



Online Training

Alberta Aids to Daily Living




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Module 2.7

Power Wheelchairs

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Overview

- Overview of Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) Power Wheelchair benefits
- Authorizer qualifications
- AADL Recycle Power Wheelchair Vendor qualifications
- Power Mobility Assessment and Eligibility
- Approved Product Lists for Power Wheelchairs
- Application and Authorization process
- Ownership and Maintaining AADL Power Wheelchairs

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Overview: AADL Power Wheelchair Benefits

- AADL provides funding for power wheelchairs for adults and children using a recycle model.
 - AADL retains full ownership of all power wheelchairs it funds.
 - The recycle pool of wheelchairs is accessed first before providing new wherever possible.
 - Recycled power wheelchairs are cleaned and refurbished before being provided to the next client.
- Power wheelchairs benefits include:
 - Power wheelchairs that can accommodate specialized seating and controls, with or without tilt and recline.
 - Only power wheelchairs and benefits listed on the AADL Approved Product List are funded through AADL.
- Collaboration with a Seating Clinic or team may be required as seating components are often needed for this population.

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Authorizer Qualifications

Power Wheelchairs


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Authorizer Qualifications

- Must be an Occupational Therapist or Physical Therapist licensed to practice in Alberta.
- Must be an approved AADL Authorizer with a minimum Manual wheelchairs/ Level A Seating product range.
- Must have completed additional training and education in seating assessments.
- Must have a minimum one year experience authorizing manual wheelchairs.
- Must be familiar with power mobility devices through attendance at manufacturer in-services on power mobility.

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Vendor Qualifications

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Vendor Qualifications

- Must have a contract with AADL to provide purchasing and repair services.
- Must have a head technician with certificates for each power wheelchair manufacturer the vendor deals with.
- Must have passed a facility inspection completed by AADL.
- Must have agreements with manufacturers to distribute their products.
- The recycle vendor has a separate contract with AADL to provide recycle services, including maintaining the recycle inventory, accepting/picking up all AADL-owned equipment from Albertans no longer needing them and providing recycled chairs to Albertans

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Assessment and Client Eligibility

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Assessment – Power Wheelchair

- Confirm client meets general eligibility criteria.
- Seating assessment.
- Assess client's suitability for power mobility.
- Functional considerations.
- Positioning needs - requirement for tilt option.
- Determine which power wheelchair model meets client's needs.
- Power wheelchair trial(s).
- Power Mobility Application form.
- Power Tilt-in-Space Request form.



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Client Eligibility Assessment

AADL-funded power mobility is intended to address clients with very high needs. AADL reviews all applications for power and takes the following into consideration before approving funding for power devices:

- Client must require power mobility with capacity to accommodate complex seating full-time as the only type of mobility device they can use to independently move within their home and community.
- Client must live in a fully accessible environment.
- Client must not be able to functionally walk or mobilize in a manual wheelchair.
- Client must have high level of engagement in productive, social and leisure activities in the community.
- Considerable limited access to caregivers/support staff who can push them in a manual wheelchair in conjunction with an active lifestyle.
- Sitting tolerance must be at least six consecutive hours.
- Client must not be able to meet power mobility needs with a scooter or captain style power wheelchair.
- Clients who have accessed funding for a homecare bed or Category C/D Wheelchair through AADL may not be eligible unless there has been a condition change.
- Clients who have lower limb prosthetics also are not eligible for a power wheelchair as the prosthetics enable to the client to walk

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Client Eligibility Assessment

Eligibility Criteria	Adult Power (Prior Approval)		Pediatric Power (Prior Approval)	
	First	Second	First	Second
Ability to manage a manual wheelchair	Not able to self propel and no assistance available.	Not able to propel and no assistance available.	Not able to propel and no assistance available.	Not able to propel and no assistance available.
Ability to ambulate with/without a cane/walker or crutches	No ability (use helmet). May use cane/walker for transfer purposes.	No ability or limited.	No ability.	May use cane/walker for transfer purposes.
Activity Level	Full time indoor use and outdoor use. Must be active in community (daily or close to).	Indoor use with plan in place leading to full time use.	Full time indoor use and outdoor use. Must be active in community (daily or close to).	Full time indoor use and outdoor use. Must be active in community (daily or close to).
Functional Equipment	Not or significant lack of U/E strength, has no sitting or is at high risk for U/E injury.	May or may not be at risk.	Not or significant lack of U/E strength or at high risk for U/E injury.	Not or significant lack of U/E strength or at high risk for U/E injury.
Accessibility	Environment the client use are fully accessible (home/community). Heated storage. Able to transport.	Client clear that client will become full time plan to consider full accessible home.	Fully accessible. Home/community. Heated storage. Able to transport.	Fully accessible. Home/community. Heated storage. Able to transport.
Total	2 power W/C's from different manufacturers. Minimum 24 hours in all circumstances. Heated Storage.	2 power W/C's from different manufacturers. Minimum 24 hours in all circumstances. Heated Storage.	2 power W/C's from different manufacturers. Minimum 24 hours in all circumstances. Heated Storage.	2 power W/C's from different manufacturers. Minimum 24 hours in all circumstances. Heated Storage.
Other	Minimum 6 consecutive hours sitting tolerance. Heated Storage.	Minimum 6 consecutive hours sitting tolerance. Heated Storage.	Minimum 6 consecutive hours sitting tolerance. Heated Storage.	Minimum 6 consecutive hours sitting tolerance. Heated Storage.


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Eligibility Assessment for Options on Power Wheelchairs

- Power Tilt Option on Power Wheelchairs**
 - Funded for adult clients only, an upgrade for pediatric clients.
 - Power Adult Tilt in Space form must support need for tilt option.
 - If aware client may need one in future, ensure power wheelchair requested can be retro-fit with one in the future.
- Specialty Control Options**
 - Includes: Head Arrays, MEC Joysticks, Chin Controls, Rim Control, Sip 'n Puff controls, Switch Drives.
 - Clients using a Speech Generating Communication Device are eligible for a Bluetooth capable joystick.
 - Maximum amount funded – clients are responsible for costs above the maximum. Includes the display, mounting hardware and installation costs.
 - Specialty Controls are considered owned by the client, repairs are the client responsibility.
- Other Features/Options**
 - Clients are responsible for upcharges or options not funded by AADL.
 - Other options may be covered dependent on clinical rationale.


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Power Wheelchair Assessment – Functional Considerations

- Ability to operate power controls**
 - Adult clients must be independent and able to use power controls to operate a power wheelchair safely.
 - Pediatric clients must have the capacity to learn how to use power controls and have the capacity to be trained to operate a power wheelchair safely.
 - There are a variety of options for power controls to enable individual's with impairments to operate the power wheelchair independently.
 - AADL does not fund attendant controls for power wheelchair users.


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Power Wheelchair Assessment – Tilt-in-Space Option

- Clients with progressive conditions**
 - Tilt-in-space option and/or recline should be considered when ordering the power wheelchair.
 - More costly to retrofit.
 - Indicate on Tilt-in-Space form that client's condition is progressive and anticipated timeline for requiring the tilt.
- Factors that support need for recline**
 - Compromised respiratory system, feeding and swallowing concerns.
- Factors that support need for tilt-in-space**
 - Inability to maintain upright position – head, trunk.
 - Inability to weight shift independently.
 - Reduced seating tolerance due to fatigue.
 - History of pressure wounds, impaired sensation.
 - Increased independence in basic activities of daily living.


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Power Wheelchair Assessment – Trialing the Power Wheelchair

- **All power wheelchair requests must be preceded by a trial of the equipment.**
 - Power wheelchair trials must consist of two wheelchairs with the same drive configuration from two separate manufacturers.
 - The trial must be completed by the Authorizer.
 - Power wheelchair trials must last a minimum 24 hours and include the areas the client plans to access within the community.
- **Environment**
 - Trialing the power wheelchair within the client's environment will prevent issues with accessibility. This includes home, work and/or school.
 - The wheelchair should be able to go through doorways.
 - If the client is transporting the wheelchair, it needs to fit in the van, truck or trunk of a car.
 - If the client has a wheelchair lift, the platform needs to accommodate the wheelchair footprint.


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Approved Product List

Power Wheelchairs


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Power Wheelchair Approved Product List

Includes information on:

- models
- weight capacities
- sizes
- eligibility criteria
- clinical rationale requirements
- front, mid and rear wheel drives




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Power Wheelchair Approved Product List

- If a power wheelchair model is not on the Approved Product List, it will not be funded by AADL.
- Not all options on power wheelchairs are funded – examples:
 - Multiple color options (not permitted on recycle wheelchairs – basic black or blue only)
 - Pediatric power tilt or recline
 - Elevating seat option
 - Power elevating legrests, foot platforms
 - The full list of excluded items are found in the Power Wheelchair Policies and Procedures manual
- Basic power wheelchairs with captain style seats and scooters are not on the Approved Product List and are not funded by AADL.
- Repairs on specialty controls, elevating seats, or other options considered upgrades or funded privately are not covered by AADL.

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Power Wheelchair Approved Product List

Power Wheelchair Drive Controls

- Joysticks and switch drives are provided on AADL power wheelchairs.
- More complex or specialty drive controls are funded through a grant model.
- The maximum funding for specialty drive controls is \$4,000.00.
- Clients are responsible for the repairs and maintenance on complex drive controls.
- Specialty controls are listed in the Approved Product List under Recyclable Benefits – Wheelchairs at:
<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/aadl-program-manual-w>
on the Alberta Blue Cross website at:
<https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/pdfs/aadl-manual-w-products.pdf>

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Application and Authorization Process

Power Wheelchairs

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Authorization Process – Overview

Authorizer:

1. Complete Seating Assessment - determine client's equipment needs.
2. Determine if client is eligible for power wheelchair funding through AADL - check Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal for other equipment.
3. Collaborate with vendor and select two models which meet the client's clinical needs.
4. Conduct power wheelchair trial(s).
5. Complete manufacturer specification form with vendor assistance.
6. Determine costs to client and discusses these with the client.
7. Complete power wheelchair application form and obtain client consent.
8. Upload the Power Mobility Application form, Client Declaration form and manufacturers specification forms with the authorization on Alberta Blue Cross

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Authorization Process – Power Mobility

Complete a seating/power mobility assessment.

The AADL Power Mobility Application Form and the AADL Adult Power Tilt-in-Space Request form will assist the therapist in determining if the client meets the eligibility criteria for power mobility with or without the tilt option. Forms are available on the Alberta Blue Cross website at: <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/provider/type/aadl/wheelchair-home.php>

The Mobility Manager prior approves Power Wheelchair Application packages that meet AADL power mobility criteria. An email is sent to the authorizer with notice that a decision has been made

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Completing the Power Mobility Application

ALL SECTIONS must be completed

Page 1

- Confirms client has a chronic stable condition and identifies clients who are already using an AADL power wheelchair.
- Clients who need replacement power wheelchairs must have their current wheelchair evaluated by an AADL vendor first.
 - The client's current power wheelchair must be deemed as not cost effective to repair or not able to be reconfigured by AADL to meet the client's needs.
 - The AADL vendor will submit a prior approval for repairs/parts changes to ABC and upload the work order.
 - ABC notifies the vendor if the client should pursue an assessment and application for replacement.
- Having a private power wheelchair informs AADL that the client has experience with power and does not exclude the individual.

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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Page 2

Page 2

- **Equipment Trial:** The client needs to trial the power wheelchair in order to complete page 2 of the Power Mobility Application.
- **Client Capacity:** Confirms client is able to operate a power wheelchair safely and the power wheelchair selected will meet the client's condition if any changes are expected.
- Basic joysticks and switches are provided. If more complex controls are required, a therapist specialized in seating may need be involved.
- The information on the client's ability to ambulate (walk) or propel a manual wheelchair within their home is critical for determining eligibility.
- If the client can walk, or manage a manual wheelchair within their home, they are not eligible.
- If the client has extreme difficulty propelling a manual wheelchair any distance, check off no and explain it further under the comment section.



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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Page 3

Page 3

- **Question 12:** It is important to indicate the client can tolerate a minimum six consecutive hours in the power wheelchair and is not necessarily the sitting plan for the day.
- **Question 13:** Confirms client has demonstrated that they are able to operate a power wheelchair safely.
- **Cognition:** The cognitive assessment must be comprehensive and include perception, executive decision making, ability to learn new skills and memory. Indication that the client is safe to operate the power wheelchair must be supported by evidence and clinical judgement.
- If the cognitive assessment identifies impaired capacity, do not proceed with the application.



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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Page 3

Page 3

- **Accessibility:** The information on the trial within the client's home and community environment confirms that the environment is accessible for all the areas used by the client.
- Measurements are required in case a substitute power wheelchair is considered.
- **Questions 17 & 18** provides confirmation that the healthcare provider and client have considered how to transport and care for the power wheelchair.
- Ensure the client receives information on all the features of the power wheelchair and understands how to care for them.
- Work with the vendor to provide the client education on proper care and maintenance of the wheelchair.




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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Page 4

- Questions on this page provide information on the level of activities both within the client's home environment and within the community.
- Clients that are working, volunteering, parenting, or going to school are considered to have higher needs.
- The answers on this page should reflect that the client requires a power wheelchair to manage their basic activities.
- The daily usage plan assists AADL in determining how often the client uses a power wheelchair, how it is being used and for what purpose.
- AADL needs to determine that power mobility is the **only way** the client can participate in these activities.



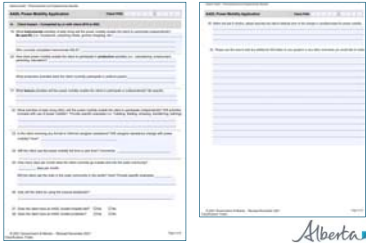
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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Pages 4 and 5

- Questions 24-26 inform AADL that the power wheelchair will increase the client's ability to participate in activities independently.
- Questions 27 and 28 confirms eligibility with other AADL funded equipment
- Question 29 and 30 look at lifestyle and give the opportunity to add any additional information



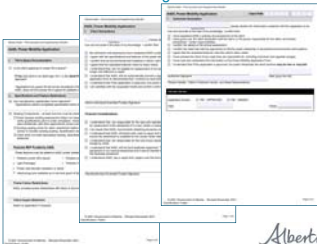
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Completing the Power Mobility Application

Pages 6 to 8

- For client/guardian/trustee/authorizer signatures.
- Serve as declarations that the client or guardian/trustee understands what is being ordered, the rules around obtaining equipment from the AADL program and agreement with what is being ordered.
- The Authorizer is responsible for ensuring the client understands the declaration and understands that the application has to be prior approved.




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Application and Authorization

- A Power Mobility Application package is uploaded with the authorization on the Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal by the authorizer and includes:
 - Power Mobility Application form
 - The manufacturer specification forms for the chosen model
 - Client Declaration form
- Specification forms are available on the manufacturers' websites.
- The tilt-in-space form is uploaded with a separate authorization for power tilt
- Once received at AADL, the application package is placed in a queue for review.
- If approved, AADL will search the recycle inventory and will order from the recycle vendor or the preferred client vendor if ordering new.
- Alberta Blue Cross will email the authorizer when a decision is made and this can be viewed on reports on the online health portal.
- Authorizer then follows up directly with the vendor.




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Ownership and Maintaining

Power Wheelchairs


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Ownership and Maintaining Power Wheelchairs

- AADL retains ownership of all power wheelchairs**
 - The AADL vendor will set up the power wheelchair and program it according to the client's needs including speed, acceleration, and brake functions.
 - The AADL vendor will advise the authorizer of the advanced features available to meet your client's specific needs.
 - The client may use the power wheelchair for as long as needed unless they are no longer eligible – e.g., move out of province, or become bed bound.
 - must be returned to the recycle vendor when no longer needed by the client or the client is no longer eligible.
- Responsibility**
 - Clients are responsible for their AADL-funded wheelchair.
 - Appropriate care.
 - Insurance in case of loss, damage or theft.
 - Proper maintenance.
 - Advise vendor when repairs are required.


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Ownership and Maintaining Power Wheelchairs

- **Repairs to AADL Power Wheelchair**
 - Repairs for power wheelchairs do not require an authorization.
 - Only AADL-approved vendors are permitted to repair or reconfigure AADL power wheelchairs.
 - The authorizer or client can contact the vendor directly for a repair.
 - The authorizer contacts the vendor if reconfiguration or a parts change is required.
 - Provides the vendor with their authorizer number, the equipment make and model, and changes requested.
 - Clinical rationale must be provided to the vendor to support the request.
 - Maximum repair allotment for power wheelchairs is \$650 per year.
 - In addition, one set of tires and batteries are funded annually.
 - Repairs are subject to cost-share rules.
 - There is a 90-day warranty on new parts and labor from the date the repair or part was provided.


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Ownership and Maintaining Power Wheelchairs

- **When repairs are no longer cost-effective**
 - AADL may determine that the costs of repairs are no longer cost-effective and will advise the vendor to let the client know it is time for a reassessment for a new power wheelchair.
 - The client is expected to make arrangements for a reassessment.
 - Replacements are not automatically approved. A Power Mobility Application form must be submitted.
 - The power wheelchair is returned to the recycle vendor for surplus.


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Power Mobility Resources

For any questions about Power Mobility, contact the AADL Mobility Technical Specialist at 780-422-9642 or toll-free by dialing 310-0000, then 780-422-9642 when prompted

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Alberta Aids to Daily Living Program
Telus House, 13th Floor
10020 100 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0N3

Phone: 780-427-0731; to call toll-free, first dial 310-0000

Deaf/hearing impaired callers within Alberta using a TTY can reach the provincial government by dialing 780-427-9999 in Edmonton or 1-800-232-7215 throughout Alberta. _____

Fax: 780-422-0968

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-aids-to-daily-living.aspx>

or

<https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/provider/type/aadl/index.php>

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