

SEATING SERVICES STANDARDS FOR ALBERTA AIDS TO DAILY LIVING (AADL) PROGRAM

A. Seating Services Framework

The Inter-disciplinary Team will include:

- the client
 - the caregiver
 - an Occupational Therapist
 - a Physical Therapist
 - a Commercial Seating Technician of an AADL seating vendor
 - an Adaptive Seating Technician
 - other disciplines as required, e.g. Psychiatrist
-
- The best compliment of the seating team is to have a PT and OT participating in assessment
 - When this compliment cannot be achieved , if the skill sets are met within the rehab health professional team, the assessment will be approved by AADL
 - Using the same rehab professions (2 OT or 2 PT) should be the exception , not the normal business
 - AADL must be notified of the exception in team compliment
 - AADL will monitor the change in policy

Skills sets required if the same rehabilitation professionals are composing the seating team

skill set	depth of knowledge
Physical assessment skill set - ROM, Muscle testing, tone, skin condition, pain, postural alignment (MSK deformities), sensory ,potential size change(growth, weight)	advanced
Functional assessment -transfer , upper extremity function , grip , IADL as it relates to wheelchair use, foot propelling	advanced
Cognitive / Behavioral assessment as is related to seating and wheelchair use	advanced
Social environment assessment and funding issues	advanced
Able to identify safety factors- maintain skin integrity, wheelchair center of gravity issues, behavioral and cognitive risks of the seating system . Able to educate caregivers and client on risks	advanced
Awareness of client's other medical appliances and impact on seating	
Medical knowledge of condition and prognosis	advanced
Knowledge of seating concepts/theory	advanced
Pressure management knowledge	advanced
Knowledge of eligibility criteria for funding sources	advanced
Knowledge of environment accessibility needs	advanced
Recognizes when to consult or refer to other health professionals (e.g. wound care, spasticity clinic)	advanced
Conflict resolution skills	advanced
Awareness to collaborate with wound management expertise when required	basic
Awareness of Augmentative Alternative Communication device (identify when assessment consult required)	basic
Awareness of management for pain (identify when assessment consult required)	basic
Awareness of dysphasia and respiration issues(identify when assessment consult required)	basic

B. Qualifications of the Seating Services Team

All members on the team, excluding the client, caregiver and other disciplines, must have completed the Alberta Seating Education Program developed by the Alberta Seating Advisory Council. This is the approved training program in specialized seating for the disabled. In addition, all members of the team are expected to continue upgrading their expertise by attending other seating education courses offered by international or national conferences and manufacturers.

Therapists:

1. At least one therapist must be an AADL authorizer
2. The senior seating therapist must have a minimum seating experience of 24 client assessments and application of seating systems over a 12-month period. The seating experience is not limited to AADL clients. Exceptions to this standard must have AADL prior approval.
3. All therapists should have 16 hours per year of education in wheelchair accessories and seating as documented on Seating Therapist's Qualifications form A or B.
4. At least one of the therapists must be knowledgeable and experienced with wheelchairs.
5. Must abide by vendor trial and/or loan policies

Medical Supply Company:

1. Must be an AADL approved Contractor knowledgeable in the policies and procedures of the Program.
2. Must be an AADL Vendor for the supply, service and recycle of wheelchairs, parts, cushions and accessories.
3. Must be an authorized manufacturer's dealer for all seating products approved by the AADL Program.
4. Must maintain an "adequate" inventory to meet the needs of the seating service, with the expectation that the seating therapists recommend their product needs and sizes at least 3 weeks prior to client's seating appointment for trial of equipment.
5. Must employ a commercial seating technician dedicated to be part of the Seating Services Team.
6. Must support the ongoing education of the commercial seating technician(s) as documented annually on the Commercial Seating Technician's Qualifications form (Schedule G).
7. Must notify AADL immediately of staffing changes regarding their commercial seating technician(s)

Commercial Seating Technician:

1. The senior commercial seating technician must have a minimum seating experience of 24 client assessments and application of seating systems over a 12-month period. The seating experience is not limited to AADL clients. Senior seating technicians will be indicated in the Seating Suppliers' Vendor List.
2. A senior seating technician must directly supervise commercial seating technicians with experience of less than 24 clients per year. Exceptions to this standard must have AADL prior approval. Prior approval by AADL will be based on:
 - Commercial seating technicians with experience of less than 24 clients per year can provide service for 1 month, and can be extended up to 3 months if the OT/PT team agree and have no concerns. The clinic will inform AADL about this temporary situation.
 - The technician must have a good working knowledge of wheelchairs, and wheelchair configuration and adjustment, and a basic working knowledge of seating.
3. All seating technicians must complete the approved manufacturers' training program in all the specialized seating products on Schedule A and complete the Commercial Seating Technician's Qualification Initial Submission (Schedule F).
4. All seating technicians must continue to update manufacturers' training annually in all seating/wheelchair accessory products.
5. All seating technicians must have minimum of 50 hours/per year of education in seating/wheelchair accessory benefits as documented on the Commercial Seating Technician's Qualification Annual Update (Schedule G).
6. Senior seating technicians must be knowledgeable in the assessment of wheelchairs with a minimum of 2 years experience.

Adaptive Seating Technician:

1. The senior adaptive seating technician must have a minimum of 600 hours (75 clients at 8 hours/client) of experience/education in the assessment and application of seating systems. The seating experience is not limited to AADL clients. Exceptions to this standard must have AADL prior approval.
2. Must be knowledgeable about working with various metals, wood, plastics, viscoelastic, gels and polyurethane foams.
3. Knowledge of commercial seating components and systems.
4. Basic knowledge of mobility bases.
5. Have a basic anatomy course.
6. Have a basic biomechanics course.

C. Roles and Responsibilities of Seating Team Members

AADL Program:

Have a Functional Working Relationship with the Inter-disciplinary Team

1. Set the seating service standards, in consultation with the Alberta Seating Council.
2. Update the Approved Products List and price maximums for the seating components in conjunction with the Inter-disciplinary Team.
3. Monitor the provision of benefits through the seating services.
4. Be available for consultation by telephone or on-site visits and ensure there is adequate staffing to do this.
5. Provide payment for seating benefits in a timely manner for eligible clients based on accepted Program policies and procedures.
6. Facilitate the development of outcome measures for seating services.

Inter-disciplinary Seating Team:

Have a Functional Working Relationship with Inter-disciplinary Team members.

1. Follow up on a referral for a seating assessment.
2. Coordinate the seating clinic/services.
3. Assess the client with the relevant Inter-disciplinary Team members and determine the appropriate components for the client.
4. Determine client eligibility for AADL benefits in accordance with existing policies and procedures.
5. Ensure commercial seating system is trialled for a maximum of 1 week.
6. Accept the responsibility for and facilitate the recycling of seating equipment for other seating clients referred to the seating clinic when the previous seating client no longer requires them.
7. Provide written instructions to clients on the care and maintenance of the seating system.
8. Determine/ensure if seating outcome standards and outcome measures have been met.
9. Provide at least 1 follow-up seating service evaluation within 3 months (includes a client and caregiver satisfaction questionnaire completed in person or by mail-out).

Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist (AADL authorizer):

Have a functional working relationship with the Inter-disciplinary Team Members.

1. Complete AADL authorization form using the seating benefits Approved Products List.
2. Two therapists must be present for the initial assessment for a commercial system seating client. One therapist and commercial seating technician must be present for the fitting for a commercial system seating client (a second seating therapist is to be available for consultation).
3. Two therapists must be present for the assessment of a custom-made system seating client. One seating therapist and the adaptive seating technician must be present for fitting of the custom-made system client (a second seating therapist is to be available for consultation).
4. Abide by individual Contractor trial and/or loaning policies, see Attachment to Schedule "B", when trialling equipment with a client.
5. Provide the commercial seating technician with the potential inventory required for the scheduled seating clinic at least 2 weeks prior to the clinic.

Commercial Seating Technician:

Have a functional working relationship with the Inter-disciplinary Team Members.

1. Be present for the initial fitting of the commercial seating components with the client and for follow-up as required.
2. Provide equipment for loan and assessment purposes for a maximum of 1 week.
3. Provide manufacturers' information regarding the seating components and warranty coverage to the client, client's family and caregivers as appropriate.
4. Assist with the recycling of previously used seating components as appropriate.
5. Only provide component parts identified on the seating Approved Products List.
6. Only provide therapist recommended, minimal cost effective customization of the modular components as listed below, or approval from AADL.
 - Cut cushion/base
 - Increase groove of channeling
 - Add small addition for leg length discrepancy
 - Offset "T" nuts
 - Growth brackets to base
 - Minimal modifications to ischial dishing
 - Laterals cut/shaped
 - Reposition Kid Kart belts
 - Reinforce laterals/headrests
7. Bill the AADL Program after the team has authorized the appropriate seating system and the system has been received by the client. If the actual seating system is completed at less than the prices set out in Schedule "D", the Contractor shall bill accordingly.

Adaptive Seating Technician:

Have a functional working relationship with the Inter-disciplinary Team members.

1. Be present for the assessment and initial fitting of the commercial/custom-made seating components with the client and for follow-up as required.
2. Directly responsible for the fabrication of the seating components/system if appropriate commercial seating components are not available or if a commercial seating system cannot be fit for the client.
3. Directly responsible for the workmanship of any adaptation of commercial seating components in order for the system to fit the client.
4. Assist with the informal recycling of previously used components as appropriate.
5. Provide only component parts identified on the seating Approved Products List.
6. Bill the AADL Program after the team has authorized the appropriate seating system and the system has been received by the client. If the actual seating system is completed at less than the prices set out in Schedule "D", the Contractor shall bill accordingly.
7. Provide documentation to AADL confirming a 2-year warranty against defects, materials and supplies in the fabrication of the seating system.
8. All materials and supplies used in the fabrication of the seating systems comply with AADL fire retardancy standards.

D. Seating Telehealth

Seating Telehealth enables clients, who are unable to travel to an approved seating service clinic, to be provided seating benefits through AADL. AADL monitors the impact of seating benefits provided through Telehealth. The seating team will include:

1. At the remote-site setting:
 - the client
 - PT or OT therapist (the remote assessor therapist)
 - caregivers
 - other health professionals as required
 - the commercial seating technician
2. At the seating clinic site (i.e. the AADL approved seating clinic):
 - two seating therapists. Exceptions to this requirement are dependent upon the experience and expertise of the remote assessor therapist. AADL, in consultation with the seating clinic therapists, may approve the requirement for only 1 seating clinic therapist to be present during the seating Telehealth assessment.

Telehealth therapist qualifications:

1. The remote assessor therapist has:
 - attended the Alberta Seating Education Course
 - experience in wheelchair/cushion ordering
 - participated in the assessment and fitting of 4 seating clinic clients
 - an established working relationship with the seating clinic they are connecting with

2. If the remote assessor therapist has not attended the Alberta Seating Education course, with the prior approval of AADL only, they may temporarily be involved in Telehealth assessments for up to 6 months if the therapist has:
 - at least 2 years experience in wheelchair/cushion ordering
 - attended an in-service provided by the seating clinic on the AADL seating assessment
 - participated in the assessment and fitting of 4 seating clinic clients
 - an established working relationship with the seating clinic they are connecting with

Process

1. The AADL Seating Manager must be **notified** of the proposed Telehealth seating assessment by the remote assessor therapist. A completed Telehealth Notification Form (attached) must be submitted by fax. If AADL has concerns regarding the proposed Telehealth seating assessment, the Program Manager will contact the remote assessor therapist and/or seating clinic.
2. The remote assessor therapist performs the assessment in view of the seating clinic therapists.
3. The seating clinic therapists complete Assessment Form C and Outcome Summary Form D:
 - On Assessment Form C, indicate the name of the remote assessor therapist as part of the seating team members present
 - All therapists' names must be indicated on Outcome Summary Form D.
 - Remote assessor therapist's name must be printed on the Outcome Summary Form D
 - A seating clinic therapist must submit the 1250/1251 authorization forms and Outcome Summary Form D.

If the seating system trial is not successful and a reassessment is required to come up with a different action plan/components, the seating Telehealth reassessment must be attended by complete composition of therapists.