



**RANCHO LOS AMIGOS NATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER**  
**Occupational Therapy and Recreation Therapy Department**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

<b>SUBJECT: BATHING EVALUATIONS AND TRAINING BY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY</b>	<b>Policy No.:</b> <b>Revised:</b> <b>Supersedes:</b> <b>Page:</b>	<b>305</b> <b>January 2016</b> <b>January 2013</b> <b>1 of 3</b>
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**POLICY**

Bathing evaluations are performed by authorized occupational therapy personnel based on individual patient needs. All staff responsible for bathing evaluations and training will have demonstrated knowledge of safety principles, competency in emergency procedures and ability to function independently in this area. New employees are required to demonstrate competency by carrying out the activity in the presence of a designated staff member and by completing the Bathing Self-Study competency check-out (Attachment A).

**INDICATIONS FOR BATHING EVALUATION AND TRAINING**

A bathing evaluation will be performed when:

1. The patient has identified this as a goal in the rehabilitation process.
2. Functional/safety deficits or adaptive equipment needs have been identified which would impact the patient's ability to bathe adequately and safely for discharge setting.
3. There is an identified need for patient, family and/or caregiver education and training for bathing.

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STAFF AUTHORIZED TO PERFORM BATHING EVALUATION AND TRAINING**

1. Occupational Therapists after service competency is completed.
2. Occupational Therapy Assistants after service competency is completed.
3. Occupational Therapy Interns may perform evaluations and training only after they have demonstrated service competency and have been observed by the preceptor to be competent. They may require direct supervision by an OTR/L or OTA/L for evaluation or training of more complex patients. The preceptor will determine the OT Intern's ability to work independently with more complex patients on a case by case basis. If an intern is performing OT bathing training in a bathroom, an OTR/L

or OTA/L must be present. Once an intern is cleared he/she may perform bathing training in the patient unit under distant supervision by therapy or nursing staff.

4. Rehabilitation Therapy Technicians and/or Rehabilitation Associates perform training only under continuous supervision of an OT after service competency is demonstrated. They may assist other occupational therapy practitioners during bathing evaluation or training if more than one person is required.
5. Service competency includes the Bathing Self-Study competency check out and observation of performance by a designated staff member.
6. To improve patient safety, performance of bathing/showering with a patient during a Saturday or holiday should only be performed if the staff working with the patient on the weekend is the patient's primary therapist.

## **PROCEDURE**

1. In the case of ongoing medical issues such as skin ulcers, blood pressure fluctuation and post surgical conditions, a physician's order in the patient's medical chart is required in order for the patient to participate in a bathing evaluation.
2. The therapist will be familiar with emergency procedures and will know the location of the nearest call light in the event of an emergency while using a training bathroom.
3. Prior to the session, equipment to be used during evaluation or training will be inspected to ensure that it is in safe working condition.
4. The OT will consider the need for physiological monitoring during the bathing activity, remembering that heat, postural changes with physical exertion, and the stress involved in the evaluation may cause blood pressure changes. When the OTA/L or OT Intern are performing the bathing activity, the OTR/L will communicate any precautions or changes from normal routine bathing practices.
5. The OTR/L will make the determination if the bathing evaluation can be safely performed by the OTA/L or OT intern.
6. Immediately following the evaluation or training, the practitioner will wipe the adaptive equipment used (e.g. bath bench) and the bathtub used (e.g. bathtub on patient care unit or bathtub in OT training bathroom) as per Departmental Policy No. 604. The practitioner will notify the maintenance custodian for cleaning of the bathtub located in the OT training bathrooms.

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7. The person performing the evaluation/training will be familiar with the patient's transfer status prior to performing the evaluation and training and/or arrange for assistance if needed.
8. When possible, the home setting for bathing will be simulated.
9. Following a bathing evaluation, an appropriate number of training sessions will be scheduled to assure safety and optimal outcome for patient and family/caregiver learning.
10. The patient and family/caregiver education and training will include safety precautions, recommended equipment and optimal bathing techniques.
11. During the evaluation and training process, the patient's privacy will be respected by using privacy curtains, "occupied" signs and door locks.

#### **DOCUMENTATION OF BATHING EVALUATION**

1. All bathing evaluations will be documented in the patient's daily, weekly and discharge notes and will include the patient's status during bathing, any patient/family/caregiver education and training provided, and recommendations for equipment. Information will be communicated to the team via weekly progress note.

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Director, Occupational Therapy and Recreation Therapy Department

Signature (s) On File