

HOW TO GET THE RESULTS YOU NEED FROM YOUR SEATING & MOBILITY ASSESSMENT

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Therapists providing seating and mobility intervention have learned seating principles and concepts in stages. We learn basic biomechanical principles, how to perform a mat assessment, how to measure a patient, and the various parameters and options of mobility equipment. It is important to be able to pull all this knowledge together in order to assist our patients in obtaining the best equipment for their mobility needs. Based on years of clinical experience, the best method to “pull it all together” is by following a standard assessment process.

The paths to take when recommending mobility devices to patients are not always clear. How many of us say “I never know what cushion to choose” or “there are so many choices and I don’t know what the best is”, and last but not least “Can we try them?” By following a standard assessment process therapists will be able to confidently gather all the necessary information to make informed decisions on equipment choices.

Each facility or agency can start by developing and using a standard assessment form. In fact it should really be named “Initial Seating Assessment Tool”. This “tool” guides the therapist through the information gathering process by providing the cues on what to ask and what to assess. We find ourselves in environments where there are many distractions and following cues keeps us focused, on track and will ensure we obtain all relevant information. The Lyndhurst seating clinic has consistently updated their assessment to follow best practices, to meet the new standards of terminology and body measurements, and have added relevant components based on years of experience.

The assessment process will be reviewed with a focus on being able to identify relevant information and analyze findings in order to make informed decisions about this complex intervention we as occupational and physical therapists provide.

References:

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Speaker Bio:

Andree Gauthier is an Occupational Therapist working in the seating and mobility clinic at Toronto Rehab’s Lyndhurst Centre. She has 27 years working as an OT in various settings with the last 12 years in a seating clinic setting.