



May 2016

FUNDING REQUEST CHECKLIST: PEDIATRIC POWER WHEELCHAIR WITH ACCESSORIES

Power wheelchairs provide independence for adults and children. Independent mobility allows for full integration in homes, places of employment, schools, and the community. Independent functional mobility gives children, including the very young, access to the same environment as their peers. Children also benefit from planning on how they will get from one place to another, determine why they need to go there, how they will interact with that place once they get there, and to store these learned experiences for future use. Gross motor development is the foundation for so many other developmental milestones that are necessary for a child to grow into an adult.

The information provided in this toolkit will assist you in justifying a power wheelchair as a medical need for both functional mobility and proper development.

LETTERS OF MEDICAL JUSTIFICATION (LMJ) OR MEDICAL NEED (LMN)

LMJ or LMN letters should:

- Be written by an ordering or treating practitioner (e.g., doctor, therapist, nurse practitioner).
- Be signed and dated by the professional who wrote the letter.
- Address the child's cognitive status, medical history, current health status, and the perceived benefits of introducing this device into his/her care plan.
- Address both the medical need for independent functional mobility, (e.g., to mitigate learned helplessness, and how the introduction of a power wheelchair will affect the child's ability to reach developmental milestones.
- If the equipment has been tried, the LMJ should report on what was observed in as many of the user's customary environments as possible during the trial period.
- Include information about other devices that were considered during the user's evaluation period. If less costly devices were considered but ruled out, there should be an explanation about why these devices will not meet the individual's needs.

Justify the need for a power wheelchair, through Medicaid for children as young as 18 months-old (see-Other Resources).

SUPPORTING LETTER OF MEDICAL NEED

Individuals with functional motor disabilities often experience a variety of other medical conditions requiring specialist care. When working with a child, you want to identify all of the doctors and health care professionals he or she sees regularly. Use the following list of medical specialties and sub-specialties to identify medical professionals who might support the individual's acquiring this device. See the sample letter for information that you might want to suggest be included in their letter of support.

Pediatric Rehabilitative Physiatrist
Cardiology
Developmental Disabilities Pediatrician
Gastroenterologist
Occupational or Physical Therapist
Neuromuscular Medicine
Neurodevelopmental Disability Medicine
Orthopedist
Pulmonologist

Pain Medicine
Rheumatology
Urology
Pediatrician
Chiropractic
Speech Therapy or Pathology
Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)
Neurology

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS

Videos should be planned in advance. The video should clearly capture the child's ability to safely and effectively use the wheelchair. When you videotape the individual using the device be sure to do the following:

- Practice for several days before capturing its use on videotape.
- Do not let the child know that he or she is being videotaped.
- Identify the user, the requested equipment, and the Medicaid prior approval number in the video.
- Identify what events you want to show in the video (e.g., familiarity with using the wheelchair, completion of activities of daily living, using of seat elevator, and the ability for the user to maneuver around several common environments such as home, school, outdoors).
- Ask someone who has not seen the video to review and comment on its contents.

When taking a photo of a person, remember to keep it dignified.

- Take several pictures from different angles and choose only those that are clear, have good lighting, and convey exactly what you want the reviewer to see.
- If you want to use an object as a reference for size (e.g., an open pressure sore, use objects that are easily identifiable so that people have an idea of their size.) A dollar bill is approximately six inches.
- Include the identity of the individual in the picture by name, prior approval number, and the purpose of the picture (e.g., Marvin Black, PA#, request for power wheelchair, child using seat elevator to rise to height of a dining room table.

EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH

Evidence-based research should be used to support the user's diagnosis and the accepted standard of care. It should be referenced in the LMJ when speaking about the effect or correction of a certain condition. Include a copy of the literature or a website link. Articles should be current and on point.

SAMPLE LETTERS

- Sample Letter of Medical Justification for a Pediatric Power Wheelchair
- Sample Supporting Letter of Medical Justification for a Pediatric Power Wheelchair

OTHER RESOURCES

- [Did You Know series, "Power Wheelchairs for Young Children: Supporting Medicaid Funding for Children as Young as Two Years Old"](#)
- [AT Advocate newsletter, "Power Wheelchairs and Accessories for Young Children: Justifying Medicaid Funding for Kids as Young as 18 Months"](#)

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