



**Community Equipment
Retailer Accreditation**

**CERA CODE OF
PRACTICE**

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1.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The CERA Code of Practice for Retailers is to ensure that their customers are supported in their purchase of mobility support aids to a high standard of Care and Integrity. In addition to the public this Code also covers Retailers dealings with Public Bodies (Such as Care Homes, NHS etc.)

This Code will be reviewed annually, with input from Retailers, Customers & external bodies.

2. REASON FOR THE CODE

This Code of Practice determines the behavior of Retailers (CERA Members) that agree to hold the high standards of the CERA Organisation. It operates for retailer sales in the UK. CERA regulates the code to ensure compliance.

The Code is intended to reflect the ethics of the CERA organisation.

3. STAFF CONDUCT

- a) Staff should always have the best interests and safety of their customers in mind and should always act in a manner which upholds the good name of their organisation and CERA.
- b) Staff should never claim that they or their organisation are endorsed / or make reference to being endorsed by any another organisation / support group if they are not.
- c) Staff should adhere to Consumer Rights Regulations and work within the law at all times. Staff should never attempt to restrict the Customers Consumer Rights with unlawful contracts or impose unfair terms and conditions onto the customer.
- d) To the best of their knowledge all staff should always ensure that the customer is fully aware of the conditions of sale, the customer's legal rights and what any contract entails. Naturally this should always be in line with the current law of the land.
- e) Hard or pressure sales tactics are unacceptable and should never be used. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Inducements for a quick decision
 - Persistent phone calls to a customer, such as offering an additional discount to attempt to close a sale
 - Quoting a price that does not include all the costs that will be incurred by the prospective purchaser that are specific to the item being purchased.
 - Non-disclosure of the full purchase price until the purchase of the said items has been agreed.
- f) Staff must not cold call customers.
- g) Staff must always clearly identify themselves with their Company business card / or identification badge when visiting a customer's home.
- h) Staff should respect the fact they have been invited into the customer's home and there should be no abuse of this courtesy.
 -) If a customer wishes to have a friend or relative present during a demonstration/sale in the home, the company / or representative must arrange an appointment that will facilitate this.
- a) Staff should never stay at a home if the customer has asked them to leave.
- b) Staff should always ensure they leave within two hours from arriving at a customer's home unless a Health Professional is leading the assessment.

- l) Customers must be informed if a product needs modification(s) and will be “bespoke”. Any standard contractual changes for this modification must be clearly explained and put in writing, detailing the total cost to the customer.
- m) Salesmen must put in writing any claims or promises made. A breakdown of prices (VAT / Credit charge / Delivery / fitting charge etc.) must be clearly put in writing before the sale is finalised.
- n) Any credit sales must be clearly detailed and set out, giving the customer the opportunity to consider the details and consider any / the alternatives. Cancellation details must also be clearly explained.
- o) Delivery times should be clearly communicated to the customer. If the retailer fails to abide by any timeframes agreed as part of the contract, then a full refund must be given, should the Customer so request.
- p) If a retailer / or distributor is unable to fulfil an order as per the contract, a full refund must be given, should the Customer so requests.

5. STAFF TRAINING

- a) Company training records must be kept for all staff on an ongoing basis.
- b) No member of staff should be selling a product on behalf of the Retailer until they have been fully trained on that product. Whilst staffs are undergoing training they may be “shadowed” by a fully trained person. Staff must have the appropriate product knowledge to advice and assist purchasers.
- c) Training should be updated on a regular basis. It is recommended that there is a maximum of a two year gap before refresher training is given.
- d) Fully trained staff must assist their colleagues to become competent.
- e) All staff must be updated with any change of legislation to do with their role.
- 4) All staff working for the Retailer with Customer contact must be given a copy of this code.

6. MANUALS & INSTRUCTION BOOKS

Wherever possible a manual or instruction book must be given to the customer outlining as much information as possible including product limitations, service requirements and any warnings about the use of the product.

7. AFTER SALES SERVICING & REPAIRS

- a) All repairs and servicing should be acknowledged within 3 working days of request.
- b) All retailers should work to the target that no customer who relies on a piece of equipment for their mobility should be without their product for more than 10 days. Exceptions may occur due to shortages/slow delivery of parts - but any delay should be kept as short as possible.
- c) Customers must not be put under any pressure to purchase extended warranties etc. Information on any additional purchases should be made available to the customer for them to make an informed decision and to decide after consideration, whether to purchase.
- d) All repairs must have a minimum of three months warranty.
- e) The customer must be informed of the limitations of any product guarantees. If the product has been badly maintained or abused the guarantee will not cover these issues.
-) For any work that is carried out, a schedule of the work undertaken and the charges incurred must be clearly given to the customer.
- a) The customer must be provided with the shop opening hours including any emergency out of hour’s numbers.

8. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- a) A clear pricing menu must be available for any additional services
- b) If the product sold will need servicing on a regular basis then this must be explained to the customer along with likely costs. If the Retailer does not carry out this service then they need to explain this service will have to be obtained elsewhere.
- c) When appropriate, Insurance should be discussed and details given and in line with current legislation. Any leaflets available should be given to the customer.
- d) Any details on Guarantees / Warranties must be explained in full and any leaflets / instructions regarding these must be given to the customer.

9. COMPLAINTS

- a) All members must have a prompt and timely complaints procedure in place. All complaints should be resolved within four weeks wherever possible.
- b) Customers must be informed of the complaints procedure which will include:
 - o Who and how to make the initial complaint to.
 - o What information they need to provide.
 - o The timescales the complaint should be handled in.
 - o If they are not happy with the outcome who to appeal to.
 - o If they are not happy with that outcome go to CERA for arbitration.
- c) All staff should be friendly and co-operative with the customer.
- d) An appeal to either CERA or Trading standards will be upheld if members have not abided by the Code of Practice or the legal requirements. All paperwork will be requested.

10. MYSTERY SHOPPING

All members agree and acknowledge that 'Mystery Shopping' may be carried out at their store(s). Results from 'Mystery Shopping' exercises that are undertaken will be shared with the respective Retailer.

This Code of Practice is published by:

Community Equipment Retailer Accreditation

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