

WHEELCHAIR, USE OF

PURPOSE:

1. To provide mobility for the non-ambulatory resident with safety and comfort.
2. To provide mobility for residents learning to become independent in activities of daily living.

EQUIPMENT:

1. Wheelchair.
2. Pressure-redistribution seat cushion, if necessary.

PROCEDURE:

1. **NOTE:** WHEELCHAIR SHOULD BE THE PROPER SIZE; IF TOO LARGE, THE RESIDENT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN GOOD BODY ALIGNMENT. IF TOO SMALL, SKIN IRRITATION WILL RESULT DUE TO PRESSURE.
2. APPLY BRAKES TO LOCK WHEELS OF WHEELCHAIR.
3. Fold foot rests up out of the resident's way for safety. DO NOT REMOVE FOOT RESTS UNLESS RESIDENT USES FEET ON FLOOR TO ENABLE MOBILITY.
4. Pad seat of chair with pressure-redistribution cushion and light cover if necessary. Do not sit resident directly onto cushion.
5. Assist resident to dress in appropriate clothing with proper footwear as per plan of care.
6. Assist resident into wheelchair, using proper transfer techniques.
7. Lower foot rests and place resident's feet on foot rests if used. Position feet and legs in good body alignment. Be sure residents feet are securely positioned on foot rest/use calf supports and adaptive equipment as needed (foot board/foot boxes). Elevate leg(s) as ordered.
8. Please make sure all positioning devices are in place as ordered.
9. Check to be sure clothing or protective cover is not wrinkled under the resident.
10. Be sure the resident's clothing covers his/her back so that his/her skin is not in contact with the plastic back rest.
11. Permit the resident to remain in the wheelchair according to the physician's order or as tolerated.
12. Assist resident to bathroom and re-position at least every two hours, encourage resident to self-reposition if able
13. Assist resident to the area of the facility desired. Encourage and instruct resident in proper procedures for safely propelling the wheelchair.
14. When returning resident to room, assist with transfer to bed, recliner chair, etc. as necessary per plan of care.
15. Leave resident in comfortable position with call light within reach.

PROPELLING WHEELCHAIR BACKWARD:

Wheelchairs are to be propelled forward unless it is unsafe to do so. For safety, wheelchairs are propelled backward over elevations, door thresholds and rough surfaces.

POWER DRIVEN/ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR:

The facility promotes residents independence with use of assisted mobility device including the use of power/electric wheelchairs. The facility must also provide a safe environment, free from accident hazards. The use of a power/electric wheelchair requires:

- A physician order for the use of a power/electric wheelchair.

- The power wheelchair must be able to safely fit through facility doorways and room openings.
- The power wheelchair must be checked by the facility or corporate maintenance to be sure the chair is in good repair. Any concerns with the safety of the power wheelchair will be addressed with the resident/resident representative and reviewed with the power wheelchair provider/service center.
- The resident that will be using the power wheelchair must be alert, aware of surroundings and must be able to understand and retain training on safe maneuvering of the power wheelchair. The resident will be assessed for safety in use of the power wheelchair by the facility therapy department, which may include PT, OT, and ST if needed.
- Adaptations to the power wheelchair to allow for safer positioning and mobility will be done in cooperation with the wheelchair provider (eg: speed adjustment, control adaptations, wheelchair seating (supports)).
- Residents will be re-assessed if safety concerns are identified or if resident exhibits a change in condition (cognitive and/or physical decline) or significant improvement.
- The use of the power wheelchair will be addressed on the care plan.
- Facility staff will be training on any assistance needed for the use of the power wheelchair (eg: transfer to the wheelchair, positioning, battery charging).
- Safety concern with the use of the power wheelchair that place the resident or other resident/staff at risk for injury, require notification of the physician, resident/resident representative to revise the care plan which may result in discontinuing the use of the power/electric wheelchair.