Information about the Updated Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) Power Mobility Application

AADL has developed an updated power wheelchair application in consultation with experienced power mobility authorizers.

The new application is designed to be as clear and self-explanatory as possible. The information below addresses comments and questions that AADL has received from authorizers, in areas that could not be fully explained on the application form itself.

General questions

‘No’ Answers

All answers will be considered within the context of the application as a whole. The questions are designed so that ‘Yes’ answers support the client’s eligibility, but not every answer needs to be ‘Yes’ for the application to be approved. AADL expects that most eligible clients will have some ‘No’ answers but demonstrate their eligibility with ‘Yes’ answers in other areas.

There are several questions marked ‘If No, do not submit application’. These questions address AADL’s basic eligibility criteria. If the answer appears to be ‘No’ for a client, please read the application text carefully, consult this document and see the AADL Program Manual for clarification. If the criteria are still unclear, contact the Program Manager for more information.

Client Impact Statement

The updated application does not include a Client Impact Statement. This application captures the relevant information from the Client Impact Statement in a series of more specific questions. AADL expects this change will make the application process faster, more objective, and easier for clients and authorizers.

Part D: Clinical History

Questions 1-7: Medical and functional stability

Authorizers must use clinical judgment to determine whether their clients are medically and functionally stable. The following indicators are often used to determine medical stability: stable diagnosis, no significant fluctuation of symptoms, no recent admissions to the hospital.

Part E: Client Capacity

Question 8: Capacity to safely and efficiently operate a power wheelchair

Authorizers must use assessment tools and clinical judgment to determine if their clients have the physical and cognitive capacity to safely and efficiently operate a power wheelchair. For the purpose of this application, ‘safely’ means without significant danger of injuries, falls or collisions.
‘Efficiently’ means the client is able to operate the power wheelchair with sufficient speed and direction to support participation in daily activities.

If assessment indicates that a client does not have the capacity to use a power wheelchair, then AADL will not fund power mobility for that client even if they are pediatric.

NOTE: This question is focused on capacity only. It is possible to answer Yes even if the client has not yet demonstrated use of power mobility. This distinction is relevant for pediatric clients, who may have the assessed capacity to use a power wheelchair but still need time to develop the specific skills.

**Question 9: Ambulation**

If the client is only able to transfer or walk a few steps, AADL does not consider them able to ambulate for the purpose of this application.

**Questions 10-11: Safely propelling a manual wheelchair in home/community environment**

These questions are meant to determine if a manual wheelchair is a viable mobility strategy for the client. For the purpose of this application, ‘safely propel’ means moving the chair independently without excessive physical strain and without significant danger of falls or collisions.

**Question 13: Has client demonstrated safe and efficient use of power chair**

Adult clients need to demonstrate safe and efficient use of a power wheelchair before AADL will approve their application for funding. Authorizers may work with clients for as long as necessary to build and demonstrate this ability before submitting an application.

Pediatric clients are exempt from this requirement for their first power wheelchair only. AADL will not fund power mobility for any client (pediatric or adult) who has previously had power mobility and cannot demonstrate safe and efficient use.

**Part F: Accessibility**

**Question 16: Frequently used community environments**

AADL expects that clients will be able to use their power mobility base for approximately 80% of their waking time. Clients are expected to use their power wheelchair to access activities in the community. As long as this requirement is met, it is not necessary for every community environment they visit to be accessible by power wheelchair.

**Part G: Care and Maintenance**

**Question 18: Means to ensure wheelchair is properly cared for and maintained**

AADL requires clients and caregivers to care for and maintain their power mobility devices. They must be able to perform routine care/maintenance tasks (ex: cleaning, charging batteries) and obtain support from others when needed. (ex: contacting vendor or manufacturer to address mechanical problems.)
Part H: Client Impact

Questions 20: Impact on activities of daily living
These questions are intended to demonstrate that power mobility is the only mobility strategy that enables the client to participate in their activities of daily living. If a client is able to participate in these activities using alternate strategies (ex: conventional rehabilitation, manual wheelchair), AADL does not consider power mobility a basic clinical need for that client and cannot provide funding.

Question 21-22: Frequency of participation in productive and leisure activities
This question is intended to demonstrate how power mobility increases the client’s access to productive and leisure activities, with the understanding that increased access often leads to more frequent participation. AADL recognizes that this question may not capture changes in clients’ quality of participation. An increase in participation will support the client’s eligibility for power mobility funding, but a ‘No’ answer will not count against the application.

For example: With a power wheelchair, the client is able to travel to a bus stop and ride the bus to activities such as volunteering, group bingo and going for coffee with friends. He can participate in these activities roughly 6 days a week when he is able to take the bus by himself. Without a power wheelchair, he is dependent on family and caregivers who can only take him out 4 days per week. Therefore, a power wheelchair would increase his participation from 16 to 24 days per month.

Question 23: Briefly Describe Usage Plan for Power Mobility
This question is intended to find out exactly how the client plans to use the power wheelchair in his/her day to day activities. There has to be a set plan in place to use power mobility and this plan has to be realistic and attainable.

For example: simply stating that a client “would consider an employment opportunity if he/she had a power wheelchair” does not provide enough information. There has to be a set plan in place – for example if a client had a power wheelchair he could now access the following workplaces. He has applied for these jobs or has reviewed all the qualifications of these jobs and would be a successful candidate if he had power mobility.

Question 25: Realistic Goals
This question is intended to find out if the client has realistic goals for participation in the community with power mobility.

For example: It may not be realistic for a client who has spends his/her whole day indoors in a long-term care facility to think that with power mobility they will suddenly be able to travel long distances independently with no other supports in place.

Question 26: Motivation

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Power wheelchairs can increase a client’s independence and participation in day to day activities. In order for this to happen, however, a client has to be motivated to do so. This question is intended to demonstrate how motivated the client is to increase his/her independence with power mobility.

**Question 29: Seating Components**

This question assists AADL in identifying clients who require their wheelchair specifications to be checked by a seating clinic therapist. Clients who have seating and require a replacement and those who have never had seating components and have been identified as needing them require an assessment at an AADL seating clinic.