



# **British Healthcare Trades Association: An Introduction**

**The British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA) is one of the largest healthcare associations in the UK.**

**Our common vision is for everyone to have access to the best products and support available, so they can live healthier and more independent lives.**



## Who we are

Founded in 1917, BHTA has been instrumental in championing better healthcare for over 100 years.

The association has grown to become one of the largest healthcare associations in the UK. It now represents over 400 companies, employing 18,500 people, across 12 key sectors of the healthcare and assistive technologies industry.

We bring together leading manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and service providers to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation, support healthcare systems and services, and protect consumers' interests.

The estimated £3.7bn worth of essential products and services our members supply to NHS and social care settings are integral to the delivery of healthcare across the UK. Our members also provide important assistive and independent living technologies directly to consumers, helping to reduce the ever-growing pressures on public health and social care services.





## Playing a pivotal role in health and social care

BHTA members are responsible for the design, production and distribution of healthcare and assistive technologies (including medical devices, acute and community care products, independent living technologies/products, and associated services).

Products range from medical beds and mattresses, stoma and continence products, and specialist seating and positioning equipment, to first-aid and children's equipment, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, stairlifts, prosthetics and more.

Our members also provide a range of services to individuals and the NHS, from assessments for the right mobility vehicle, to the dispensing of prescriptions for healthcare and assistive products.

These products and services are fundamental to the running of the NHS and social care systems, and help transform the lives of millions worldwide.



## Helping to tackle the country's healthcare challenges

Together, the BHTA and our members work to help overcome the healthcare challenges facing the UK, be it:

- Creating new innovations and better advice to avoid preventable injuries, such as pressure ulcers
- Preventing hospital admissions by keeping people safe and independent in their own homes
- Reducing bed blocking in hospitals by facilitating quicker discharges

Through the BHTA and our members' efforts, we deliver better outcomes for patients, more independence for those in need, and better value for the healthcare system through costs savings.





## Rising to the challenge of COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, BHTA members have worked with the NHS and social care systems to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From rapidly scaling the manufacture and delivery of medical beds, mattresses and decontamination products to hospital and care settings at the peak of the pandemic, to delivering PPE for frontline staff and maintaining critical equipment and services, our members have worked tirelessly to support the national effort.





## Protecting consumers

Our association is also a consumer protection body, ensuring people – often vulnerable because of their age or medical condition – who need our members' products and services can be confident that they are treated fairly and ethically.

At the heart of this protection is our Code of Practice, which sets out strict standards that all our members must meet to demonstrate best practice and ethical behaviour in their business and retail dealings.

The Code is the first and only one for consumers in the healthcare industry to have achieved approval under the Trading Standards Institute's Scheme. It protects people by ensuring ethical selling, the suitability and quality of products, and high standards of service. It also includes access to independent arbitration, free to the consumer.



## Engaging with stakeholders

The health and social care systems face significant challenges. Our members will play an important and positive role in shaping the reforms that will help the UK meet the many pressures it faces.

BHTA strongly supports the principles and direction of travel towards: early intervention for long-term financial savings, greater value for the taxpayer through applying the principles of integrated care, breaking down funding silos, more use of personal budgets, and giving patients more control of their care.

BHTA and our members are committed to working with government, parliament and stakeholders across the sector to continually improve the healthcare landscape for all.





## Contact us

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