

## ***Power Assist Wheelchair -- Markets Reach \$327.6 Million By 2017***

LEXINGTON, Massachusetts (August 9, 2011) – WinterGreen Research announces that it has a new study on Power Assist Wheelchair Market Shares and Forecasts, Worldwide, 2011-2017. The 2011 study has 1,092 pages, 334 tables and figures. Power Assist wheelchair technology works to provide essential supplement to manual pushing of the regular wheelchairs. Motor assist devices are varied and innovative, providing significant advantages to users.

Propulsion assist devices for manual wheelchairs are used by people who lack the strength to propel their wheelchairs and lack the stamina to propel their wheelchairs throughout the day. Many people may move to a conventional power wheelchair when faced with propulsion problems.

Power wheelchairs present some problems that are not easily overcome. Power wheelchairs rarely fold for storage. Power wheelchairs are difficult to load into a smaller vehicle. If they do, they tend to be bulky and heavy.

The manual wheelchair has appeal because it keeps people moving physically. This level of exercise is of value for maintaining physical health.

Manual wheelchair propulsion assist devices use a battery powered motor to reduce the physical effort. A non-motorized manual assist device is a wheel that uses gear ratios to reduce the effort required to propel the wheelchair.

Manual wheelchair propulsion assist devices are useful as an add-on. Devices can be added to an existing manual wheel chair in the form of wheels. Power propulsion assist wheels have motors built into the hubs of the wheels to enhance the user's power when propelling the wheelchair. Power assist wheels can be turned off when not needed.



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According to Susan Eustis, primary author of the study, "Using the assist wheels instead of pushing all the time improves the effort ratio, use of a motor some of the time, or one push with a geared wheel equals three pushes. The arms do not tire out as fast and people can go further distances."

Research is focused on reducing the incidence of conditions secondary to the long term use of the wheelchair. Upper extremity pain, de-conditioning, vibration/shock exposure are all issues to some extent. Conditions associated with long-term wheelchair use need to be addressed.

Pressure ulcers are a costly health care problem worldwide. A common problem in wheelchair users is back pain and poor posture. For both of these conditions, it is thought that tilt in space and recline may be of benefit. Tilt in space can significantly reduce static seating pressure, a key ingredient in the development of pressure sores.

The emergence of advanced mobility devices shows promise for addressing conditions that arise because of long term wheelchair use. The contribution of engineering is key. Increased sales of devices support research and development budgets, better engineering contributes to achieving economies of scale.

Markets at \$109.1 million in 2010 are set to grow to \$327.6 million by 2017. Economies of scale and more efficient manufacturing will drive the price down and increase the appeal of devices. More favorable reimbursement and baby boomer purchasing will serve to drive these markets higher in the future.

Growth is different by region, depending on different reimbursement patterns.

WinterGreen Research is an independent research organization funded by the sale of market research studies all over the world and by the implementation of ROI models that are used to calculate the total cost of ownership of equipment, services, and software. The company has 35 distributors worldwide, including Global Information Info Shop, Market Research.com, Research and Markets, Bloomberg, and Thompson Financial.



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