

## BHSCT Charitable Trust Funds Grant Application

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| Amalgam Fund Name & Number |  |
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| For official CTF office use only |      |            |
| CTF Unique Approval Ref          | Date | Initialled |

**Details of anticipated expenditure (list all expected itemised costs) additional information can be provided on a separate sheet**

### **Overview**

This Application seeks approval for the funding to locate, design, procure and install a **Changing Places Toilet** facility to BS 8300:2018 Standard (best-practice guidance for designing accessible, inclusive environments) in the main foyer of the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) to meet the needs of disabled people whose needs are not met by a standard accessible toilet.

Belfast Trust does **not** have a Changing Places Toilet facility on **any** of its acute or community sites. Two are planned for the New Children’s Hospital.

Following a review on site with service groups, Belfast Trust **Estates Team** have provided an indicative estimate of approximately **£100,000**. This includes the design team fees, contingencies (subject to re-measuring), decommissioning / relocation and associated costs to create a Changing Places Toilet facility in the main foyer of the RVH.

The lack of a Changing Places Toilet facility in Belfast Trust means that disabled people attending the RVH often miss appointments or are changed on a toilet floor, which is dangerous, unhygienic and undignified. As a result there are potential adverse impacts on human rights, patient and carer experience, DNAs, reputational damage, litigation and complaints. The issue of lack of Changing Places provision was recently discussed by the NI Health Committee.

It has been a challenge to locate the space needed to create a Changing Places Toilet facility. A number of options have been explored over an 18 month search. However, to facilitate the creation of a Changing Places Toilet facility in the main foyer of the RVH in the space near the current public toilet facilities the following moves are needed:

- Busy Bee storage facilities moves to the current Chaplaincy Office
- ATM machine housing needs decommissioned
- Chaplaincy Office moves and is then split across two spaces – one currently housed by the ATM machine beside the chaplaincy office and one which is a porters store just at the bottom of stairs beyond the foyer.
- Current standard Accessible Toilet moves to the current Mothering Room to produce one space for the Mothers room and a standard Accessible Toilet
- A new Changing Places toilet facility is then created using the Busy Bee storage and most of the current Accessible Toilet space

The decision regarding access to and the security of the Changing Places Toilet facility will be subject to a risk assessment however there are a number of options including use of [RADAR KEYS](#)

*Please note that this request for funding is subject to all parties being in agreement with the multiple moves required and the necessary leases being altered. All parties are aware of the proposed move and leases can be amended.*

## What is a Changing Places Toilet facility?

There are currently 81 Changing Places Toilets across NI. In June 2022, building regulations mandated that new public buildings and major refurbishments must install Changing Places Toilets. Since June 2022 there has been a 100% increase in such facilities. Key Changing Places locations in Belfast include Belfast City Hall: Waterfront Hall: Titanic Belfast, Girdwood Community Hub, Olympia Leisure Centre, George Best Belfast City Airport and Divis & Black Mountain.

A Changing Places facility is an **enhanced accessible toilet space** designed for people whose needs are not met by a standard accessible toilet. It provides more space, equipment and privacy for disabled people, their families and carers to manage personal care with dignity.

A Changing Places Toilet facility differs from standard accessible toilets as they have additional features/equipment and more space. Standard accessible toilets do not offer enough space or the right equipment required for the safe lifting, changing or personal care that many disabled people require when attending appointments, as inpatients or service users. Standard accessible toilets do not provide changing benches or hoists and most are too small to accommodate more than one person/carer.

The **Changing Places Consortium** is a nationally recognised organisation that campaigns for the installation of changing places toilets in public venues [Changing Places Toilets](#). It states that a compliant Changing Places room provides the space and equipment for safe transfers and personal care (adult sized height adjustable bench, ceiling track hoist, peninsular WC, and **12 m<sup>2</sup>** clear floor area). This improves safety, dignity and the patient experience, and aligns with recognised UK best practice. This will also facilitate large wheelchairs and cater for up to 2 care givers to be present at any one time.

*Below see a typical layout of a Changing Places facility.*



1. A height adjustable changing bench
2. A tracking hoist system

3. There should be adequate space (at least 12 square metres wherever possible)
4. A centrally placed toilet with room either side for the carers and drop down hand rails
5. A screen or curtain
6. Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
7. A large waste bin for disposable pads
8. A non-slip floor

Changing Places facilities need to meet a certain standard to be registered on the Changing Places Consortium website. This ensures that any facility advertised as a Changing Places toilet meets the needs and expectations of the people who use them. The **Changing Places symbol** can be used in signage if a Changing Places Toilet does meet the minimum standards which helps families to easily identify that a venue has a toilet which meets their needs.

*Below see a typical Changing Places Toilet that meets the minimum standards and the Changing Places symbol.*



### Why is a Changing Places Toilet facility needed?

Changing Places Toilet facilities meet the needs of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities as well as people with other physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis and invisible disabilities.

Currently, the lack of a Changing Places Toilet facility in Belfast Trust means that disabled people attending the RVH or indeed any of our hospitals often **miss appointments or are changed on a toilet floor, which is dangerous, unhygienic and undignified**. As a result there are potential adverse impacts on human rights, patient and carer experience, DNAs, reputational damage, litigation and complaints.

It is estimated that approximately **7,000 people** in NI with profound and multiple learning disabilities or with physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. These needs are met by Changing Places Toilets. Without suitable facilities, carers report that they are often forced to assist their loved ones in cramped, unhygienic spaces.

In addition, not all disabilities are visible. Many people live with conditions that affect their mobility, dignity, and independence in ways that aren't immediately obvious to others. For those with **invisible disabilities**, such as neurological conditions, chronic illnesses, or severe continence issues, standard accessible toilets often don't meet their needs. Changing Places toilets provide essential features like extra space for **carers**, a height-adjustable adult-sized changing bench, a colostomy shelf etc. These facilities ensure that everyone, regardless of their access needs or disability or reliance on the assistance of carers or specialist equipment, can use a toilet facility with dignity, safely and hygienically.

Despite changes to the Building Regulations in June 2022 (which mandated that certain new building required Changing Places facilities) there continues to be a **strong public campaign** for Changing Places Toilet facilities in all major hospitals in Northern Ireland.

The extent of provision in Hospitals has been recently discussed at the **NI Health Committee**, numerous **Assembly Questions** have been raised and **Local Councillors** have made contact with Belfast Trust teams asking to meet to discuss provision.

In addition, **complaints** have been received from carers outlining their experience and disgust at the lack of facilities with several families noting that they have been forced to change an adult relative on the floor of hospital toilets.

**To summarise**, the latest complaint received by the Trust demonstrates the need for a Changing Places Toilet facility in the RVH at least given the potential adverse impact on human rights, patient and carer experience, legal equality duties, health and safety, DNAs, reputational damage and number of complaints.

A complaint was received in January 2026 from a mother indicating that following an appointment at the main general RVH with her 4 year old son she needed to change him. She checked and was shocked to find out that in the whole main hospital there was no changing facility and bathroom area that could accommodate various levels of disability – a changing places facility. (The son has a lot of essential medical equipment and must be changed in a lying position). The mum was directed to use the baby bench in the baby changing room in the RVH foyer but stipulated that she felt that she did not feel safe using this given the length and weight of her son. She noted, that other parents have since told her that they use the boot of their car or the floor. The mum also noted that the RVH children's hospital has recently put in a bench in one of its toilets but there is no equipment to help with lifting and so is not acceptable.

The mum went on to state in her complaint that:

*"I can't imagine what people do who have fully grown children or care for an adult who have severe physical disabilities."*

And, concluded by saying that

*"It is a disgrace that I even feel the need to reach out and complain about something that is a basic form of dignity. My local leisure centre has better facilities for those with a disability! A lack of action will only speak volumes about how the disabled community will continue to be treated and viewed by our health service."*

The proposed specialised toilet facility will make the RVH more accessible and inclusive for everyone, including children, adults and older people with complex needs, mobility issues or invisible disabilities such as Crohns Disease or Bladder problems.

**Amount Required Exclusive of VAT:**

**£100,000 approx.** inc design team fees, contingencies (subject to re-measuring), decommissioning / relocation and associated costs.

**APPLICANT PRINT NAME:** Estella Dorrian

**APPLICANT SIGNATURE & DATE** 1 *Estella Dorrian* 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Employee declaration FOR TRAVEL COURSE AND CONFERENCES UK & IRELAND ONLY**

Where applicable, by signing this form I confirm that:

My study leave application has been approved by the appropriate manager through HRPTS system in line with the assistance to study policy.

I am responsible for ensuring that the correct level of approval has been obtained when submitting the Charitable Funds Application

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have all other avenues been explored for funding and what was the outcome? i.e. General Capital Funds**

No

**Have you approached another Committee for this funding previously? If so, what was the outcome?**

No

**Please note the Committees decision can range from anywhere between 2-6 weeks to be relayed so please ensure your application is submitted well in advance. Once a decision has been made, the CTF team will update you**

*I have reviewed the attached request and I am content it meets the Public Benefit Test, it fits with the fund objectives, Trust objectives, values and is in line with the CTF Handbook & Guiding Principles*

**Committee Member 1  
Signature & Date**

**Committee Member 2 or Chair  
Signature & Date**

**Category of Spend Please Select one**

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|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Building &amp; Refurb</b> |  | <b>Medical Research</b> |  | <b>Patient Education &amp; Welfare</b> |  |
| <b>Purchase of New Equip</b> |  | <b>Staff Education</b>  |  | <b>Other</b>                           |  |
| <b>Other- Please Specify</b> |  |                         |  |  |  |