



# Hospital Visitor Beds

High Performance, Cost and Space Saving Hospital  
& Hospice Visitor Wall Beds and Guest Beds.

## THE DEFINITIVE FIVE PART S • P • A • C • E

GUIDE FOR WARD STAFF AND OTHER DECISION MAKERS SOURCING  
**VISITOR BEDS FOR HOSPITALS & HOSPICES**

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND WHAT TO AVOID  
- EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW...**

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### WEBSITE



### WALLBEDS



### GUESTBEDS





# THE STATUS QUO

The need to provide cost effective, space efficient, safe and comfortable overnight accommodation for visitors in Hospitals and Hospices has never been more pressing...



Whether it's parents wanting to stay close to their children on Paediatric and Neonatal Wards, fathers supporting new mothers on Maternity Units, or partners, relatives, close friends, or carers offering comfort and moral support on Cancer, Palliative Care, Dementia, Post Natal and other Adult Wards, having facilities for them to stay close to the patients, has been shown to be hugely beneficial, greatly improving the patient experience, reducing anxiety, speeding up recovery, shortening hospital stay times and **saving the provider a substantial amount of money!**

There can also be a requirement to provide overnight/rest facilities for on-call medical, surgical and laboratory staff, in rooms that need to have a second day time function and even for *patients* themselves on some Day Surgery units and in the new generation of 'no hospital bed' Midwife-led Birthing Centres.

Due to space restrictions, these facilities are usually provided by some form of space-saving bed, which can be deployed at night – (ideally close to the patient) – and then folded up/away, so as not to waste valuable Ward space, or disrupt Ward routines, during the day.

There are literally dozens of space-saving bed products on the market, but the vast majority are designed for just occasional, **light domestic** use, are *non-compliant* and totally unsuitable for use in a Hospital, or Hospice, for a whole variety of reasons which are fully explained in this guide.

Unfortunately, these reasons are not widely understood, so such unsuitable, *non-compliant* products are often **the very ones** selected, usually on price grounds and they turn out to be a total waste of money!

Conversely, there are many advantages of choosing the right Visitor bed, not least the very substantial cost savings which can be achieved by selecting a bed with a really long service life.

**Read on to find out what to look for  
and what to avoid.**



# WHO ARE WE?

We are long established, Multi-Award Winning specialists, in the UK Hospital and Hospice Visitor bed field.



Formally known as GP Care Systems, Hospital Visitor Beds offer a whole range of world class, high performance space and cost-saving guest beds and wall beds, specifically engineered for daily heavy-duty use in Hospitals and Hospices to ensure they stand the test of time, in even the most gruelling environments.

We pioneered the use of wall beds in Hospitals and Hospices with our range of single, double and made to measure 'Horizontal' and 'Vertical' **'WISKAWAY'®** Visitor Wallbeds and our **'NEAT-A-WARD'®** Patient Wallbeds, all of which come with a choice of wipe-clean/waterproof mattresses.

Our family of top-of-the range **'GLIDEAWAY'®** Visitor Guestbeds have transformed the Hospital and Hospice guest bed market and are now the guest beds of choice.

For over 40 years, Hospital Visitor Beds has been at the forefront of innovation in the Hospital and Hospice Visitor bed field, has set the standards and operated a policy of continuous product improvement. As trusted specialists in this market, we don't just provide Visitor beds - we also offer safety, comfort, space-efficiency, cost and time savings and peace of mind to Hospitals, Hospices their staff, visitors and patients.

But we don't stop at exceptional products. At Hospital Visitor Beds, we're dedicated to supporting you every step of the way. Our **FREE** pre-sales consultancy service (Helpline: 020 7439 1066) helps you identify the perfect products for your specific needs and, because we manufacture our products to order, we are able to customise them when required, even on quite small orders. Our comprehensive after-sales support is designed to ensure your investment continues to deliver, year after year.

Moreover, when costed over their impressively long working lives, our Hospital and Hospice Visitor wall beds and guest beds work out cheaper and **FAR better value for money** than anything else on the market and will outlast all competitive products, leading to substantial savings - (see also pages 11 and 12).

***To assist those involved in sourcing and specifying Visitor beds for Hospitals and Hospices, we have produced this definitive five-part S • P • A • C • E guide, based on our unrivalled (40+ years) specialist experience in the field.***



# THE MAIN PROBLEM AND WHAT TO AVOID



## **FATAL MISCONCEPTION ABOUT HOSPITAL/HOSPICE GUEST BEDS**

There is a major misconception about the concept of a 'Guest Bed'. What most people are familiar with, in this context, is a relatively cheap **light-weight** product, designed to put up the occasional overnight visitor at home. What Hospitals and Hospices actually need are much stronger, safer, *compliant* and therefore more expensive, heavy-duty products, suitable for use **every night**, by a constantly changing stream of (increasingly overweight) visitors.

## **LACK OF AWARENESS AMONG DECISION MAKERS**

Those sourcing and specifying Visitor beds (often the Ward staff) frequently fail to make this vital distinction. They generally have no idea of what is actually suitable and *compliant*, or where to find it and many Procurement Departments, Estates Departments and even Architects don't know either!

## **LIMITED FUNDING AND POOR SPENDING DECISIONS**

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that funding for these products is very limited, often from charitable sources and, human nature being what it is, when funds do become available, they are frequently (and often repeatedly) squandered, on the cheapest and least suitable products. 'Cheap' invariably works out to be expensive!

## **WASTED FUNDS AND DISAPPOINTMENT**

Every year hundreds of thousands of pounds are totally wasted on inappropriate, *non-compliant* Visitor beds leading to disappointment, frustration and missed opportunities for providing practical, cost effective and dependable visitor facilities.

## **THE SOLUTION**

Don't just choose any available space-saving bed from any supplier. Insist instead on products which are fully *compliant* and fit for **long-term, heavy-duty** use in Hospitals and Hospices. Read on for full details of what to look for and what to avoid.

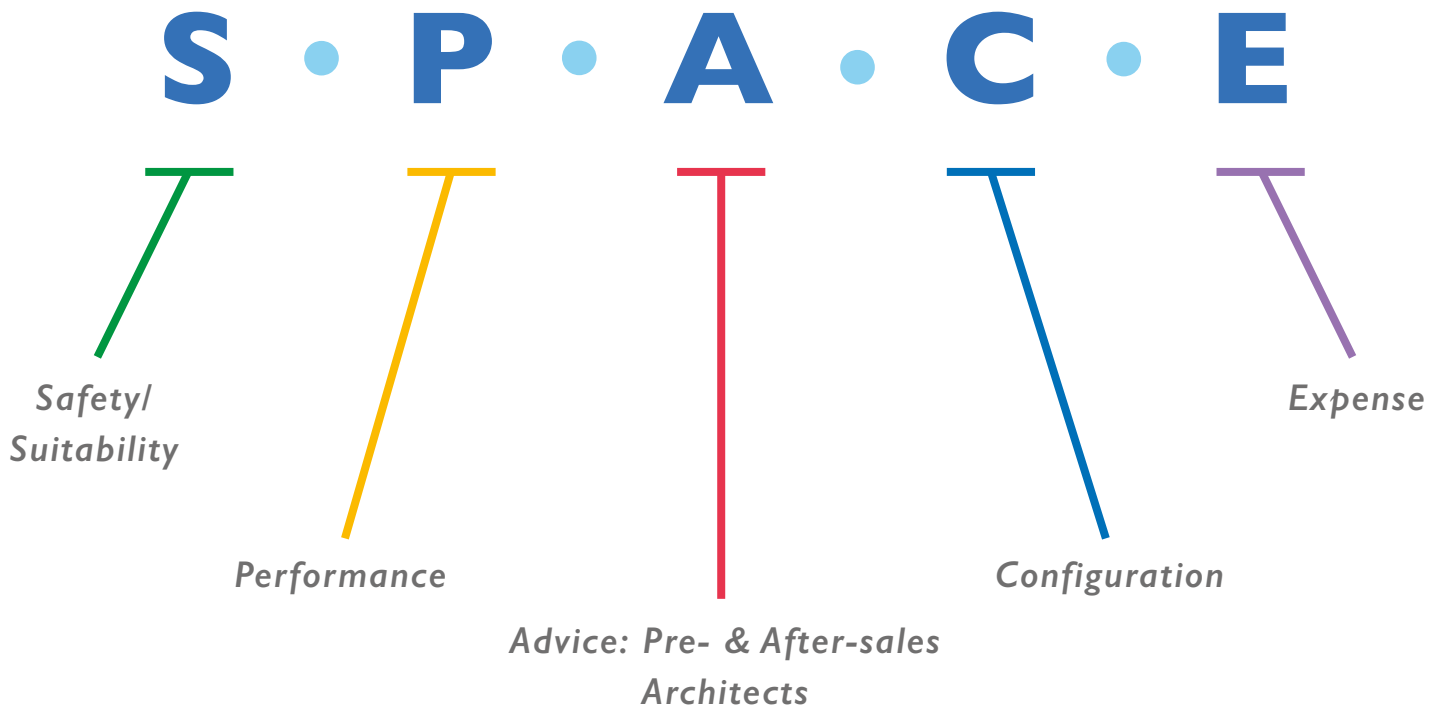
***This guide aims to address the above issues and help prevent the vicious cycle of unsuitable purchases and wasted funds.***



# THE SOLUTION AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Using the **S • P • A • C • E** anagram below, we have highlighted a whole series of essential factors which need to be considered when choosing an appropriate space-saving bed for accommodating visitors overnight in Hospitals and Hospices, if costly errors are to be avoided.

This guide is designed to help you navigate the pitfalls and to avoid the kind of expensive mistakes others are routinely making, whilst helping to ensure that your staff, patients and their visitors have the best possible experience.





# S • P • A • C • E

## **S**

### **Safety/Suitability**

- Conforming to mandatory requirements for Hospital and Hospice products.



#### **BAD CHOICES**



*A non-compliant, domestic, wall bed 'tray' base on the Neonatal Unit of a major Regional teaching Hospital. The fixed wooden slats are difficult to keep clean and the space underneath is a trap for dirt and debris and virtually impossible to clean. The domestic mattresses supplied were also non-compliant and had to be replaced.*



*This was one of 11 uncleanable non-compliant, mattresses we found in daily use on the parents' wall beds on a children's ward at a well known London Teaching Hospital! They were replaced with our wipe-clean/waterproof 'FLEXICA'® mattresses, with replaceable covers. The wall beds were also defective and have since been replaced.*

More specifically, these include:-

#### **Infection Control Requirements:**

It must be possible to clean/disinfect the products used, regularly, usually with chlorine-containing cleaning agents and sometimes even with steam and the surfaces must be accessible, wipe-clean/waterproof, smooth and fault-free. Wooden bed frames and wooden slatted bed bases are not suitable (see top picture opposite) and a mattress with an absorbent domestic cover, for instance, may not be used at all. Even waterproof covers must be discarded, if damaged - (see pictures below and on page 13). The straps used to hold the bedding in place, when wall beds are folded away, also need to be easily cleanable. Webbing straps are therefore unsuitable, on infection control grounds.

*All Hospital Visitor Beds' high performance space and cost-saving Visitor beds comply fully with current Infection Control requirements. We NEVER use wooden slats and our powder-coated, all-steel bed frames and wipe-clean/waterproof mattresses can be cleaned/disinfected in the same way and using the same cleaning agents, as normal Hospital beds and mattresses.*

*All our wipe-clean/waterproof mattress covers can be replaced, (zipped on/off), so a tear in the cover doesn't mean you have to discard the whole mattress – you just replace the defective cover. The unique flexible bedding retaining straps provided with all our wall beds have a smooth waterproof surface and can be wiped-clean in literally seconds.*



# S · P · A · C · E



## BAD CHOICE



*This wall bed design was flawed and unsafe for use in a Hospital. It was purchased on cost grounds, despite our warnings and resulted in a sick child's parent being folded away in the night and becoming trapped in the bed! This and the other similar beds on the Ward were subsequently replaced with our 'WISKAWAY'® Wallbeds. So the Hospital ended up with our wall beds after all, having completely wasted their money on the above (cheaper, non-compliant) model and were lucky that the parent in question was not injured and didn't sue!*



## GOOD CHOICE



*Mandatory Ignition Source 5 label.*

### **Health and Safety Requirements:**

Products used must be safe, robust and stable, with no sharp edges, or protruding parts and must not present a hazard, such as a trip hazard, or 'finger-trap' to the user - (see also top picture).

### **Manual Handling Requirements:**

Products used must not be awkward, or too heavy to be handled by a single person, or cause the user/operator excessive strain, such as over-stretching, whilst lifting.

### **Flammability Standards:**

Products used must not present a Fire Risk and must comply with specific flame retardancy standards. For instance, mattresses in most Hospital areas must be flame retardant to 'Ignition Source' 5 and must be permanently labelled, as such - (see bottom picture). In high risk areas, such as Mental Health Wards the requirements are even stricter and the standard for mattresses is Ignition Source 7.

**Non compliance with any of the above requirements, means the products are not allowed to be used in a Hospital, or Hospice.**

**This alone knocks out 90% of the space-saving beds on the market, at a stroke!**

*All Hospital Visitor Beds products comply with all the above mandatory requirements, but we frequently come across other, non-compliant products in Hospitals and Hospices, as illustrated (top left) and elsewhere in this guide.*

*This may sometimes be because the parties involved were simply not aware that compliant products existed, or where to find them, but is more likely due to the fact that non-compliant products are significantly cheaper to purchase initially - (albeit FAR more expensive in the long run)!*





# S • P • A • C • E



## Performance



### GOOD CHOICES

- In terms of *desirable* features (other than the mandatory ones).

#### **Strength:**

Products used should be sufficiently strong to cope with the job in hand (e.g. overweight users). Avoid breakable, wooden slats.

*Our single all-steel bed frames and unique, firm, non-sag, woven steel mesh bases will comfortably cope with loadings of up to 200Kg and our doubles with up to 400Kg.*

#### **Durability:**

Products used should be able to withstand repeated mistreatment over extended periods and should ideally come with a guarantee.

*Our space and cost-saving Hospital and Hospice Visitor bed frames are designed for a long, hard service life, are guaranteed for 10 years and will last far longer.*

#### **Simplicity:**

As visitor beds are handled by a constantly changing stream of different people, they should ideally be as simple as possible in design, easy and intuitive to use, have automatically opening and retracting legs and come with clear safety/operating instructions.

*All our award winning space-saving Visitor beds have simple, intuitive mechanisms, automatic leg action and come with clear, step-by-step, wipe-clean, laminated safety/operating instructions, permanently fixed to and prominently displayed on every bed - (see picture opposite).*



*Compact, powder coated, all-steel construction, automatic leg action, rubber corner protectors, Hospital wheels (2 with brakes), a choice of bed frame colours and of single, or double sizes and a wipe-clean/waterproof mattress put the 'GLIDEAWAY'® Visitor Guestbed in a class of its own. This model will sleep even overweight adults, for extended periods, in total safety & comfort at an optimal height of 47cm.*



'GLIDEAWAY'® Safety Instructions.





# S • P • A • C • E



## Space Efficiency:

Products used should ideally take up the absolute minimum of valuable space, both when in use at night and particularly, when folded up/away, during the day. There are a lot of very bulky, cumbersome designs on the market, including many contract guest beds, sofa/chair beds and recliners - (see pictures on page 13).



## GOOD CHOICE



**BESPOKE  
MODEL**

*Our ‘GLIDEAWAY’® Visitor Guestbeds and ‘WISKAWAY’® Visitor Wallbeds are designed to be extremely space efficient.*



## Customisation:

Whilst standard products may be fine in many instances, sometimes minor modifications/changes can make a big difference if, for instance, the standard size is just slightly too wide to fit. Some customers may also have special requirements - (see pictures opposite). But most suppliers won't even entertain making changes.



*We make all our products to order, so we can be very flexible, on size and design even on relatively small orders and we frequently adapt our products to meet special customer requirements.*

*Customised Horizontal WISKAWAY® 6000SB Parents' Wallbeds at Great Ormond Street Hospital. These modified wall beds were produced to conform to the special requirements of Great Ormond Street Hospital, who have used them to replace unpopular/cumbersome chair beds and recliners on various Wards.*

***By adding the above desirable features to the earlier mandatory ones, we have narrowed the field still further and have eliminated most of the remaining unsuitable contenders.***



# S • P • A • C • E



## **Advice: Pre- & After-sales**

- This is what you won't get from most suppliers.

### **Advice:**

This means FREE expert **pre-sales** advice, (from someone who fully understands **all** the requirements and constraints), on what would be the most suitable product for a particular job. This can sometimes entail a FREE site visit.

Call our helpline today on 020 7439 1066 to discuss your requirements and benefit from the unrivalled experience of our specialist staff.

***We still regularly come across situations where totally unsuitable and non-compliant products have been sourced via local furniture shops, office supply companies and even Amazon, none of whom even begin to understand, or care about the mandatory or other requirements!***

### **After-sales/spares service:**

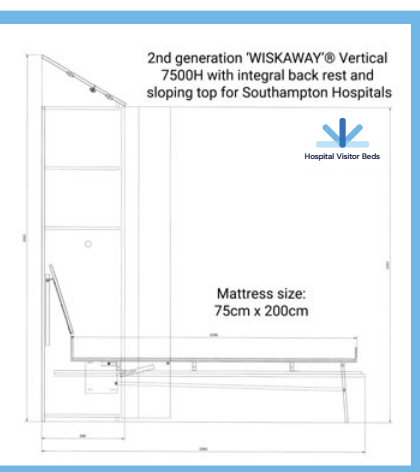
This includes dealing promptly with any problems, actual or perceived, supplying spare/replacement parts, when required, to prolong the product's working life, optional periodic servicing and installation/relocation - (of our wall beds).

### **Architects:**

If you're working on Ward refurbishments and new Hospitals/Hospices, you can check and discuss dimensions and designs, including any bespoke requirements, such as sloping tops, with our technical staff. Drawings are also available - (see example opposite). 'Sample' beds can be provided for mock-up rooms.



**John Miller**  
**Chief Designer, Founder**  
**& Managing Director of**  
**Hospital Visitor Beds**





# S • P • A • C • E



## Configuration



### **GOOD CHOICE**



The Ultimate Visitor Bed! A counterbalanced 'Vertical' **'WISKAWAY'® 7500H Parents' Wallbed**, sited close to the sick child's bed is the 'ultimate' solution. It can be folded away, (in literally seconds, in an emergency), complete with all the bedding, including the pillows into its own, compact, wipe-clean housing. Matching wardrobes and other furniture are also available, if required, as are sloping tops.

**\* Our 'WISKAWAY'® Wallbeds can easily be unfixed and relocated if required.**

This is where you decide on the type(s) of space-saving bed you want, depending on where and how you are planning to use them and also on your budget. If your budget is relatively modest, for instance, you might opt for a fold-up bed on wheels which can be moved around the Ward, made up and used when and where required and kept on the Ward, or stored elsewhere, when not in use. One advantage of this type of bed is that, if you don't need to be able to accommodate visitors in every room, just a few such **mobile** beds may suffice to provide all the facilities you need.

If you have a larger budget, for a complete Ward refurbishment, or a new Hospital, you might choose a more expensive wall bed in a housing, sited (permanently fixed)\* right next to each Hospital bed, which can be folded away with all the bedding, including the pillows. This is the 'ultimate' Visitor bed - (see pictures opposite).

Many Hospitals and Hospices opt for a combination of the two, with **'WISKAWAY'®** Visitor Wallbeds in the single cubicles and **'GLIDEAWAY'®** Visitor Guestbeds in the multi-bedded bays.

### **Relocation:\***

In December 2020/January 2021 we moved and serviced all 24 **'WISKAWAY'® 7500H Parents' Wallbeds**, from Ward 75 on the Ground Floor at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital (RMCH), to Ward 86 on the third floor, to make way for an expanded A & E Dept. The RMCH have had over 200 **'WISKAWAY'® Parents' Wallbeds** in service, since 2009, spread over multiple Wards, which we have serviced periodically for them.

We offer our **'GLIDEAWAY'®** Visitor Guestbeds in a choice of 10 colours and in single and double sizes. Our 'Horizontal' and 'Vertical' **'WISKAWAY'®** Visitor Wallbeds come in a range of single, double and made to measure sizes with a wide selection of finishes for the bed frames, integral housings, optional lockers and other matching furniture - (for further details please scan the QR codes on the back page).

# S • P • A • C • E

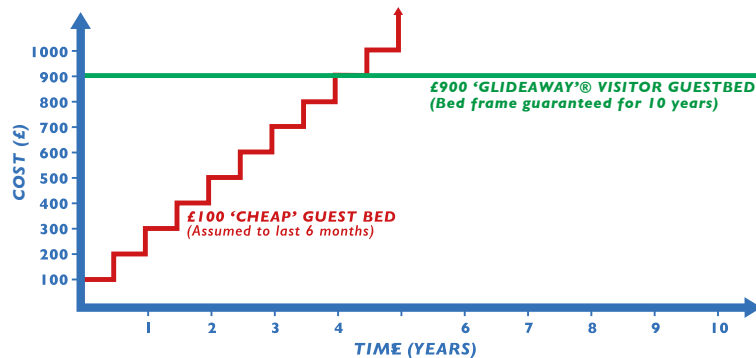
## Expense

- ALWAYS LOOK FOR REAL VALUE FOR MONEY!

This is where some of the worst purchasing decisions are made and staggering amounts of money are completely wasted, every day, in the NHS and elsewhere.

A £100 **domestic** guest bed, (apart from being totally *non-compliant*) will last just a few weeks, or months at most, in a Hospital/Hospice, before having to be replaced again and again and again. This was the exact situation at one of the country's leading Children's Hospitals, before we launched our high performance '**GLIDEAWAY**'® Hospital Visitor Guestbeds - (see pictures opposite).

### COMPARATIVE PURCHASE COSTS (NET OF ALL OTHER ASSOCIATED COSTS)



A £100 'cheap' guest bed will last 6 months, at most, in a Hospital, or Hospice. A £900 '**GLIDEAWAY**'® will easily last 10 years, or more. So do the maths: which one is actually going to work out cheaper? Dividing the '**GLIDEAWAY**'® price by 10, we get a cost of £90/year. Compare this with £100 for the 'cheap' guest bed, which will last just a few weeks, or months at most!

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## BAD CHOICE



Two typical (broken) non-compliant 'cheap' domestic guest bedframes wasting space on a Children's Ward, awaiting collection/disposal. These types of guest bed last just a few weeks or months, at most, in a Hospital environment.

## GOOD CHOICE



Award Winning '**GLIDEAWAY**'® Guestbed frames have been specifically engineered for daily, heavy-duty use in Hospitals and Hospices, will cope with loads of up to 200Kg and are supported by a full after-sales service. Many customers have been using their '**GLIDEAWAYS**'® for 15, or even 20 years.

You generally get what you pay for in life and it's important not to make the all too common mistake of choosing a seemingly 'cheaper' product, when a more expensive one will last far longer and will therefore offer much better value for money, when costed over its working life, even though the initial outlay is greater.



# S • P • A • C • E

## **The True Costs:**

But the **real comparative costs** are not just between the 2 respective initial purchase prices. The 'cheap' £100 guest bed is not very strong and can't be repaired and there are no spares available, because no one offers that service, so even a minor defect can render it useless.

Each time it needs to be replaced, someone has to collect and arrange and pay for the disposal of the defective bed. Someone else has to order a new one, with several others involved in the purchasing/approval process. Yet another person needs to take delivery of the new bed, unpack it and deliver it to the Ward, etc. This whole 'cycle' is repeated every few months, involving a whole 'team' of people!

## **THIS IS THE HIDDEN COST OF BUYING 'CHEAP'!**

How 'expensive' does the **'GLIDEAWAY'®** Visitor Guestbed look now? Yes- the initial outlay is greater but, costed over 10 years, the **'GLIDEAWAY'®** actually costs not just less, but **FAR LESS** than the so-called 'cheap' £100 guest bed over the same period, which will anyway have gone up in price repeatedly over the 10 years in question and will have cost a small additional fortune in disposal and re-ordering costs!



Apart from the cost, just think of the Carbon Footprint of just **one 'GLIDEAWAY'®** compared to a **'van load'** of so-called 'cheap' guest beds needed to do the same job over the same period!

At the end of 10 years the **'GLIDEAWAY'®** Visitor Guestbed can still be serviced and will continue to give good value for years to come. Many of our customers have been using their **'GLIDEAWAYS'®** for 15 and even 20 years.

Similarly the launch customer for our 'Vertical' **'WISKAWAY'®** 7500H Parent's Wallbed has been using their original 16 beds for over 32 years and now has nearly 80 of them. We have serviced their wall beds periodically for them, as we do for many of our other Visitor bed customers.





## BAD CHOICE



This chair bed/recliner design is ugly, bulky and difficult to move around, taking up a lot of Ward space during the day. It's also narrow and uncomfortable to 'sleep' on and very unpopular with both visitors and staff. This particular one has a small tear in the upholstery and is thus unusable, on infection control grounds, requiring re-upholstery, or complete replacement.

## Equipped to Choose:

Once the specifier has understood what to look for and what to avoid, from the information in this guide, they will be equipped to make an informed choice.

**Taking all these factors into consideration, there are not many products left to choose from, but the few that are left, will be technically suitable for the job and there will still be some choice.**

Hospital Visitor Beds offer the leading **Hospital** and **Hospice Visitor guest bed and wall bed** products on the market and the only Award Winning and high-performance ones.

We do not offer chair/sofa bed products, or recliners, partly because these tend to be bulky and cumbersome, but mainly because it only takes **one small tear** in the wipe-clean upholstery and the whole product is rendered technically unusable, on infection control grounds - (see picture opposite).

## CALL OUR HELPLINE TODAY!

# 020 7439 1066



### WEBSITE



### WALLBEDS



### GUESTBEDS



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