

# Equipment Clinic Referrals

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## WHAT IS THE EQUIPMENT CLINIC?

- The equipment clinic evaluates and prescribes wheelchairs and other adaptive equipment for children with physical and developmental disabilities
- A physical therapist (PT) completes a comprehensive evaluation for pediatric durable medical equipment (DME) needs
  - The assessment may identify equipment beyond the initial request
  - It is encouraged to refer to equipment clinic even when a specific item has not yet been identified because scheduling, insurance authorization, vendor ordering, delivery, and any needed appeals can take time.
- Equipment
  - Safety beds
  - Activity chairs
  - Shower chairs
  - Secure car seats
  - Walkers
  - Wheelchairs
  - Medical strollers
  - Gait trainers
  - Standers

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Children up to 21 years of age
- Equipment Clinic will review eligibility
- Final equipment decision is subject to insurance review/approval

## WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

- 1st floor, St Christopher's Hospital (Main Building), Physical & Occupational Therapy Department

## WHEN IS IT OPEN?

- Patient sessions: Tuesdays, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM
- Appointments may be up to 4 months from the date of referral

## HOW TO COMPLETE A REFERRAL

- 1) In the order section of the intended patient type 'physical therapy'
- 2) Select 'PT at St. Chris'
- 3) In the comments write 'please schedule with equipment clinic'
  - i) General wording gives the PT more flexibility and may improve the odds of insurance approval.

- ii) Ensure the attending physician is the primary signor or co-signer on the referral/prescription to help prevent processing and scheduling delays.
- 4) Submit

## **HOW TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT**

- Once referred, Equipment Clinic will contact the family to schedule the initial visit
- Patients should expect a call within the 5-7 business days
- Appointments may be scheduled for up to 4 months after referral

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE EQUIPMENT CLINIC CONSULTATION**

- No prior equipment is required for the initial visit
- Families will meet with a PT and equipment specialist (3<sup>rd</sup> party) for a comprehensive evaluation of equipment needs
- Families should plan to attend the full 45-60min appointment (~45-60mins)
- The equipment specialist manages equipment ordering and future adjustments and repairs through follow-up Equipment Clinic visits

## **WHAT TO EXPECT DURING DELIVERY**

- After the equipment clinic evaluation, equipment can take approximately ~3–6 months to arrive.
- If approved, equipment will be delivered directly to the patient's preferred address or the equipment clinic (will be determined at the time of the evaluation)
  - The vendor will coordinate delivery times and fittings via phone or email
  - Families should be present for the entire delivery to ensure proper fitting, adjustments, and instructions on safe and effect use
    - Vendors provide the final instructions & fittings
    - PTs will not be present for home visits or during equipment delivery

## **WHAT TO DO IF INSURANCE DENIES A CLAIM**

- PTs will initially provide an addendum letter
- PTs will advise families to file a grievance or appeal independently
  - A letter will provide the necessary information to submit grievances/appeals
  - Submission requirements vary by insurance
- Some, insurers may request a peer-to-peer review, whereby the referring physician must explain the medical necessity of the recommended equipment
  - Denial letters will appear under 'media manager' within the patient's chart
  - Information requested in peer-to-peer will be found within the denial letter

## **CONTACT**

- PT & Rehab Department: 215-427-5497
- Kristen Henry PT, DPT & Francesca Lella PT, DPT, PCS, NTMTC (available via EPIC chat / email)
- [Kristen.henry2@towerhealth.org](mailto:Kristen.henry2@towerhealth.org), [Francesca.lella@towerhealth.org](mailto:Francesca.lella@towerhealth.org)

**DOT PHRASE (.EQCLINIC)**

“I’m referring your child to the Equipment Clinic. A physical therapist will check your child’s safety, daily needs, and equipment needs. The PT may suggest equipment you have not thought about. You should get a call within 5-7 business days to set up a visit. The first appointment will be at the Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation department in the main building of St. Christopher’s Children’s Hospital. Enter from the main entrance on St. Chris Drive: go past the security turnstiles → take the first left → then take the first door on the left of the long hallway. You do not need to bring any equipment. Plan to stay for 45-60mins. If there are any questions, please contact the Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Department at 215-427-5497.