



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center PHYSICAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Procedure for Procuring, Assembling, and Maintaining Wheelchairs for Inpatients that are Ventilator-Department

Policy No.: 409
Reviewed: June 2021
Supersedes: May 2018
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PURPOSE: To delineate the areas of responsibility of each department in procuring, assembling, and maintaining wheelchairs for ventilator-dependent inpatients.

POLICY: The physical therapist will coordinate services with respiratory therapy, occupational therapy and Bio Medical Department when assembling and maintaining a standard or power wheelchair for an inpatient that is ventilator-dependent.

- I. **PROCEDURE:** Manual wheelchair for use when patient is initially cleared to be out of bed.
- A. The physical therapist will:
1. Obtain cushion and modify it, as needed;
 2. Obtain reclining wheelchair from contracted vendor or unit (hospital-owned wheelchairs);
 3. Obtain ventilator tray or other ventilator carrying device and necessary positioning equipment, such as trunk support, arm troughs, head supports, from contracted vendor or through hospital wheelchair supplies.
 4. Arrange for the technician to put equipment on a wheelchair; and
 5. Instruct nursing personnel in positioning and transferring patient with positioning devices.
- B. The respiratory therapist will:
1. Obtain portable ventilator with external battery;
 2. Attach portable ventilator – the RT removes humidifier when appropriate.
- C. The occupational therapist will:
1. Obtain and fit lapboard, mobile arm support, and other upper extremity positioning and assistive devices as needed;

2. Coordinate with Orthotics, PT, and technician for equipment adjustments.
- II. Power wheelchair for use while in the hospital – Same procedure as with the manual chair for PT, OT, respiratory therapist. In addition, the nurse is responsible for daily charging of the wheelchair battery.
 - III. Permanent wheelchair – power or manual:
 - A. In addition to the detailed procedure outlined in Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 411, the physical therapist will:
 1. Order patient’s permanent power and or manual wheelchair, while consulting with a vendor representative and OT as needed (order should include positioning devices that are medically necessary);
 2. Consult with OT before finalizing wheelchair order to ensure compatibility with UE positioning and function needs as well as Environmental Control Unit (ECU) needs; and
 3. Vendor will fit patient in permanent wheelchair.
 - B. The occupational therapist will:
 1. Order specialized ECU or UE equipment such as mobile arm supports (When indicated, ECU’s may be ordered at the same time the wheelchair is ordered by PT, or the ECU order may be placed separately.); and
 2. Consult with PT regarding upper extremity support and ECU compatibility with wheelchair.
 - C. The respiratory therapist will:
Consult with PT regarding ventilator and wheelchair compatibility.


Director, Physical Therapy Department