

## What is a wheelchair assessment?



The assessment is done with a team including the child and family, physical therapist, equipment vendor/ATP (Assistive Technology Professional) and others who the family may ask to be part of the process. It is critical to having a wheelchair that best fits your child's needs. Information collected from the assessment will help the wheelchair assessment team and family to; choose the most appropriate wheelchair from those available; determine the most appropriate wheelchair components from those available including any possible additional postural support required and decide what training or support your child and you may need to use and maintain the wheelchair.

It is also needed for insurance coverage, including Medicaid.

## What do I do if my child needs a wheelchair assessment or fitting?

- You should start by having a conversation with the physical therapist who is providing therapy for your child. This could also include the school therapist (although she may not be able to do an assessment with you).
- Be specific about your child's wheelchair needs and your concerns.
- You can also contact your child's Medical Home (primary care doctor), care coordinator, case manager, or other physicians, and specialists involved with your child's care for their recommendations.

## My child does not have a physical therapist. Who could help me?

- The local wheelchair vendors may be able to direct you to one. There are two:
  - **Yankee Medical**, 276 North Avenue, Burlington – Phone (802) 863-4591  
Website: <https://www.yankeemedical.com/> **As of June 2, 2022, Yankee Medical will be closing and will no longer be providing DME services in this area.**
  - **National Seating & Mobility/Vermont**, 6 Green Tree Drive. Unit 1, South Burlington, VT 05403  
Phone: 802) 552-4190  
Website: <https://www.nsm-seating.com/>

If you live near New Hampshire, New York, or Massachusetts, there may be vendors in those states who can provide assessments and accept VT Medicaid and Insurances. You will need to ask them if they have



a contract with your insurance or if they are a Vermont Medicaid provider before any information is sent to them.

- **If your child is between the ages of birth and 3 years of age, the Vermont I-Team Early Intervention (EI) Project may be able to help you.**
  - Contact Pamela Cummings – Phone (802) 343-9400 or email: [Pamela.Cummings@uvm.edu](mailto:Pamela.Cummings@uvm.edu)  
Website: <https://www.uvm.edu/cess/cdci/i-team-early-intervention-project>
  - Information on the I-Team: [Center on Disability & Community-Inclusion/EI.pdf](#)
- **Contact the Seating Clinic at the Hospital Near You:**
  - **University of Vermont Medical Center**, Rehabilitation Therapy Center, Fanny Allen Campus, 790 College Parkway, Colchester, Vermont - Phone: 802-847-1902.
  - **Rutland Regional Medical Center**, 160 Allen Street, Rutland, Vermont – Rehabilitation Services  
Phone: 802-747-1840
  - **Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center**, Wheelchair Clinic, 1 Medical Center Dr, Lebanon, New Hampshire – Phone 603-650-5978

## What About Insurance Coverage?

The physical therapist will usually complete the documentation needed to medically justify the wheelchair and seating components that are recommended at the assessment. This will be sent to the vendor who will submit to your insurance or the child's Medicaid for prior approval.

The wheelchair vendors (durable medical equipment providers) have a lot of experience and knowledge in using the wheelchair assessment, sending in the prior authorization, and submitting the wheelchair claim to your child's insurance.

You can call the number on the back of your child's insurance card if you have any questions.

The Department of Vermont Health Access has produced a fact sheet on how to get durable medical equipment through Vermont Medicaid. [How to get DME through VT Medicaid](#)

**Children with Special Health Needs:** <https://www.healthvermont.gov/family/special-health-needs>

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