When considering the most appropriate emergency evacuation equipment there are some key factors to be considered including:

* cost
* practicality
* level of training required
* maintenance
* ease of use
* nature of disability
* location of disabled person (s)
* number of persons requiring assistance
* number of trained staff available
* terrain or surfaces to be negotiated
* width of escape routes.

Below are some of the different types of emergency evacuation equipment available and some of their characteristics:

**Evacuation sheet/sledge**

* lightweight and compact for easy storage
* ideal for evacuating bedridden persons
* requires mattress/sledge to be physically dragged
* Can be permanently left beneath the mattress
* may require two or more helpers depending on user weight
* Intended for lateral or “down stairs” travel
* can be used through narrow doorways and fire escapes
* maintenance free.

**Level evacuation chair**

* to be used for lateral travel and not suitable for use on stairways
* some models may only have two wheels which will require the chair to be used at an angle, requiring physical input by helper.

**Manual stairway evacuation chair**

* compact
* requires user to self transfer to the evac-chair
* not suitable for travel up stairways
* requires physical input by helper.

**Powered stairway evacuation chair**

* requires user to self transfer to the evac-chair
* some models require manual pushing when traveling on the level
* narrow staircase turning areas to be considered.

**Powered wheelchair stairclimber**

* basic models travel on stairs only, advanced models also travel on the level
* user can remain in their wheelchair. Some models require the rear wheels of the wheelchair to be removed
* narrow staircase turning areas to be considered.

**Mobile platform stair lift – for powered wheelchairs**

* user can remain in their wheelchair
* narrow staircase turning areas to be considered.

Note: - Health professionals are to be consulted when considering suitability of equipment for a user. Training for helpers is required on the above, some of which has to be carried out on a regular basis. Most types of equipment will need to be inspected at least annually; The supplier will be able to provide details of maintenance and inspection requirements.