



DEFECT & INVESTIGATION CENTRE

FOR ACTION BY:

Chief Executive of each HSS Trust
General Manager/Chief Executive of each HSS Board
General Manager/Chief Executive of each Agency
General Practitioners

Stoney Road Dundonald
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ADVICE NOTICE (NI) 2000/05

Date: 8 August 2000

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|---------------------------|---|---|
| Product | : | Scandinavian mobility powered wheelchairs: overheating of the charger/controller connection |
| Manufacturer/ Supplier | : | Scandinavian Mobility |
| Issue | : | A number of reports have been received concerning the overheating of the battery charger connector which plugs into the control box on Scandinavian Mobility powered wheelchairs. The connector may overheat during charging, which could result in burns to the users' hands if the connector is touched |
| | : | See Section 2 overleaf |
| Action | : | |

ADVICE NOTICE

1. ATTENTION CHIEF EXECUTIVES/GENERAL MANAGERS

This Advice Notice should be brought to the immediate attention of all who need to know, or be aware of it including those listed below, in accordance with local procedures, and immediate action should be taken as detailed overleaf:

- Trust Wheelchair Services Managers
- Rehabilitation Engineers (Wheelchairs)
- Occupational Therapists (involved in wheelchair provision)
- Physiotherapists (involved in wheelchair provision)
- Nursing Staff, Hospital & Community
- Wheelchair Repair Services
- Wheelchair Reconditioning Services
- Community Care Staff
- Hospices
- Day Care Services for Elderly or Disabled People
- HPSS Board R&I Units
- Loan Store Managers
- Supplies Officers
- Safety Liaison Officers
- Risk Managers

Boards/Trusts should ensure that if appropriate, this information is passed to ALL persons having the responsibility for premises registered under "THE REGISTERED HOMES (NI) ORDER 1992".



2. IMMEDIATE ACTION

Identify all Scandinavian Mobility powered wheelchairs (Harrier, Harrier HD, Popular plus, Corbie, Reflex, Spectra, Home and Away) and powered models of the Rea Stolen Assist and Rea Stolen Comfort that were delivered between 14 August 1998 and 31 May 2000.

Chargers labelled as JM Clarke Ltd manufacture, Part No. 600-70180 and dated between 14 August 1998 and 29 March 2000, and control boxes labelled as Penny and Giles (Part No. D49530) should be removed from these wheelchairs and withdrawn from use. Scandinavian Mobility will supply replacement units free of charge (see contact reference on the following page).

In addition, any charger or control box that has been removed from a Scandinavian Mobility wheelchair, which meets the above criteria, should be traced and replaced as above.

3. BACKGROUND

The Department has received a number of reports of the connector on the battery charger overheating. This has occurred while the charger was plugged into the controller to charge the batteries on Scandinavian Mobility powered wheelchairs. The wheelchairs affected were delivered between 14 August 1998 and 31 May 2000. Chairs delivered before and after these dates have a different charger connector. If you are in doubt, as to whether the wheelchair lies in the affected date range, please contact the Scandinavian Mobility freephone number with the wheelchair's unique serial number and they can verify if the wheelchair is affected.

Some of the JM Clarkes' chargers and/or Penny and Giles control boxes may already have been removed via repair or reconditioning processes, and hence may either be in spare stock or have been re-issued on other wheelchairs.

The wheelchairs manufactured by Scandinavian Mobility were all supplied with low profile 5 Amp chargers labelled Scandinavian Mobility. The chargers also carry labels to show that the manufacturer was JM Clarke Ltd Part No. 600-70180. The control boxes used were manufactured and are labelled Penny & Giles Part No. D49530.

The reports received by the Department indicate that the charger connector may overheat during charging. This can result in burns to the users' hands if they have touched the metal shroud of the connector during the charging cycle. In addition, repeated exposure to this excessive heat eventually causes the plastic materials within the connector to deteriorate and stops the charger working.

The charger connector used before August 1998 has not shown any major problems so far and the manufacturer reverted to the pre-August 1998 specification on all equipment from May 2000.

The replacement parts, once fitted, will update the connection system to align it with the manufacturer's latest specification.

Scandinavian Mobility have offered to exchange units and reimburse reasonable fitting costs to allow the necessary replacement to start as soon as possible (see contact on the following page).

4. ENQUIRIES

Enquiries to the manufacturer should be addressed to:

Ms Jean Foley, Chris Bevan or Mr Kevin Humphries
Scandinavian Mobility
Unit C
Tyson Courtyard
Weldon South Industrial Estate
Corby
NN188AZ

Tel: 0800 7319063

Enquiries regarding this notice should be addressed as follows:

NORTHERN IRELAND DEFECT & INVESTIGATION CENTRE (NIDIC)
Health Estates
Estate Policy
Stoney Road
Dundonald
Belfast BT16 1US *marked for the attention of Mr Brian Godfrey*

Tel: 028 90 523714

Fax: 028 90 523900

Email: brian.godfrey@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Brian Godfrey
Defect Centre Manager

HOW TO REPORT DEFECTS

Professional Estate Letter PEL(93)36 issued by Estate Services Directorate, on 27th July 1994 advises Health and Social Services Boards, HSS Trusts and agencies how to notify HPSS about accidents with and defects in medicinal products, buildings and plant, medical devices and other medical and non medical equipment and supplies.