday problem-solving skills.

Some conductive educators offer animal-assisted sessions. Calm interactions with animals, such as chickens or rabbits, can help support movement, social development and problem-solving skills in a natural and engaging way.

Sessions can be one-to-one, or groups of children might be taught by groups of conductive educators. Parents are often invited to join sessions, so that they can learn how to support their child's movements and goals in the same ways at home.

Sessions for children with Cerebral Palsy are usually carried out in addition to regular mainstream or special schooling; they are often run on a weekly or fortnightly basis at Conductive Education centres or at schools.

Centres across the UK

National Institute of Conductive Education, Birmingham (leading charity and training hub)
nicecharity.org.uk

The Pace Centre, Aylesbury
thepacecentre.org

Steps Conductive Education Centre, Loughborough
stepscentre.org

Footprints Conductive Education Centre, Nottingham
footprintscec.org

CPotential, London
cpotential.org.uk

Paces School for Conductive Education, Sheffield
pacesschool.org.uk

Marbles Movement and Learning, Maidenhead
pca-ce.org/directory/marbles-movement-and-learning-ltd

Rainbow Centre, Fareham
rainbowcentre.org

Conductive Education, Bristol
cebristol.com

Case management and finding support

There is a lot to juggle when looking after a child with cerebral palsy and a case manager can be appointed to support individuals with their complex needs. They may help to provide access to statutory services; employ carers and therapists; and find suitable equipment.

Community Case Management Services Limited (CCMS)
ccmservices.co.uk

Bush & Co
bushco.co.uk

COOCI Rehabilitation Case Management Services
coociassociates.co.uk

Westcountry Case Management

Westcountry Case Management provide a specialist case management service to support people in reaching their goals, for adults and children with brain, complex physical and psychological injury.

westcountrycasemanagement.com

ILS Case Management
indliv.co.uk

Breakthrough Case Management

Breakthrough Case Management supports individuals with brain, spinal and profoundly traumatic injuries – to realise their full potential and improve their quality of life.

breakthroughcasemanagement.com

Brownbill Associates Ltd
brownbill.com

North Star Case Management
northstarcm.co.uk

Stanley Smith Case Management
sscasemanagement.co.uk

Stokes Case Management
stokescasemanagement.co.uk

Corpore Case Management
corpore.co.uk

Rehab Without Walls
rehabwithoutwalls.co.uk

Snap Care

Snap Care can help you recruit high calibre carers, personal assistants and buddies to support your child's needs.

snapcare.co.uk

Surgery and medical treatment

Orthopaedic surgery

Children with cerebral palsy are often at risk of developing problems with their muscles and bones.

These may require monitoring by an orthopaedic doctor throughout a child's life, particularly until they are fully grown. The orthopaedic surgeons with whom we work often recommend review every six months.

Orthopaedic surgery is used to correct conditions that affect the musculoskeletal system (bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles and nerves) and may be available to relieve the symptoms of cerebral palsy in some cases. Because of the risks associated with surgery and because its benefits may only be temporary, courses of physiotherapy and medication are usually recommended first.

Surgery may be able to realign fixed joints and tendons; prevent contractures (permanently tightened muscles); correct hip dislocation and treat scoliosis (spinal curvature).

If you have concerns about your child's musculoskeletal system, speak to your child's paediatrician or orthopaedic team.

Selective dorsal rhizotomy

Selective dorsal rhizotomy (SDR) surgery is a surgical procedure that could help children who have spastic cerebral palsy. Specifically, it can help children with spasticity in their lower limbs that makes walking and sitting difficult. SDR involves cutting carefully selected sensory nerves inside the spine of the lower back to ease muscle stiffness. The surgery is performed under general anaesthetic.

Following surgery, regular physiotherapy is necessary to obtain the best results from SDR. Like all surgery, SDR carries specific risks and your child's treatment team will be best placed to advise whether SDR is right for your child.

Botox therapy

Botox therapy involves the injection of botulinum toxin and can be beneficial for relaxing certain muscles. When injected into the saliva glands, it can help with drooling. The injections only work for a few months at a time. Your child's doctors and therapists will advise you if botox therapy is suitable for your child.

WELCOME TO BRISTOL

Support in Bristol

Cerebral Palsy Plus is a charity in Bristol, working with children and adults, their families and their carers, creating opportunities for connection, fun and personal development

cerebralpalsyplus.org.uk

Bristol Parent Carers is made up of volunteer parents of children with additional needs. Their website is packed full of Bristol based events and information on accessing support in Bristol. Bristol Parent Carers run 'pop in' coffee mornings at different locations across the city.

bristolparentcarers.org.uk

Special Friends Club is a charity operating throughout Bristol and South Gloucestershire providing weekend and holiday activities for children with additional needs including cerebral palsy. Recent events have included trips to Westonbirt Arboretum, Cattle Country and Avon Valley Country Park. Families find that attending outings where there are a group of families facing similar challenges can be hugely supportive.

specialfriendsclub.org.uk

Khaas was set up to meet the needs of Black and minority ethnic children with disabilities and their families. Khaas provide respite care and holiday play schemes, bring families together for peer support and have a wealth of knowledge on accessing local support. Khaas staff are often multilingual speaking Urdu, Punjabi, Bangla, Somali and English.

khaas.co.uk

WELCOME TO BRISTOL

Staying active in Bristol

Gympanzees

Gympanzees is a Bristol-based charity supporting disabled children and young people aged 0 to 25, and their families. The charity provides accessible opportunities for exercise, play and friendship through specialist equipment, sensory spaces and inclusive activities.

Since 2018, Gympanzees has run Pop Ups, giving families the chance to access specialist gym, sensory rooms and adapted play equipment in a welcoming and fully inclusive environment.

Gympanzees is now building the UK's first fully inclusive exercise and leisure centre for disabled children, young people and their families, opening in Spring 2027 near Bristol.

The centre will feature a gym, a trampoline room, a swing room, a music room, several sensory rooms, a soft play centre, a music room, an outdoor playground, a café, and other hangout spaces. The building will be fully-accessible, with hoists and changing facilities. Even their climbing wall will be adapted to accommodate complex mobility needs. The staff will be specially trained to look after every gympanzee.

Gympanzees also runs a "lending library" through which families can borrow specialist play and exercise equipment to use at home. This currently operates online, although there will be an in-person lending library at the centre.

gympanzees.org

lendinglibrary.gympanzees.org

It's not ready yet! Gympanzees kindly gave us a tour of the construction site:

Bristol Cycling Centre

Bristol Cycling Centre is a cycle skills training facility situated on the Old Whitchurch Athletics Track in Bamfield, Bristol. The centre runs inclusive cycling sessions for riders of all ages with specialist inclusive cycles, balance bikes and two-wheelers.

betterbybike.info/cycling-centres/bristol-cyclingcentre

Frenchay Falcons Cricket

Frenchay Falcons Cricket is a club that welcomes those with additional needs aged 12 to 25. They meet weekly during the cricket season at Frenchay Cricket Club.

bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/activities/send-service-finder/send-service?id=55

jeanette.tate@gloucestershirecricketfoundation.org

All Aboard Water Sports

All Aboard Water Sports sailing opportunities for people with a wide range of abilities up to Paralympic Standard. They offer sailing, kayaking and canoeing in Bristol harbour.

allaboardwatersports.co.uk

Absolutely Karting

In the Autumn of 2023, Absolutely Karting in Speedwell purchased two twin-seat karts, and launched the Together Karting programme. The exciting programme offers free karting sessions every Sunday morning for children and young adults with additional needs.

absolutely-karting.co.uk

WELCOME TO BRISTOL

Bristol City Cerebral Palsy Football Club

We at RWK Goodman are proud to support Bristol City Cerebral Palsy Football Club.

BCCPFC is a place for children with cerebral palsy to be celebrated! It is not just a football club, it is a welcoming community of friends. The club is open to players of all abilities: some of the players had never had the opportunity to play football before joining.

There are two boys' teams and one girls' team. The girls' team currently has 7 regular players aged between 6 and 13, but they are keen to recruit more!

Players have exciting opportunities to travel with the club! They have attended football tournaments in a number of amazing places, such as Copenhagen and Manchester.

They now host the Bristol Cerebral Palsy International Football Festival every summer, which is attended by teams from Ireland, Norway and Denmark, as well as players from all across England.

BCCPFC is an associate team of Bristol City Football Club through the Robins Foundation. This means that Bristol City FC supplies the team with the official kit every season, supports them with coaching and advice, and provides other fun opportunities. Recently, the Bristol City CP girls' team were invited to be mascots for the women's team at Ashton Gate.

By donning the red jersey, the team represents Bristol City FC in training and matches across the country!

BCCPFC offer two free trial sessions so you can find out whether you would like to join. After the trial, there is a membership fee of £13 per month to cover the costs of pitch hire.

Chloe – former centre-forward for the girls' team:

"As soon as I came for my first training session, I felt incredibly welcome… I knew that this was honestly the place for me"

"Since joining the club, I've managed to have many one-on-one sessions with specialised coaches, and travelled to Manchester and similar places nationally – these aspects have helped me improve as a player"

"I wish to hopefully represent my country one day, but I also want to be an integral part of not only my dream but other young girls' dreams and help to inspire them"

Since we interviewed Chloe, she has now left BCCPFC and has joined the Women's England Cerebral Palsy team! Congratulations to Chloe!

Casey – coach and player for the senior team:

"The club has provided me and my family with loads of opportunities to travel, have fun, meet new people and build a community"

"We can show people with Cerebral Palsy others similar to them gaining success while enjoying their football, providing them with hope that they can do the same thing"

Matt – coach and parent of one of the players:

"I've taken a lot from football, so for me, it's an opportunity to give back, and what better way than to give back to these kids with cerebral palsy"

"My daughter loves football too, and for her, it's an opportunity to play with peers on a level playing field: people with the same condition. She can come every week, she's got a great social life here, made lots and lots of friends"

Natasha – parent of one of the players:

"We didn't know anybody with cerebral palsy in the UK before we found the club; so having a club where we can meet other parents, and Zak can meet other people, has honestly been life-changing"

"I don't feel I can ever put into words the difference it's made to our lives; it feels like we have found our people"

To have this form of therapy, that he looks forward to, that's the thing I think makes such a difference to him and his quality of life."

Out and about in Bristol

Aerospace

Aerospace in Patchway, Bristol provides supersonic family fun with interactive exhibits, an outdoor play area and trails for budding engineers and pilots to enjoy. The site is fully accessible to wheelchair users and there are fifteen disabled parking bays near the entrance to the museum. There is a Changing Places toilet on site too.

aerospacebristol.org

Bristol Zoo Project

Bristol Zoo Project is the perfect place to meet all your favourite animals. There are six Blue Badge parking bays in their carpark with step free access throughout albeit some routes are steep and a bit uneven. Accessible toilet facilities are available in the Fun Fort and at the exit to Bear Wood but there are no full changing facilities.

bristolzoo.org.uk

Brunel's SS Great Britain

Brunel's SS Great Britain, on Bristol Harbourside welcomes visitors aboard this famous ship in the Great Western Dockyard where it was built. For visitors with limited mobility, the Dry Dock, Dockyard Museum, Brunel Institute and the ship are fully accessible for wheel chair users and both levels of Being Brunel have wheelchair and step-free access following an alternative route. Although the venue doesn't have its own car park there is on street blue badge parking available. Accessible toilets are available but there are no changing facilities.

ssgreatbritain.org

M Shed

M Shed on Princes Wharf is a museum on Bristol and its colourful history. For those with limited mobility there is accessible car parking near by and the level access to all galleries and lifts in between. There are accessible toilets on all floors (some with right hand and some with left hand transfer) and the toilet on the ground floor also has an adult changing bench and free standing hoist.

bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed

Royal West of England Academy

Royal West of England Academy in Clifton is an art gallery in a beautiful and historic building. The academy has level access through the main entrance, café and shop and lift access to the main galleries on the first floor and the Long Gallery. There is a Changing Places Toilet available.

rwa.org.uk

Windmill Hill City Farm

Windmill Hill City Farm in South Bristol is a 4.5 acre community farm complete with gardens, play area, café and farm shop. All public areas of the farm are on a single level albeit some of the paths can be a bit muddy when wet. There are accessible toilets on the farm. The farm also offers supported animal care and gardening placements for adults with additional needs who are keen to learn new skills and increase their independence.

windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk

Felix Road Adventure Playground

Felix Road Adventure Playground in East Bristol BS5 0JW provides the perfect space for outside physical play. They hold a monthly 'stay and play' session for children with additional needs and their families on the second Saturday of the month.

eastsidecommunitytrust.org.uk

Incredible Kids

Incredible Kids provide inclusive play sessions at The Vench Adventure Playground, BS7 9TB. Play sessions take place after school on Fridays and there are family sessions on Saturdays. Whether your child likes to swing, climb, slide, trampoline, make slime or chill in their sensory room they have something for everyone.

incrediblekids.org.uk

St Pauls Adventure Playground

St Pauls Adventure Playground BS2 9LN is a community play space in Bristol. The playground holds sessions specifically for children with additional needs on Wednesdays from 3.15pm to 6.15pm and on Saturdays from 10am to midday. Opening times differ during the school holidays.

stpaulsventures.org.uk

Changing Places toilets in Bristol

Changing Places toilets are designed with a centrally placed peninsular toilet, enough space to turn a wheelchair and accommodate two carers, a height adjustable washbasin, a height adjustable changing table and ceiling track hoist.

changing-places.org

There are thousands of Changing Places Toilets across Britain but here are some you will find in Bristol:

- Aerospace, BS34 5BZ. Open Monday – Sunday 10am to 5pm
- Cabot Circus, BS1 3BX. Open Monday – Saturday 10am to 8pm and Sunday 11am to 5pm
- IKEA, Eastgate Shopping Centre, BS5 6XX. Open Monday – Saturday 9.30am to 9pm and Sunday 10am to 5pm
- Lloyds Bank, Harbourside BS1 5LF. Open Monday – Friday 6am to 10.30pm and Saturday 6am to 6pm
- Royal West of England Academy, BS8 1PX. Open daily 10am to 5pm

WELCOME TO BRISTOL

Flamingo Chicks

Magical worlds of sensory wonder!

When Katie Sparkes couldn't find inclusive dance and performance opportunities for her daughter Poppy, who has cerebral palsy, she decided to create them herself. What began as a mum's determination to ensure her daughter could experience the joy, confidence and friendship that comes from being part of something special has since grown into Flamingo Chicks, a national charity that has reached more than 60,000 children across the UK.

Dance sits at the heart of Flamingo Chicks. But it's also a powerful tool for bringing people together.

Flamingo Chicks uses creativity, movement and imagination to build connections, boost confidence and create opportunities for children and families to feel part of a community where they belong.

What really sets Flamingo Chicks apart is that it is known for creating magical worlds of sensory wonder. Children might find themselves exploring the depths of the ocean, venturing through rainforests or discovering cultures from around the globe. Through music, storytelling, sensory experiences and movement, they are immersed in adventures designed to spark curiosity and imagination.

Beneath the magic sits a unique active learning layer. Flamingo Chicks harnesses the power of dance and movement to help children better understand, engage with and retain information. Developed alongside organisations including UNICEF, National Geographic, the United Nations' Global Goals and the Eden Project, its experiences blend creativity, education and inclusion in a way that broadens horizons while building confidence.

Over the years, that simple idea has grown into something much bigger. Alongside its inclusive dance programmes, Flamingo Chicks now supports families through peer networks, intergenerational volunteering, global outreach and youth-led advocacy, all working together to create meaningful social change.

One of its proudest achievements is the Agents of Change, a remarkable group of young disabled people and allies who are helping shape a more inclusive world. As well as sharing their experiences with decision-makers in Downing Street and representing disabled young people at the United Nations headquarters in New York, they deliver inclusion training and accessibility audits for organisations looking to do better. Their insight and expertise have supported some of the world's most recognisable brands, including British Airways and Disney, helping ensure disabled voices are heard where it matters most.

Today, Flamingo Chicks is recognised as a leader in inclusion, but its mission remains rooted in the same belief that inspired Katie and Poppy all those years ago: that every child deserves the chance to be seen, celebrated and included. Thirteen years on, that belief continues to open doors, challenge perceptions and create a world where disabled children don't just take part - they lead the way.

flamingochicks.org

AROUND THE UK

Staying active

Cerebral palsy affects different people in different ways, but regardless of a person's abilities, everyone deserves to reach their full potential. Happily, there are several UK charities dedicated to making this happen.

CP Sport is a charity at the forefront of supporting children and young people with cerebral palsy to stay active. Their vision is "to support people with cerebral palsy to reach their life potential through sport and active recreation".

Whether your child is interested in netball, table tennis or an adaptive sport like boccia or wheelchair rugby, you can probably find it on CP Sport's website. For each sport, there are useful links so that you can find somewhere near you to play, and even tips and tricks to make the sport more accessible.

CP Sport also hosts events online and in-person, so that you and your child can make friends.

cpsport.org

Whizz-Kidz provides children and young people with vital mobility equipment, opportunities to meet and have fun, and training to help them gain skills. Many of the young people Whizz-Kidz works with and supports have cerebral palsy.

whizz-kidz.org.uk

Riding for the Disabled Association delivers therapy, achievement and fun to children and adults with disabilities through riding, carriage driving and other horse activities.

rda.org.uk

WheelPower has been supporting people with physical disabilities across the United Kingdom to lead healthier and more active lives for over 75 years. The charity delivers opportunities, both in person and online, that support disabled people of all ages to discover the many benefits that come from increased participation in activity and sport.

wheelpower.org.uk

The **English Federation of Disability Sport** (EFDS) is the national sports body for people with disabilities in England. The principle aim of EFDS is to increase participation in sport and physical activity. Their website has lots of advice on how to access sports and activities.

activityalliance.org.uk/get-active

Disability Sports Coach have a number of Community Clubs across London providing weekly sports activities for people of all abilities. The Clubs offer a whole range of activities from Basketball to Boccia and are a great place to make friends and stay active. Siblings and carers are also able to take part!

disabilitysportscoach.co.uk

Supportability, based in Stockport, provides care and support for children and adults with cerebral palsy and other learning and/or physical disabilities, helping people to access the activities they enjoy and live life to the full. They also offer adapted cycling sessions so everyone can join in and get some exercise!

supportability.org.uk

Diverse Abilities is based in Dorset with the goal of ensuring children and adults of all abilities have an enjoyable life. They provide activities, holiday clubs, respite care, a specialist school and parent support.

diverseabilities.org.uk/children

Derby County Community Trust CP offers football training for people with cerebral palsy and compete in the National CP Football League.

derbycountycommunitytrust.com/fundraisingand-events/events/derby-county-cp-training-5

Every Body Moves is a campaign to connect people with disabilities with opportunities to be active. Their website has a brilliant search function to help you connect with inclusive sporting opportunities in your area and also has home workouts available online too.

everybodymoves.org.uk

Flitwick Eagles Football Club in Bedfordshire offers frame football free of charge on Sunday mornings in the season. The club meets at Redborne Upper School and Community College.

flitwickeagles.org

Frame Football Suffolk meet at Copleston High School and is designed for all ages.

inclusive.football/places/coplestonians-fc-framefootball

Goals Beyond Grass is a Gloucestershire charity that delivers inclusive sports and activities throughout the county.

goalsbeyondgrass.co.uk

Greenbank Power Hockey Club meets on Greenbank Lane in Liverpool. The game is played in specialist electric wheelchairs and offers a fast-paced contact sport to children with disabilities. You do not have to be a wheelchair user to play.

greenbanksportsacademy.co.uk/inclusive-sport/power-hockey

Leeds Powerchair Football Club meets at Bishop Young Academy in Leeds. The club has over 40 players who compete at all levels.

leedspowerchairfc.co.uk

WBB Frame Football Team in Newton Abbot train regularly and compete against other teams from different regions. The club meets on Strap Lane, Kingsteignton.

wbbfc.co.uk/teams/wbb-frame-football-team

AROUND THE UK

Out and about around the UK

Max Card

Make sure to apply for your Max Card, which provides discounted admission for families of children with additional needs to many venues across the UK.

mymaxcard.co.uk

The Alan Shearer Centre in Newcastle describes itself as a "highly specialist, respite, residential and social" facility for people with complex disabilities and acute sensory impairments. The centre offers a wide range of therapeutic and sensory activities.

alanshearercentre.org.uk

Swings & Smiles in Thatcham provides a fantastic place to play for children with special needs and their siblings. The centre provides soft play; a sensory room; and an art room where children can paint and draw. They are also providing one-to-one and group video calls if you would like to chat to someone.

swingsandsmiles.co.uk

Gulliver's World in Warrington has over 80 rides, attractions and shows. It has an impressive accessibility guide with information on dining areas; toilet facilities and whether the rides require upper or lower body control. For guests who struggle with queuing, ride passes are available.

gulliversworldresort.co.uk/special-needs-guide

The Creative Space Centre in Preston boasts a huge multi-sensory environment with the latest lighting, sound and projection equipment which are controlled by iPads to give maximum flexibility for anyone with any special needs of any age. The centre has excellent changing facilities including a hoist.

creativespacecentre.org

Withy Grove Park in Preston has an enormous playground designed to cater for all ages across three different zones. There is a large sand area which has lots of slides, climbing and sand buckets. There are bridges to climb, tunnel slides and towers. Access to the park is free and the park has been praised for being accessible to all. The wheelchair friendly roundabouts are a particular favourite.

freeparks.co.uk/park/withy-grove-park

Chessington World of Adventures includes a theme park, sea life centre and zoo. Ride access passes are available for guests who struggle with queuing. Chessington has changing facilities that include an adjustable changing bench, shower, toilet and hoist.

chessington.com

Colchester Zoo has over 260 species to see, set in 60 acres of beautiful parkland and lakes. The zoo has a planned pushchair and wheelchair friendly route avoiding the steepest of hills. The changing facility includes an adjustable bench and ceiling hoist, although a sling is not provided.

colchester-zoo.com

Paultons Park in Hampshire has family rides, splash parks and a collection of birds and animals. The Park provides queue assist passes and essential companion tickets for guests with additional needs.

paultonspark.co.uk

Yorkshire Wildlife Park offers manual wheelchairs to pre-book, mobility scooter hire, wheelchair-accessible pathways, wheelchair-friendly viewing platforms, and a Changing Places toilet.

yorkshirewildlifepark.com

Milestones Living History Museum in Hampshire takes you from the Victorian era to the 1950s and beyond. Although wheelchair users may struggle with some of the cobbled streets, areas are equipped with drop kerbs. Wheelchair hire is also available together with a Changing Places toilet.

milestonesmuseum.org.uk

Bird World in Surrey has penguins, parrots and owls, and also offers wheelchairs, free entry for carers, and wheelchair-accessible paths and restaurant.

birdworld.co.uk

Monkey World in Dorset has wheelchair swings and birds nest swings that are often popular with children with limited mobility. There are accessible toilets available and the first aid hut can be used for adult changing albeit there is no hoist available.

monkeyworld.org

Changing Places toilets

Many children with cerebral palsy cannot use a standard accessible toilet, which can make life tricky when away from home. Changing Places toilets are properly equipped to meet the requirements of those who need them. Each toilet has a height adjustable changing bench and hoist and enough space to accommodate both the individual and up to two carers.

There are over 3,000 changing places toilets in the UK, from IKEA to Galloway Forest Park. To find a toilet near your destination, visit:

changingplaces.uktoiletmap.org

Wellington Country Park in Reading is fantastic for children, complete with a farm, lots of outdoor space, dinosaur park, soft play for babies and a sensory room for guests who need a quiet break. All buildings and most of the park are wheelchair accessible and the train has a wheelchair carriage.

wellingtoncountrypark.co.uk

Finkley Down Farm in Hampshire Finkley Down Farm is home to an array of animals, has a huge indoor play barn and an outdoor sensory music garden. The Farm provides complimentary tickets for personal assistants and a Changing Places toilet has recently been installed.

finkleydownfarm.co.uk

Sandcastle Waterpark in Blackpool describes itself as the UK's largest indoor waterpark with rides for thrill seekers and families alike. For guests with mobility impairments they have level access throughout the park, a Changing Places 'wet room' facility and water accessible wheelchairs.

sandcastle-waterpark.co.uk

The Maritime Museum in Merseyside is at the heart of Liverpool's historic waterfront in the Royal Albert Dock Liverpool with objects and archives connected to ships, boats, life at sea, the port of Liverpool and its connection to the world. Wheelchairs are available to borrow at the entrance to the museum, there are two lifts to all floors and there is a Changing Places toilet available on the second floor.

liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime-museum

Legoland Windsor Resort has something for the whole family: whether you are behind the wheel of a LEGO car at the LEGO City Driving School, riding a Dragon through a medieval castle or discovering a lost underwater city in your very own submarine. They have carer tickets available, ride access parks for those with additional needs and have recently installed a Changing Places toilet.

legoland.co.uk

Alton Towers has 40 rides and attractions from adrenaline filled roller coasters to family fun. They have a full and helpful accessibility guide showing which venues and attractions have accessible toilets, level access and ramped doors. They also have a Changing Places toilet and a smaller 'Space to Change' facility.

altontowers.com

AROUND THE UK

Support in London

London can be a daunting place to access support. Below are details of London-based charities who assist children with additional needs:

KEEN London provides free one-to-one support at free sports and activity sessions for children with additional needs. Their weekly sessions give athletes the chance to play games, make friends and, most importantly, have fun!

keenlondon.org

C Potential provides rehabilitation and support that is tailored to children with movement disorders.

cpotential.org.uk

Access Sport is a community led charity that seeks to make sport more inclusive for those with disabilities.

accesssport.org.uk

Small Steps delivers group sessions for children from newborn to five years with cerebral palsy and other forms of mobility issues in London and support for parents.

smallsteps.org.uk

The Ravensbourne Project, based in Lewisham/ Catford, was set up to provide day care and overnight services for children and young people with special needs.

ravensbourneproject.org.uk

KIDS Charity London provides lots of advice and support to children with special educational needs or disabilities together with drop-in nurseries for under-5s and short breaks and residential stays for young adults along with support for families and home care.

kids.org.uk

HOLIDAYS

Travelling with Cerebral Palsy: Things I'd Love Parents to Know

By guest author Chloe Tear, disability writer, speaker and advocate

I was diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy when I was seven years old. I wear AFO splints on both legs and manage fatigue, pain, and muscle spasms. I'm now 27, and looking back on family holidays from my childhood, I can see the things that made them special. With the knowledge I have now, I also know what would have made them even easier.

Planning a holiday when your child has CP can feel daunting. There's the accessibility research, the logistics, and the uncertainty of not knowing how your child will feel on any given day. I can't promise it will ever be entirely simple. But I can tell you, from lived experience, that travel is absolutely possible. Some of my warmest memories involve being somewhere new with the people I love.

Here are a few things I'd love parents to know.

Fatigue is invisible, so plan around it anyway

One of the most important things to understand about cerebral palsy is how much energy it takes just to move through the world. When muscles don't work the way they should, the body works significantly harder to do things that appear simple to others. For a child with CP, a busy day of sightseeing can be exhausting in a way that isn't always easy to spot from the outside.

My advice is to build rest into the holiday from the start, not as a fallback if things go wrong, but as a proper part of the plan. A slow morning, a quiet afternoon, or a rest day between busy excursions aren't wasted holiday time. They're what make the rest of it enjoyable for everyone.

Consider a mobility aid for busy days, even if your child doesn't use one at home

Using a wheelchair on holiday isn't giving up. It's smart planning. It means arriving somewhere with enough energy left to actually enjoy it. For children with cerebral palsy, a wheelchair or pushchair on high-activity days can make the difference between a great day and a really diffcult one. Many major attractions and airports offer wheelchair loan schemes, so it's worth calling ahead to check.

Additionally, what about a walker or rollator? I recently tried one for the first time on holiday, and it made a huge difference. It might not be the mobility aid I need every day, but it made a week of sightseeing much easier and more enjoyable.

Cruising can be a brilliant option for families

For families travelling with a disabled child, cruising has some real practical advantages. You unpack once. Your accessible cabin becomes a consistent, familiar base throughout the holiday.

Each day you arrive somewhere new without the disruption of airport transfers or unfamiliar hotels. For children who find change diffcult or tiring, that consistency can make a real difference.

Last year, I sailed on an ocean cruise in the Mediterranean and had the time of my life. The staff were disability aware, the accessible cabin was well equipped, and small adjustments like

reserved seats at the front of excursion coaches and priority boarding made a real difference day to day.

If you're considering a cruise, book excursions well in advance to secure the accessible options you need. And don't feel like you have to fill every single day. A slower, self-guided day in port can be just as memorable as a packed excursion, and much kinder on everyone's energy levels.

Ask the right questions before you book

Accessibility information on travel websites has improved a lot, but it still isn't always enough. Don't rely on a tick box that says "accessible room available." Ring ahead and ask specific questions. How far is the accessible room from the lift? Is there step-free access to the pool? What is the terrain like on excursions? Are there quieter dining times? Can children board coaches or enter attractions before other visitors?

The questions that feel like a nuisance to ask are usually the ones that prevent problems on the day. To be safe, ask them anyway.

Tell providers about your child's needs upfront

Whatever you're booking, let providers know about your child's access needs in advance. Don't wait until you arrive. Early notice gives them time to make proper arrangements. If your child uses specific equipment, check whether it needs to be declared beforehand.

It can also help to have a short written summary of your child's key access needs. Handing this over at check-in desks, on coaches, or at busy attractions can speed things up and take some of the pressure off in the moment. I tend to take my Blue Badge because it's often a universally recognised form of evidence.

Don't forget Changing Places toilets

Some children with cerebral palsy cannot use a standard accessible toilet, which can become a real barrier when you're out and about. Changing Places toilets include a height-adjustable changing bench, a hoist, and enough space for two carers. They're available at a growing number of venues across the UK, and you can search for locations before you travel on the Changing Places website.

It's worth it

At the end of the day, planning a holiday when your child has cerebral palsy takes more thought and preparation than most. But the joy of being somewhere new together, and watching your child experience something exciting, is worth every phone call and every question asked in advance.

Your child deserves adventures. So do you.

About Chloe Tear

Chloe Tear is an award-winning disability writer, speaker, and advocate with 13 years of experience. She shares honest content about living with cerebral palsy and visual impairment. Her work focuses on disability awareness, independent living, education, employment, and daily life as a disabled young woman.

She also writes personal stories, travel reviews, and advocacy pieces. Chloe aims to challenge stereotypes and make conversations about disability more open and relatable.

chloetear.co.uk

Parties

Guest author Karen Ruisi from Cerebral Palsy Plus has kindly prepared the below article on planning a party for a child with cerebral palsy.

Party planning for a child with cerebral palsy

By Karen Ruisi (Charity Director (Job Share) Cerebral Palsy Plus)

Every child deserves the opportunity to celebrate special occasions with family and friends, and with some advance planning we can all help to ensure that children with cerebral palsy can participate fully.

Cerebral palsy affects everyone differently, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organising an event. However, there are a few things to consider to ensure a party or celebration is inclusive for everyone no matter their individual needs.

One of the most important steps in planning any celebration is understanding what the child enjoys. Every child is unique, and what works well for one child may not suit another. Here at Cerebral Palsy Plus, we support a wide range of children with varying interests, from accessible sailing to seasonal parties, swimming and cookery classes. There is something on offer to suit everyone.

Over the years we have been delivering our events and activities, we have learned a lot from the feedback we've received from parents, carers and the children themselves.

Some key themes include:

Choosing an Accessible Venue

The venue plays a crucial role in the success of any event. Accessibility should be considered from the earliest planning stages rather than treated as an afterthought.

When assessing a venue, consider:

- Step-free access to entrances and activity areas
- Accessible toilets and changing facilities
- Adequate space for wheelchairs and walking aids
- Safe and accessible parking nearby
- Good lighting and clear signage
- Areas where children can move around comfortably

It is also a good idea to have a quiet / sensory area on offer. Parties and celebrations can be exciting, but they can also be noisy, busy environments and some children may become overwhelmed. Having a designated quiet space can provide an opportunity to take a break when needed.

A quiet or sensory area might include:

- Soft seating
- Cushions or beanbags
- Sensory toys
- Low lighting
- Calm activities such as books or puzzles

Providing a space where children can regulate their sensory needs can help them remain comfortable and enjoy the event for longer.

Planning Transport and Arrival

Getting to the event can sometimes be one of the biggest challenges for families.

Consider how guests will travel to and from the venue. Is the venue accessible by public transport? Are there suitable parking or drop-off points close to the entrance? Clear information about transport arrangements should be shared with families in advance so they can plan confidently.

Creating Fun and Inclusive Activities

The best celebrations are those where everyone can participate and have fun. Activities should be planned with the age group and abilities of attendees in mind. The aim is not necessarily to provide separate activities but to make activities accessible for every child wherever possible.

Examples might include:

- Arts and crafts
- Sensory play
- Interactive games
- Storytelling
- Hiring a children's entertainer such as a magician.
- Accessible sports and movement activities

One of the biggest attractions here at Cerebral Palsy Plus at the moment is the hire of a bubble-ologist who creates giant bubbles and interacts with the children giving them hands on experiences.

When planning activities, consider how children with different physical, sensory or communication needs can take part. Small adaptations can make a significant difference and help ensure that every child feels included.

Supporting Personal Care Needs

Practical considerations such as toileting and personal care facilities are essential when planning an inclusive event. At Cerebral Palsy Plus, we regularly hire the Mobiloo, a mobile toilet with changing table, hoist and wheelchair lift access. This helps ensure that everyone is included, no matter the complexity of their needs.

Sharing Information in Advance

Providing information before the event can make a significant difference for children and families.

A simple event guide might include:

- Arrival and departure times
- Activity schedule
- Meal times (make sure you get information on any dietary requirements)
- Venue map
- Locations of toilets and changing facilities
- First aid points
- Contact information for organisers

Knowing what to expect helps children and families feel more prepared and can reduce uncertainty and anxiety.

A structured itinerary also helps families plan their day and supports children who benefit from routine and predictability.

Creating Opportunities for Families to Connect

Celebrations are not only important for children; they can also provide valuable opportunities for families to connect with others who share similar experiences.

Parents and carers often benefit from informal conversations, peer support and the chance to exchange ideas and advice. Siblings may also enjoy meeting other children and participating in activities together. Providing comfortable spaces where families can chat, relax and build connections can add another positive dimension to the event.

A Celebration Everyone Can Enjoy

With thoughtful planning and attention to individual needs, celebrations can be welcoming, enjoyable and memorable experiences for children with Cerebral palsy and their families.

By focusing on accessibility, inclusion, communication and fun, organisers can create events where every child has the opportunity to participate, make memories and feel valued.

After all, the most successful celebrations are not defined by elaborate decorations or packed schedules, but by creating an environment where every child feels included, supported and able to enjoy being part of the occasion.

The full UK guidance can be found here:
paediatriccontinenceforum.org/resources

Toilet training and continence

Continence is not everyone's favourite subject but it can have a massive impact on quality of life and all children should receive support to achieve their maximum continence potential. The UK guidance for the provision of continence products to children recommends that all children must have a comprehensive assessment of their continence.

The guidance recommends the provision of four continence products per 24 hours. It is worth mentioning that this is only a recommendation and if your child requires more than four products in 24 hours, then the guidance recommends that your child should receive the number of products to meet their assessed need.

In addition, the guidance states that products would not normally be supplied before a child has reached their fourth birthday. Again, it is still worth applying before this age because for children for whom it is anticipated that there may be difficulties with toilet training, intervention can be started earlier.

If your child struggles with continence, speak to your child's GP or paediatric team about being referred to your local continence service as they should be able to provide you with the right continence products for your child. Some continence services can be contacted by parents directly.

Please see contact details of some of the continence services in England and Wales:

Bath: Children's Continence Service

bathnesshealthandcare.nhs.uk/services/childrens-bladder-and-bowel-service

01225 831 785

Barking & Dagenham, Havering & Redbridge

nelft.nhs.uk/services-bdhvrb-community-paediatric-continence

03003 001 618

Berkshire: Paediatric Continence Service

cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/other-services/paediatric-continence

01189 495 146

Bedfordshire: Children's Continence Service

cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/Bedfordshire/services/continence

Bowel: 01234 310 847 | Bladder: 01234 315 847

North Devon: Paediatric Bladder and Bowel Care Service

northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/services/paediatric-bladder-and-bowelcare-service

01392 208 044

Birmingham: Child & Adult Continence Service

www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/bladder-and-bowel-service

01214 663 700

Cheshire & Wirral: Paediatric Continence Service

cwp.nhs.uk/our-services/cheshire-west-chester/paediatric-continence-service

01514 888 231

Cumbria: Children's Community Nursing

ncic.nhs.uk/services/childrens-community-nursing

01228 60 8112

Lincolnshire: Children's Continence Service

careplusgroup.org/services/childrens-continence-service

01472 266 999

Liverpool: Children's Bladder & Bowel Service

merseycare.nhs.uk/our-services/liverpool/adults-bladder-and-bowel-service

01512 953 993

London, Greenwich: Paediatric Continence Service

oxleas.nhs.uk/services/service/paediatric-continenceand-enuresis-service-bexley-and-greenwich-132

02083 199 973

London, Hackney: Children's Continence Service

homerton.nhs.uk/continence-service

0207 014 7111

Manchester: Children's Continence Service

manchesterlco.org/services/childrenscommunity-services-citywide/childrens-continence-service

01617 412 030

Medway: Children's Continence Service

medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-services/child-health-service/childrens-continence-service

03001 233 444

Newcastle upon Tyne: Paediatric Continence

newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/great-northchildrens-hospital/childrens-urology-and-stoma

01912 824 890

North Somerset: Children's Community Health Partnership

Children's Continence Service

sirona-cic.org.uk/children-services/services/childrens-continence-services

Oxford: Children's Bladder & Bowel Service

oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/service_description/childrens-continenceadvisory-service

01865 904467

Plymouth: Child Development Centre Continence Service

plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk/cdc-what-to-expect

Powys: Continence Community Specialist Nursing

111.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/ViewLocalService.aspx?id=7616&s=Adult%20&%20Older%20People%20Health%20Services

01686 617 237

Southampton & West Hampshire: Paediatric Continence Service

solent.nhs.uk/our-services/services-listings/community-paediatric-continence-service-southampton-and-west-hampshire

03001 233 797

York: York Family Information Service

yor-ok.org.uk

01904 554 444

Sleep

If your child is having difficulty sleeping, and this has not improved with aids/equipment to help sleep, you may need to speak to your child's paediatrician. They may be able to provide medication to relax your child's muscles; or prescribe melatonin (a naturally occurring hormone which makes you feel tired); or refer your child to a sleep specialist who could help your child develop good habits for sleep.

Cerebra

The charity Cerebra offers a sleep advice service for children with brain injuries.

01267 244210

sleep@cerebra.org.uk

SCOPE – Sleep Right

SCOPE runs Sleep Right in East London, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. Sleep Right provides practical sleep support for families with children with cerebral palsy and other disabilities, helping to put tools and techniques in place to help your child feel calm and relaxed at bedtime, fall asleep quicker, wake up less during the night, and most importantly, get the sleep they need.

scope.org.uk/family-services/sleep-right

PURSUING A MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE CLAIM

Birth injury

Sometimes, a child's brain injury may be a result of receiving substandard medical care. This might include a delay in delivering a baby resulting in a shortage of oxygen to the brain; failing to recognise and treat jaundice; or not treating infection quickly enough.

By instructing independent medical experts, we can determine if you or your child has received substandard care and if so, pursue a claim for financial compensation to cover the extra costs of living with cerebral palsy.

At RWK Goodman, we specialise in representing children affected by cerebral palsy. We work with leading experts who advise on the standard of medical care received; and on how a child's quality of life can be maximised through the provision of suitable accommodation, therapies, equipment, assistive technology, treatment and care.

We are usually able to offer children Legal Aid Funding, which will ensure your child keeps 100% of their compensation.

Five reasons to choose RWK Goodman for your claim:

1. We will listen to your story; make ourselves available to suit you; and get to know you and your child throughout the legal journey.
2. We are nationally recognised specialists in birth injury cases and have recovered millions of pounds for hundreds of children who have suffered a brain injury as a result of negligent medical care.
3. You and your child will be supported by an expert team including some of the country's leading medical, therapy and nursing experts and specialist barristers, to work towards a successful outcome and to maximise compensation.
4. Your child will have the benefit of our extensive experience not just in securing compensation but also in making sure it is protected, invested and used effectively throughout their lifetime.
5. We will ensure that compensation is secured and invested in compliance

How will I pay for a claim?

There are many ways in which funding for a medical negligence claim can be secured, at no financial risk to you or your child.

Any initial enquiries you make to RWK Goodman are free of charge.

If, on review of the case, we consider there to be reasonable prospects of succeeding, we will discuss funding options with you:

- Legal Aid (public funding) is available from the Legal Aid Agency for those who have suffered a neurological injury during their mother's pregnancy, during their birth or within the first eight weeks of their life.
- If Legal Aid funding is not available we can look at alternative forms of funding such as legal expenses insurance or "no win, no fee" funding. This would mean that if your case is not successful you will not have to pay anything towards the legal costs.

Life Changing Settlements

Meeting the practical, physical, and emotional needs of a child with Cerebral Palsy can be costly and many families struggle to afford the care, therapies and equipment their child needs. Many parents ask the question: Who will care for my child when I am no longer able? Financial compensation should provide everything your child will need for the rest of their life.

Our specialist team at RWK Goodman have secured life changing settlements for many families. Recent examples include the following:

In July 2025, RWK Goodman secured compensation of over £21m for a young man, W, whose birth was complicated by shoulder dystocia. W was 17 years old when his claim settled in July 2025. His life is impacted by mild cerebral palsy and behavioural difficulties. W's compensation will ensure he has everything he requires to meet his additional needs for the rest of his life.

In November 2025, the team secured compensation of over £15m for a 14-year-old boy, S, who has hemiplegic cerebral palsy, learning difficulties and epilepsy.

In March 2026, the team secured compensation of £3.95m for a 7-year-old boy, D, who suffered a shortage of oxygen when he was born. He has cerebral palsy, epilepsy and visual impairment. The damages will help fund his long-term need for specialist care and input.

In April 2026, RWK Goodman secured compensation of over £24m for L, a girl who has cerebral palsy as a result of oxygen deprivation during her birth. As a result of the settlement, she has been able to purchase and adapt her own property and to access care, therapies, technology and equipment to increase her independence and maximise her quality of life.

"Working with RWK Goodman has been a seamless process throughout. Appointments made months in advance were always kept to, and communication was second to none. Since S's case was concluded 6 months ago, we've had an offer accepted on a property that will allow S the space he needs for the future. His increased financial stability has brought me so much peace of mind and we have employed a support worker to allow me some flexibility with my own life. Life is easier, finally, and that's all thanks to Kerstin Scheel, Abigail Ringer and the team at RWK Goodman."

(S's Mum)

Following the settlements of these claims, each of these children and their families will continue to have the support of a professional team under the care of a Deputy in RWK Goodman's Compensation Protection Team.

Contact a member of the team on

wkcn.enquiries@rwkgoodman.com or
0800 923 2080 for more information.

For our readers who would benefit from information in Arabic, please see the guide on page 71 to seeking compensation for birth injuries.

Compensation protection

RWK Goodman provides lifelong support to children and adults who have received compensation to ensure that their compensation is managed and protected to last for their lifetime.

Compensation payments can be very large and are awarded to pay for housing, equipment, care regimes, therapies, travel, additional holiday costs, education costs and to meet lifetime needs etc. The Court of Protection must be satisfied that the funds are managed properly and where there is a large award will appoint a professional deputy to support vulnerable children and adults.

To find out more about how RWK Goodman can build a team around your child, visit:
rwkgoodman.com/injury/compensation-protection

Professional Deputy

A deputy is appointed by the Court of Protection to manage matters on behalf of a child or adult who lacks the mental capacity to make some or all decisions themselves, either in relation to their property and affairs or their health and welfare.

When a child or an adult who lacks capacity receives compensation, a deputy is likely to be appointed to manage their property and affairs. Their duties will likely include:

- Taking formal investment advice so that the compensation fund is maximised.
- Ensuring money is invested according to individual faith and beliefs.
- Purchasing suitable accommodation and adapting it for a person's exact needs.
- Employing carers and therapists.
- Buying and adapting a suitable vehicle.
- Considering what tax is due on investments.
- Keeping records of all decisions.
- Reporting to the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) on an annual basis. The OPG is responsible for the supervision of deputies on behalf of the Court of Protection.

Why choose RWK Goodman's professional deputy services?

RWK Goodman prides itself on working with families to build a team around every individual made up of legal advisors; financial advisors; therapists and case managers. This multi-disciplinary team will have your child at its centre, focusing on maximising their quality of life and empowering them to lead as independent a life as possible. The deputy team works in harmony with parents, partners and siblings in order to get to know the child/adult so as to act in their best interests. The team understand the ripple effect of brain injury on the entire family.

RWK Goodman's specialist deputies act through a Trust Corporation, Withy King Trustees Limited, and have a wealth of experience in supporting children and adults all over England and Wales. Partners Tracy Norris-Evans and Maria Meek are regularly appointed as financial deputies for children with cerebral palsy.

They understand the unique challenges faced by children and adults with additional needs and are equipped with the skills and expertise to ensure your child reaches their full potential.
rwkgoodman.com/info-hub/inj-cpu-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-court-of-protection-and-deputyships

Personal Injury Trust

If the medical opinion is that your child will have capacity to make decisions about their financial affairs upon turning 18, then consideration should be given to the execution of a personal injury trust (PI trust); this provides protection from persons who seek to take advantage of the individual's compensation and ringfences the award for the purposes of means tested benefits and local authority funding for care.

Where the compensation is significant, a professional trustee should be appointed. Tracy Norris-Evans and Maria Meek have a long history of acting as a professional trustee in these circumstances.

The benefit of having a professional manage the compensation on behalf of your child is the freedom it provides to enable you to focus on being a parent again.

The Early Notification Scheme

Since 1 April 2017, NHS Hospitals have had to report to NHS Resolution all incidents where babies (who were born at term and following a labour) had a potential severe brain injury diagnosed within the first week of life.

NHS Resolution then carries out an investigation as to what may have gone wrong. The investigation is carried out by legal case managers and clinical advisors who will decide whether you and your child have received substandard care. If they decide that your child has suffered an injury as a result of care that does not meet the expected standard then they can provide you with a written apology and offer financial support for your child.

The Early Notification Scheme has the benefit of allowing families to reach some sort of resolution more quickly that in pursuing a medical negligence claim. However, parents cannot participate directly in the investigation, and there is currently a lack of transparency in how the investigation is undertaken and the independence of the clinical advisors who decide on the standard of care received.

It is not clear at this stage how much financial support children have been able to recover through this scheme. It is currently likely, however, that your child will receive a higher level of financial support if you pursue a clinical negligence claim.
resolution.nhs.uk/services/claims-management/clinical-schemes/clinical-negligence-scheme-for-trusts/early-notification-scheme

Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigations (MNSI) programme

On 1 October 2023, a new statutory body, the Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigations (MNSI) programme, was formed to undertake investigations when a baby has suffered a brain injury or when a mother or baby has died.

A referral for investigation is made when a baby is born following a labour AND after 37 weeks gestation AND where the outcome is:

- The baby dies during labour and before birth;
- The baby is born alive and dies in the first week of life; or
- The baby is born with a potential severe brain injury diagnosed as occurring in the first seven days of life.

The focus of the investigation is to look at what can be learnt from what has happened, in particular the investigations:

- Identify the factors that may have contributed towards death or harm;
- Use evidence based accounts to establish what happened and why; and
- Make safety recommendations to improve maternity care both locally and nationally.

For more information on the Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigations programme, please visit:
rwkgoodman.com/info-hub/hsib-maternity-investigations-have-been-replaced-by-the-maternity-and-newborn-safety-investigations-mnsi-programme

Independent financial advice

At RWK Goodman we work with Independent Financial Advisors (IFAs) to assist our clients in maximising their compensation to meet their ongoing needs and wishes. An IFA will balance risk and reward in advising on how to invest your money and will ensure that any compensation received does not jeopardise you or your child's entitlement to state benefits and local authority funding.

Personal Financial Planning Ltd are a team of personal injury specialist financial advisors with the goal of making an award of compensation last a lifetime.
pfp.co.uk

Frenkel Topping is a company of specialist financial advisors who provide a high level of service in financial planning.
frenkeltopping.co.uk

Brewin Dolphin describe themselves as one of the UK's leading wealth managers and can help their clients plan for the future.
brewin.co.uk

Punter Southall help people build, shape and protect their financial futures.
puntersouthall.com

Sheralee Ellis is a trusted independent financial advisor at Chase de Vere, specialising in personal injury matters.
chasedevere.co.uk

Acting for Muslim Families

In May 2022, RWK Goodman recovered compensation of over £9 million for a little girl, A, with quadriplegic cerebral palsy. A's birth was complicated by compression of the umbilical cord so that she suffered a shortage of oxygen to her brain.

In April 2025, RWK Goodman secured compensation of over £14m for a little boy, M, who has cerebral palsy due a shortage of oxygen when he was born.

Both the families of A and M are Muslims, and RWK Goodman's birth injury and deputyship teams are experienced in ensuring that compensation is managed in accordance with Islamic Law. This might apply to how interest or Riba on compensation is paid; whether compensation is subject to Zakat; and ensuring that any compensation money is invested in a Shariah-compliant investment portfolio.

A and M now have the benefit of professional deputies, experienced in managing compensation in accordance with Shariah Law. These deputies are working closely with each family to administer each of their awards, ensuring that each child has the support they need for the rest of their lives.

RWK Goodman will ensure that compensation is secured and invested in compliance with your personal and religious beliefs, seeking Fatwas when necessary and advice from financial experts in Shariah Law.

"As practicing Muslims, we had concerns regarding our daughter's finances being invested in a Halal manner and whether it would be subject to Zakat. Respecting our faith, our solicitors got in touch with an Islamic scholar who issued a Fatwa regarding the matter.

This was and will be a great help for us as we wouldn't know where to start in getting a judgment from a renowned Islamic Scholar."

كيف سأتحمل تكاليف المطالبة بالتعويض؟

.هناك العديد من وسائل التمويل المتاحة دون أي مخاطر مالية عليك أو على طفلك

تكون مجانية تماماً. وإذا تبين لنا بعد RWK Goodman أي استفسارات أولية تقدمها إلى .مراجعة القضية أن هناك فرصاً معقولة للنجاح، فسنناقش معك خيارات التمويل المتاحة

يتوفر نظام المساعدة القانونية (التمويل الحكومي) من خلال وكالة المساعدة القانونية للأشخاص الذين تعرضوا لإصابة عصبية أثناء حمل أمهاتهم، أو أثناء الولادة، أو خلال الأسابيع الثمانية الأولى .من حياتهم

وفي حال عدم توفر تمويل المساعدة القانونية، يمكننا دراسة بدائل أخرى مثل التأمين على المصاريف القانونية أو نظام «لا أتعاب إلا عند الفوز بالقضية». وهذا يعني أنك لن تتحمل أي .تكاليف قانونية إذا لم تنجح الدعوى

هل سيتم إدارة التعويض وفقاً لأحكام الشريعة الإسلامية؟

خبرة واسعة في ضمان إدارة التعويضات بما RWK Goodman يمتلك فريق إصابات الولادة في .يتوافق مع المعتقدات الشخصية وأحكام الشريعة الإسلامية

وقد يشمل ذلك معالجة المسائل المتعلقة بالفوائد أو الربا المترتب على التعويض، وتحديد ما إذا كانت أموال التعويض خاضعة للزكاة، وضمان استثمار أموال التعويض في محافظ استثمارية .متوافقة مع أحكام الشريعة الإسلامية

"بصفتنا مسلمين ملتزمين، كانت لدينا مخاوف بشأن استثمار أموال ابنتنا بطريقة حلال، وما إذا كانت خاضعة للزكاة. واحتراماً لعقيدتنا، تواصل محامونا مع أحد العلماء الشرعيين الذي أصدر فتوى بشأن هذه المسألة. وقد كان ذلك عوناً كبيراً لنا، إذ لم نكن نعلم من أين نبدأ .للحصول على رأي شرعي من عالم إسلامي مرموق"

:تواصل معنا

.فريقنا المتخصص في قضايا إصابات الولادة بانتظار التواصل معكم

.يرجى مراسلتنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني باستخدام بيانات الاتصال الموضحة أدناه

Danya Ali
Paralegal
07353 112 652
danya.ali@rwkgoodman.com

تعويضات إصابات الولادة

يقع على عاتق الأطباء والقابلات واجب رعاية الأم وطفلها أثناء فترة الحمل، وعند الولادة، وبعدها. وللأسف، عندما تحدث أخطاء أو تقصير في الرعاية الطبية، فقد تتعرض .الأمهات والأطفال لإصابات

إذا تعرض طفلك لإصابة دماغية نتيجة إهمال طبي، فقد يكون من حقه الحصول على تعويضات تصل إلى ملايين الجنيهات الإسترلينية. ويمكن استخدام هذه التعويضات لتغطية تكاليف الرعاية الصحية، والعلاج التأهيلي، والمعدات المتخصصة، والسكن المهيأ .لاحتياجاته الخاصة، والتي قد يحتاج إليها طوال حياته

لم يكن السعي للمطالبة بالتعويض قراراً بالنسبة لنا، بل كان ضرورة من أجل ابننا. فقد كان» بحاجة إلى دعمنا خلال هذه الدعوى المصيرية حتى يتمكن من التمتع بأفضل جودة «.حياة ممكنة

.يمكن لفريقنا القانوني المتخصص مساعدتك في معرفة المزيد

:لتمثيل مطالبتك RWK Goodman خمسة أسباب لاختيار

- سنستمع إلى قصتك بعناية، وسنكون متاحين بما يتناسب مع ظروفك، وسنتعرف .عليك وعلى طفلك طوال الرحلة القانونية
- نحن متخصصون معترف بنا على المستوى الوطني في قضايا إصابات الولادة، وقد نجحنا في استرداد ملايين الجنيهات الإسترلينية لصالح مئات الأطفال الذين تعرضوا لإصابات .دماغية نتيجة الرعاية الطبية المهملة
- ستحصل أنت وطفلك على دعم فريق من الخبراء يضم نخبة من المتخصصين الطبيين، وخبراء العلاج والتأهيل والتمريض، بالإضافة إلى محامين متخصصين، للعمل نحو .تحقيق أفضل نتيجة ممكنة وتعظيم قيمة التعويض المستحق
- سيستفيد طفلك من خبرتنا الواسعة ليس فقط في الحصول على التعويض، بل .أيضاً في ضمان حمايته واستثماره واستخدامه بصورة فعالة طوال حياته
- سنضمن تأمين التعويض واستثماره بما يتوافق مع معتقداتك الشخصية والدينية، مع السعي للحصول على الفتاوى الشرعية عند الحاجة والاستعانة بخبراء التمويل والاستثمار .المتخصصين في الشريعة الإسلامية

"وبشكل RWK Goodman ,لحسن حظنا، اخترنا أن نحصل على الدعم القانوني من خاص من كيرستين شيل وأبيغيل رينغر. لقد كان ذلك أفضل قرار اتخذناه. فقد أبدوا تعاطفاً حقيقياً في كل خطوة، وقدموا لنا المعلومات والإرشادات اللازمة، وعملوا معنا كأنهم أفراد من عائلتنا الممتدة منذ البداية وحتى النهاية"

PURSUING A MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE CLAIM

Maternal injury

We are grateful to RWK Goodman's Maternal Injury team for providing this short guide for any mothers dealing with birth injuries and trauma, to highlight the support available.

Injuries to mothers during childbirth

Our specialist Maternal Injury team represents mothers who have also been injured during childbirth. We represent women who have experienced a wide range of injuries during childbirth, and we have seen the impact these life-changing injuries can have on a mother and her family.

Psychological support and treatment

If your symptoms are affecting your ability to go about your day-to-day life, you may wish to consider professional counselling.

There are two types of therapies that work well in treating trauma symptoms:

- Trauma-focused CBT; and
- Eye movement desensitisation and processing (EMDR).

Both treatments focus on trying to remove the experience of trauma from your short-term memory into your long-term memory – the aim being that the trauma gets stored away like other long-term memories, rather than something you are reliving again and again.

Both treatments are recommended by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for treating PTSD and should be available within your area through the NHS. You can ask your GP or health visitor for a referral. If you are in England you can self-refer through your local Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service. Just google the name of your local area and IAPT to find it. As most NHS services have a waiting list, you may need to wait a number of weeks or months for treatment.

There are many UK charities supporting those who have experience psychological trauma resulting from a birth injury. The following charities may be able to help you or a loved one:

The Birth Trauma Association

The Birth Trauma Association has a large team of peer supporters who offer support over e-mail and phone. The team includes a dad, Steve, who supports other dads. They also have Facebook groups for parents affected by birth trauma, which can be a good place to seek support from others in similar situations.

birthtraumaassociation.org

Make Birth Better

Make Birth Better supports both parents and professionals impacted by birth trauma. Their website has some useful guides and resources to assist in accessing support.

makebirthbetter.org

PANDAS Foundation UK

PANDAS Foundation UK offers a variety of support through their trained team of volunteers. You can contact them via WhatsApp, request a call from them using the link on their website, communicate via email, or use their support groups. They can also help with self-care and how to approach your GP and other organisations who may be able to help.

pandasfoundation.org.uk

WhatsApp: 07903 508 334

The Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA)

The Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) is a charity and network of 130 organisations, dedicated to ensuring women and families affected by perinatal mental health problems have access to high-quality, compassionate care. They have a wealth of information on their website, including a map which enables you to find perinatal mental health support near you.

maternalmentalhealthalliance.org

MIND

MIND supports individuals and their families experiencing mental health problems. They can provide information and advice, and direct people to local services.

mind.org.uk

Dads Matter UK

Dads Matter UK is a free service providing support for dads experiencing mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and PTSD.

dadsmatter.org.uk

Fatherhood Solutions (Instagram account)

The Instagram page @fatherhood_solutions was set up by Scott Mair, a dad who developed PTSD after witnessing the traumatic birth of his son. Scott works with The Birth Trauma Association and hosts a monthly zoom drop-in for dads on the first Wednesday of the month, which can be booked in via the Birth Trauma Association website.

The Dad Pad

The Dad Pad is a resource for new fathers, developed with the NHS.

thedadpad.co.uk

Support for black mothers

There is support available via the following groups:

The Motherhood Group

A UK charity that support the black maternal experience. They run community-based events and workshops, and provide spaces for black mothers to share any issues pertaining to motherhood, pregnancy, and wellbeing. They also provide free specialist counselling for mental health to help new mums, in partnership with MumsAid.

themotherhoodgroup.org

Black Mamas Matter Alliance

The Black Mamas Matter Alliance provides a range of information resources and services for black and mixed-race women. They work with Dr Orinayo Onabanjo, who specialises in perinatal mental health therapy, and you can schedule time with her via their website.

blackmamasmatter.org

Five X More

Five X More is an organisation dedicated to changing and highlighting black maternal health outcomes in the UK. They have developed the Five X More Learning Hubb App, the UK's first culturally-tailored pregnancy and parenting app for black mothers, which offers expert guidance, community support and resources specifically designed to improve black maternal health and empower black mothers on their pregnancy journey.

fivexmore.org

Physical Injuries Following Childbirth

About 6 in 100 first-time mothers will have a deep tear involving the anal sphincter muscle, also known as a third- or fourth-degree tear. Such injuries can cause uncontrollable urges to open your bowels, or not being able to control passing wind. You might leak faeces, experience pain and have difficulty controlling your bladder.

MASIC Foundation

MASIC Foundation is the only multidisciplinary UK charity supporting women who have suffered OASI (Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injuries) during birth. The charity is run by women who have experienced these injuries, and healthcare professionals. The MASIC website has a number of resources regarding obtaining NHS support, recommendations of pelvic physiotherapists and consultants, and recommendations of in-person support groups.

masic.org.uk

Other physical injuries suffered following childbirth include but are not limited to prolapse, urinary incontinence, pelvic floor dysfunction and pain. Sometimes these injuries occur with an OASI but many women also experience these injuries without an OASI. On the NHS, you can access the following treatment:

Pelvic Health Physiotherapists

Pelvic Health Physiotherapists will see a variety of conditions, including:

- stress, urge or mixed urinary incontinence;
- pelvic organ prolapse;
- faecal incontinence;
- pelvis pain related to pelvic floor dysfunctions.

Gynaecologists

Gynaecologists will see patients with:

- prolapse;
- childbirth injury;
- urinary incontinence;
- pelvic floor dysfunction including pain and sexual dysfunction.

Colorectal specialists

Colorectal teams will see patients with:

- constipation;
- obstructive defaecation;
- anal incontinence.

Your GP will be able to refer you to above specialists on the NHS. You can also use the Squeezy directory to find NHS Pelvic floor physiotherapists in your location you can select your condition and location and filter your search based between private and NHS treatment. It also has a direct enquiry option for advice on how to get a referral.

squeezyapp.com/directory

Perineal Clinics

Perineal Clinics are a specialist clinic for women who require follow up for perineal pelvic floor problems following childbirth. They see women who have suffered third- and fourth-degree tears, infections, perineal pain and persistent bladder or bowel symptoms to assess the healing of their injury.

Pelvic floor clinics

Pelvic floor clinics offer a specialist pelvic floor assessment for bowel dysfunction, incontinence and constipation. You will usually be seen by a surgeon and may undergo further investigations such as scans.

Urogynaecology clinics

Urogynaecology clinics are run by a qualified obstetrician who has a specialist interest in pelvic floor problems such as urinary and bowel weakness and vaginal/pelvic prolapse. Treatments include physiotherapy and advice on vaginal pessaries.

Psychosexual Therapy

Psychosexual Therapy is the use of targeted counselling or psychotherapy to help address sexual problems. Psychosexual problems are emotional but they can lead to physical problems. It is therefore important to understand the relationship between physical and psychological. It is worth speaking to your GP to see if you are entitled to a referral on the NHS.

The Institute of Psychosexual Medicine (IPM) has a directory of speciality which you may also find useful:

ipm.org.uk/patients/specialists

There are larger support groups available on Facebook including: FPOPS (Female Pelvic Prolapse Support UK), APOPS (Association of Pelvic Organ Prolapse Support) and pelvic organ prolapse; and more general urology and gynaecology support groups.

The Pelvic Floor Society provide general information for patients and can assist with finding an accredited pelvic floor unit.

thepelvicfloorsociety.org.uk

Pelvic Pain is a patient led organisation and charity who provide support, information and advocacy for those with pelvic pain, their families and carers.

pelvicpain.org.uk

Colostomy UK is a charity that supports and empowers people living with a stoma. They run projects to empower people living with a stoma to return to sport, hobbies and other interests.

colostomyuk.org

Useful contacts

The Birth Trauma Association

The Birth Trauma Association is a charity that supports women who suffer birth trauma.

birthtraumaassociation.org.uk

Group B Strep Support

Group B Strep Support is a charity that provides information and support for families affected by Group B Strep.

gbss.org.uk

AvMA

Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA) is a UK charity for patient safety and justice.

avma.org.uk

The Erb's Palsy Group

The Erb's Palsy Group offers advice, information and support to families affected by Erb's Palsy.

erbspalsygroup.co.uk

The Disabled Children's Partnership

The Disabled Children's Partnership is a coalition of more than 70 organisations campaigning for improved health and social care.

disabledchildrenspartnership.org.uk

The Pace Centre

Pace is a family centred charity that provides innovative education for children with motor disorders based on a belief that every child has the ability to learn. They provide a range of therapy services and aim to equip parents with the necessary skills to support their child.

thepacecentre.org

Our team

Tracy Norris-Evans

Head of Injury Division
07717 358 058
tracy.norrisevans@rwkgoodman.com

Simon Elliman

Head of Clinical Negligence
07818 451 354
simon.elliman@rwkgoodman.com

Richard Coleman

Partner
07502 298 690
richard.coleman@rwkgoodman.com

Kerstin Scheel

Partner
07827 920 973
kerstin.scheel@rwkgoodman.com

Paul Rumley

Partner
07810 553 609
paul.rumley@rwkgoodman.com

Lucy Norton

Partner
07435 721 753
lucy.norton@rwkgoodman.com

Hannah Blackwell

Partner
07585 973 009
hannah.blackwell@rwkgoodman.com

Abigail Ringer

Partner
07787 291 052
abigail.ringer@rwkgoodman.com

Lucy Crawford

Senior Associate
07825 274 643
lucy.crawford@rwkgoodman.com

Sarah White

Senior Associate
07794 268 777
sarah.white@rwkgoodman.com

Sophie Angwin-Thornes

Senior Associate
07384 252 272
sophie.angwin-thornes@rwkgoodman.com

Danya Ali

Paralegal
07353 112 652
danya.ali@rwkgoodman.com

rwk goodman