

PROFESSIONAL CRITERIA FOR PRESCRIBERS¹

EnableNSW, NSW Health requires that prescribers of assistive technology meet the necessary qualifications and levels of experience as detailed below.

1. Principles of Equipment Prescription

- 1.1 EnableNSW endorses the use of a client centred approach to all assessment and equipment prescription. It is assumed that prior to approaching EnableNSW, the prescriber has undertaken a client centred assessment which has indicated that assistive technology may assist in optimising client outcomes.

2. Professional criteria for prescribers

- 2.1 Clinicians must have the **stipulated professional qualification** to prescribe different types of assistive technology as detailed in Table 2.
- 2.2 Prescription of Group 1 Assistive Technology only requires that the prescriber has the stipulated qualification. Prescription of Group 2 & Group 3 Assistive Technology also requires the clinician to have **relevant experience**. This is defined as:
- the amount of time a clinician has worked with the assistive technology prescription
 - the number of prescriptions previously completed in that assistive technology group and category.

Table 1: Assistive Technology Groups

<p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple to set-up and use • Not custom-made • Frequently prescribed; and • Stands alone and is not integrated with other equipment. 	<p>• Stipulated Qualification only</p>
<p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex to set-up and requires training to use safely; or • Potential adverse outcome for a client / carer / attendant care worker if not prescribed or used appropriately; or • Custom-made; or • High-cost; or • Infrequently prescribed; or • Integrated or interfaces with other equipment. 	<p>• Stipulated Qualification and • Greater than 1 year experience • 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in that category</p>
<p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of several component pieces of equipment that must integrate to achieve the goal for the client; or • Due to the risk to the client the skills of a multidisciplinary team is required to prescribe accurately. 	<p>• Stipulated Qualification and • Greater than 3 years experience • 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in that category • Prescriber plus one or more members of the specialist multi-disciplinary team</p>

¹ Developed in partnership by the Life Time Care and Support Authority (LTCSA) and EnableNSW – 02/09
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2.3. Prescribers are asked to complete a Declaration on the Equipment Request Form to confirm that they meet the professional criteria.

2.4 These requirements do not replace

- the need to document the clinical assessment and clinical reasoning underlying equipment prescription.
- the need for clinical supervision in the workplace, particularly where the clinician is a new graduate or new to the field of practice.

3. Group 1 Equipment and Complex Clients

3.1 At times, Group 1 equipment may be prescribed for a client with a complex condition, such as significant neurological impairment, or spinal cord injury. Although qualification alone is required in this instance, inexperienced clinicians should still seek or use additional clinical supervision to ensure the prescription is correct.

4. Inexperienced Prescribers Prescribing under Supervision

4.1 Prescribers who do not meet the professional criteria, may prescribe under the supervision of a clinician who is an eligible prescriber for that equipment. The prescriber will be the point of contact if there is any additional information required.

The format and level of supervision provided by the supervisor remains the responsibility of the clinical service to determine. It is recommended that the supervisor sights the ERF before it is submitted.

5. Approved Prescribers

5.1 Individuals without the stipulated qualifications, who have highly specialised skills in a particular clinical area, may apply to be an Approved Prescriber for specific equipment types. Applications must be made in writing to the equipment funding body and the applicant will be advised of the type of equipment they are approved to prescribe.

5.2 Services that operate under a transdisciplinary model or do not have access to health professionals representing several disciplines in a single location, may undertake education programs to train health professionals to prescribe group 1 equipment for non-complex clients. In these circumstances, the trained clinicians can also become Approved Prescribers.

For example an Aged Care Team operating under a transdisciplinary model may provide education to occupational therapists and nurses so that they can prescribe Group 1 walking aids, or education to physiotherapists so that they can prescribe Group 1 showering and bathing equipment.

6 Lack of Eligible Prescribers

6.1 In circumstances where a client's access to equipment may be compromised due to a lack of eligible prescribers (for example in rural or remote areas), the treating health team should liaise with the equipment funding body to discuss options to address this problem.

7. Eligible Prescribers Employed by Equipment Suppliers

7.1 All prescribers must comply with the principle that the prescription of equipment must be removed from the supply/provision of the equipment, in order to eliminate and prevent any perceived or actual conflict of interest.

7.2 Equipment requests cannot be submitted by professionals working for suppliers, nor can they provide the supervision for equipment prescription.

Table 2: Equipment and Professional Criteria for Prescribers

Activities of Daily Living Equipment	Qualifications
Beds & bed accessories	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Height adjustable over bed table - Self help pole - Bed accessories > \$100 	Occupational Therapist, Registered Nurse, Physiotherapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electric bed - Night positioning systems 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with 1 yr experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Custom moulded night positioning systems 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with 3yrs experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category + multi-disciplinary team
Chairs and chair equipment	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electric lift chair 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Home Enteral Nutrition (HEN)	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enteral nutrition devices including nasogastric, replacement gastrostomy tubes and low profile devices 	Clinical Nurse Consultant, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse practitioner or Registered Nurse > 1 years experience in enteral feeding management and 3 previous prescriptions
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pumps - Giving sets and consumables for enteral feeding including extension tubes and dispensers/syringes 	Dietitian, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse practitioner, Registered Nurse > 1 years experience in enteral feeding management and 3 previous prescriptions
Showering & bathing equipment	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bath & shower equipment >\$100 - Bath transfer bench - Swivel bather - Mobile shower commode 	Occupational Therapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressure care showering and bathing equipment - Customised or tilt-in-space shower commode 	Occupational Therapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category

Toileting equipment	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toileting aids & frames > \$100 - Bed side commode - Mobile shower commode 	Occupational Therapist Registered Nurse
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressure care toileting equipment - Customised mobile shower commode 	Occupational Therapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Continence	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disposable and non-disposable products - annual supplies apply 	<p>Continence Advisor/Nurse; Clinical Nurse Consultant; Clinical Nurse Specialist; Nurse Practitioner; or Registered Nurse with accredited continence or relevant speciality course.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Registered Nurse with >1 years experience in continence management and 3 previous supervised prescriptions.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Registered Nurse who has received education programs and/or supervision from their clinical service and is approved to prescribe the continence product/s being requested.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Doctors and other allied health professionals may prescribe in special circumstances in which an eligible prescriber is unavailable. Please contact an advisor at EnableNSW before submitting form.</p>

Communication and Technology Equipment	Qualifications
Alaryngeal communication devices	
Group 1 – Voice amplifiers	Speech Pathologist
Group 2 – Voice prostheses – Tracheostomy speaking valves – Electrolarynxes	Speech Pathologist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Augmentative and alternative communication devices	
Group 1 – Single message devices – Single level devices	Speech Pathologist
Group 2 – Multi-level devices – Dynamic display devices – Spelling based devices Group 3 Group 2 devices with complex access requirements e.g. eye gaze, head control or switch scanning. Group 2 devices to be integrated with complex seating systems and/or complex mounting requirements	Speech Pathologist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category Speech Pathologist with >3 yrs experience and 5 previous group 3 prescriptions + input from an Occupational Therapist
Assistive listening devices and alarms	
Group 1 – Alternate alerts and alarms (eg shake awake, strobe, vibrating)	Audiologist
Group 2 –	
Alternate access to print information	
Group 1 – Hand held magnifier > \$100	Orthoptist, Occupational Therapist
Group 2 – Desk top magnifier – Digital playback devices – CCTV – Braille – Talking blood pressure/blood glucose monitors	Orthoptist, Occupational Therapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Assistive technology including environmental control units	
Group 2 – Environmental control units – Initial set up of personal alarm systems –	Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category

Assistive technology access and accessories	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mounting equipment - Alternate access (specialised keyboard, mouse, switches) - Specialised software 	Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category

Mobility & Transfer Equipment	Qualifications
Transfer equipment	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slide board >\$100 - Transfer belt >\$100 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile hoist - Ceiling hoist - Sling for hoists - Standing pivot transfer aid - Standing hoist 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Walking aids	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canadian Crutches - Walking frames > \$100 	Physiotherapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialised walker 	Physiotherapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Wheelchairs	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-propelled wheelchairs - Attendant-propelled wheelchairs 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power wheelchair - Tilt-in-space manual and power wheelchairs - Custom-made lightweight wheelchairs - Wheelchairs with power assist wheels - Specialised strollers 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wheelchairs with ventilators or respiratory support equipment - Power wheelchairs with integrated controls e.g. ECU; computers; - Wheelchairs with complex controls e.g. head array, scanning controls etc. 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with > 3yrs experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category + multi-disciplinary team input

Scooters	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 4 wheeled scooter 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with > 1 yr experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category Completion of a medical questionnaire is also required
Seating Systems	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Custom made foam on ply seating – Commercially available seating e.g. backrest, headrest and cushions – Positioning devices e.g. harnesses, lateral supports – Specialised car seats, harnesses and postural supports 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Custom-made moulded postural supports 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with > 3yrs experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category + multi-disciplinary team input.
Vehicle Transfer Devices	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Slide board >\$100 – Turntable >\$100 – Portable Ramp 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wheelchair Hoist 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist > 1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category.

Alternative Positioning	Qualifications
Group 2 Standing Frames	Physiotherapist with > 1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category.
Group 2 Seating that is independent of mobility device (eg. waterchair, children's seating)	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with > 1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category.
Group 3 Custom made positioning device that is independent of a mobility device.	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist with > 3 years experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category.

Orthoses& Footwear	Qualifications
Axial (Spinal and Head) Orthoses	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigid Collars - Helmet 	Orthotist, Physiotherapist, Registered Nurse, Medical Specialist with > 1 yr experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thoracic lumbosacral orthoses - Lumbosacral orthoses 	Medical Specialist and Orthotist with > 3yrs experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category
Upper Extremity Orthoses	
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic upper limb orthoses 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Orthotist, Medical Specialist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power assisted wrist hand orthoses - Flail arm orthoses 	Occupational Therapist, Orthotist, Physiotherapist, Medical Specialist +Multi-disciplinary team input
Specialised Footwear	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footwear modifications 	Orthotist, Pedorthist, Physiotherapist, Podiatrist, Medical Specialist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prefabricated depth and width medical grade footwear - Customised medical grade footwear 	Medical specialist, podiatrist and pedorthist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Custom made medical grade footwear 	Podiatrist, Pedorthist, Medical Specialist with > 3 years experience +5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment + Medical Specialist input
Below Knee Orthoses	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Off the shelf lower limb orthoses 	Physiotherapist, Medical Specialist, Orthotist, Pedorthist, Podiatrist
Group 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Custom ankle foot orthoses - Dynamic ankle foot orthoses - Custom foot orthoses - Patella Tendon Bearing (PTB) orthoses - Basic knee ankle foot orthoses 	Medical Specialist, Orthotist, Pedorthist, Physiotherapist, Podiatrist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category

Complex Walking Orthoses	
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reciprocal gait orthoses (RGO) - Hip guidance orthoses (HGO) - Twister cables with AFO - Complex lower-limb walking orthoses (KAFO's) 	Medical Specialist and Orthotist, or Physiotherapist with > 3yrs experience + 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category

Pressure care	Qualifications
Cushions, mattress replacement systems & overlays	
Group 1 ***clients at low risk of pressure ulcers*** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foam cushions / mattresses - Foam overlays 	Occupational Therapist, Registered Nurse, Physiotherapist
Group 2 **clients at medium to high risk of pressure ulcers** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air-flotation cushions / mattresses - Gel pads / Gel style cushions - Alternating air cushions/mattresses - Low air-loss - Foam mattresses - Foam overlays 	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Registered Nurse with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category

Compression Garments	Qualifications
Group 1 Off the shelf compression garments	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Registered Nurse or specialist medical officer with level 1 training (Lymphoedema Training Course, Australian Lymphology Association).
Group 2 Custom made compression garments	Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Registered Nurse or specialist medical officer with level 1 training (Lymphoedema Training Course, Australian Lymphology Association).

Prosthetic Limbs	Qualifications
Refer to Prosthetic Limb Service Accreditation Guidelines on the EnableNSW website	
Other Prostheses	Qualifications
Wig	Initial request needs confirmation of diagnosis from Medical Specialist

Respiratory Equipment	Qualifications
Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPAP - Humidification 	Qualified Sleep Medicine Practitioner or Respiratory Physician
Oxygen Therapy	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oxygen concentrator device - Back up/portable cylinders (special circumstances) - Nasal prongs 	Paediatrics & Adults: Respiratory or Palliative Care physicians
Nocturnal Ventilation (for clients diagnosed with Obesity Hypoventilation)	
Group 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ventilator - Humidification 	Qualified Sleep Medicine Practitioner or Respiratory Physician
Nocturnal Ventilation (for clients diagnosed with other respiratory failure disorder)	
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ventilator - Humidification - Batteries and battery chargers for ventilators 	Specialist physician in Respiratory Medicine, Sleep Medicine, Spinal Cord Injuries & Intensive Care (in Consultation with the multidisciplinary care team- eg Clinical Nurse Consultant, Speech Pathologist, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Physiotherapist, Biomedical Engineer)
Suction Units and Respiratory Consumables for Secretion Management	
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suction Units – high pressure, portable - Suction Unit – manual (special circumstances) - Humidifier unit (electrical) - Ventilator circuits - Heat Moisture Exchange (HME) - Tracheostomy tubes and related consumables - Laryngectomy tubes and related consumables 	Specialist physician in Respiratory Medicine, Rehabilitation, ENT, Palliative Care, Sleep, Spinal Cord Injury Unit & Intensive Care (in consultation with the multidisciplinary care team- eg Clinical Nurse Consultant, Speech Pathologist, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Biomedical Engineers & Physiotherapist)
Continuous Ventilation	
Group 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ventilator - Humidification - Circuits - External Monitoring Systems - Batteries and battery chargers for ventilators 	Specialist physician in Respiratory Medicine, Sleep Medicine, Spinal Cord Injury Unit & Intensive Care (in Consultation with the multidisciplinary care team – eg Clinical Nurse Consultant, Speech Pathologist, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Physiotherapist, Biomedical Engineer)