

Choosing the Right Fully Electric (Hospital) Bed

Choosing a home hospital bed is never an easy decision. This article is to help you ask the right questions and weigh up the features and benefits so you make the right decision for both the patient and the caregiver.



Advantages of a Hospital Bed

A fully electric bed offers patients a range of advantages from making it easier to get in and out of bed, to ensuring that those who are bed ridden can change position frequently to avoid bedsores.

Caregivers can adjust the height of an electric bed to their optimal working level, significantly reducing strain. The increased independence an electric bed affords to patients will reduce the caregiver's workload.

Things to Consider Before You Buy

Will Bed Positioning Devices Fix the Problem?

Hospital beds are recommended for specific medical conditions, including circulatory problems with lower limbs, obesity, gastric reflux and respiratory problems. Before investing in an electric bed, it's a good idea to first find out if the problems can be alleviated using bed-positioning devices such as wedges.

Worried About Appearances?

Most fully electric beds look like...hospital beds, which is what they are. Some people want the comfort and flexibility of a fully electric bed without having to transform their bedroom into a hospital room. The i-Care IC33 bed could be a good compromise as it offers the flexibility of an electric bed, but fully lowered it looks like a part of your bedroom suite.



How Long Will You Need the Bed?

If a hospital bed is required for a limited amount of time due to a temporary illness or accident then it might be more sensible to rent rather than buy. Willaid offers a range of hospital beds for rental.

How High or Low Do You Need to Go?

It's important that you take into consideration the specific patient needs when assessing the minimum and maximum height adjustment required. For example, if a patient can transfer to a standing position, then choose a bed with a low enough height adjustment to make this easy. Or, if a mechanical lift is used to perform bed transfers then make sure the lift can be raised high enough to clear the surface of the mattress when the bed is at its lowest position.

What Bed Size Do You Need?

The standard 36" width is adequate for most people. Sometimes people with obesity or spasticity can be unable to centre themselves on the bed by sliding, but can turn themselves by rolling. In these instances, a wider bed is recommended.

An electric double bed may be suitable if sharing with a partner, but consider the space available and ensure that this won't be an obstacle for the caregiver. Some couples prefer to double up two single beds, one electric and one standard.

The length of the bed should exceed the height of the patient by several inches.

Which Type of Mattress Support?

The bed's mattress support is made up either of springs or a solid platform. Models containing springs are only appropriate for use with spring mattresses. It's important to know that specialised mattresses that prevent bedsores require a solid platform. (Note: if a patient already has a hospital bed with a spring mattress support and now required a specialised mattress, it is possible to install rigid panels.)

Can You Work the Remote Control?

All electric beds have remote controls, some wireless others wired to the bed. The main factor to consider here is the shape and size of the buttons and the amount of pressure required to activate the controls. An electric bed can only enhance independence if the patient is capable of operating the controls.

What Other Health Care Equipment Do You Use?

If the patient also uses a wheelchair, bed table, mechanical lift, bed rails or other health care equipment then it is important to make sure that the equipment is compatible with the bed.

If you are considering purchasing a fully electric bed now or in the near future, we invite you to come into our showroom and have a lie down!