

# Rifton HTS (Hygiene & Toileting System)

## A Sample Letter of Medical Necessity

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# Rifton HTS

## Components of a letter of Medical Necessity

### **Describe who you are, what you want, and beneficiary's name:**

As John Doe's therapist, I am requesting funding authorization for a Rifton HTS. This durable medical device was prescribed by John's physician for his current bowel and bladder management program.

### **Explain the beneficiary's condition, including diagnosis, or nature of the injury:**

John has spastic quadriplegia with resulting difficulty in controlling his head, trunk, arm and leg movements. He is currently positioned in a wheelchair as he can only sit upright when supported at the trunk, hips and legs. John can bear his weight for \_\_\_ seconds to minimally assist with transfers in and out of his wheelchair. Because of his spasticity and balance deficits this transfer requires moderate to maximal assistance by his caregiver. John also has recurrent episodes of constipation from decreased physical mobility and irregular toileting opportunities. Poor physical mobility and fluctuating health prevent John from independently using regular facilities during the day, resulting in incontinence and an increased risk for skin breakdown. He has also had episodes of urinary tract infection and an incidence of skin decubitus, now resolved. These were directly related to the difficulties of maintaining proper hygiene.

### **Discuss the impact of the above mentioned diagnosis.**

Because of John's impairments, he is dependent for all positioning, transfers and activities of daily living including toileting and hygiene care.

Currently, in the home environment, John's father transfers him from bed to wheelchair and then from wheelchair to the bathroom toilet, staying with him throughout the toileting process to maintain his seated position. These are physically demanding transfers with limited space to maneuver and are potentially hazardous on the often wet bathroom floor. His father's effort and fatigue in maintaining John's seated position on the toilet limits the time that John can sit for the necessary physiological functions to be performed. Additionally, John's own postural effort to maintain sitting balance on an uncomfortable surface does not allow him to relax appropriately for voiding.

At times when John's father is unavailable, on days when John is not well or during the night when his sleep medications make him drowsy and less cooperative, his hygiene care is done on his bed, impacting his dignity and quality of life. Having his diapers changed like a baby in a horizontal position is humiliating and has a psychological cost. Additionally, as John is a growing teenager, transferring him to the bed and positioning him for hygiene care can be strenuous, time-consuming and risky.

### **Describe needs and safety factors for caregivers:**

To prevent back injury, caregivers must have an accommodative environment with adequate room to maneuver themselves, the wheelchair and the client. Current literature suggests that no caregiver should lift more than 35lb of a patient's weight, under ideal conditions. [Waters TR (2007). When is it safe to manually lift a patient? American Journal of Nursing 107(8):53-58.] John's father and caregivers are routinely lifting more than this guideline weight to perform John's hygiene care. Further, research has concluded that if the right equipment is available and lifting and transfers are made easier, more people with severe disabilities may have a better chance at becoming toilet trained. [Pivato E. Breaching the last frontier: Dignity and the toileting issue for persons with multiple and severe disabilities. Developmental Disabilities Bulletin. 2009; 37(1): 153-64.]



## **State the type of equipment and accessories being requested.**

I am requesting a Rifton HTS for John's use in the home with the features and accessories listed below.

The HTS is designed for toileting in instances of disease, injury, or disability, and provides anatomical positioning to promote the physiological processes necessary for effective toileting and hygiene health. This system provides the supports and positioning options that John needs to sit comfortably, independently and safely while on the toilet. Additionally, with this system John's stand/pivot transfers are facilitated. The HTS has removable armrests, a forward tilt option and a flip-up footboard so John can be assisted into a partial standing position and from there helped to stand and pivot to the next location. This significantly decreases John's dependence on his father for the transfers. Increased opportunity and practice with these stand/pivot transfers will strengthen trunk and leg muscles increasing John's participation in the toileting routine.

The provision of a Rifton HTS for John Doe is consistent for clients with his medical condition and level of disability. Funding for this device is being requested for John Doe as it offers practical solutions to his transfer and hygiene health issues

## **Describe why the device is medically necessary:**

Toileting and bathing are activities of daily living that are essential to health and personal hygiene. Current research indicates that effective toileting not only maintains a healthy bowel and bladder but significantly impacts a child's quality of life. [Sansome A. Bladder and bowel management in physically disabled children. Paediatrics and child health. 2011; 21(10): 454-8.]

John's physician has ordered a bowel and bladder management program combining use of medications with routine opportunities to void in a toilet. The Rifton HTS can function as a free-standing system, be rolled over the toilet or it can be secured directly on the toilet as an adaptive and supportive toilet seat. It has an additional use as a shower chair. Its features, support options and accessories directly address the areas of stability, comfort and good positioning that are medically necessary for effective bowel and bladder elimination.

In the home setting, John's family will use the device both as a free standing system and over the toilet. This will allow John to consistently follow his toileting routine as prescribed by his physician to address the constipation, incontinence and integumentary issues. Research shows that children with disabilities who have been given the opportunity to void regularly have shown remarkable progress in becoming continent. [Millard E, Benore E, Mosher K. A multidisciplinary functional toileting pathway for children with cerebral palsy: preliminary analysis. Clin Practice Ped Psychol. 2013; 1(1):81-8.]

With the Rifton HTS, John can be transferred to it with one stand/pivot transfer in the safe and dry bedroom environment. Because of its mobile base, the commode can then be rolled into the bathroom and over the toilet for voiding opportunity in the toilet.

The Rifton HTS will allow John to sit independently over the toilet without assistance from his father, allowing privacy while voiding. The weight-bearing surfaces of this device are contoured and padded with polyurethane foam so John can sit with comfort for longer toileting sessions with less chance of skin breakdown.

The adjustment range of seat, back and various accessories will allow John's caregivers to position him with stability and in an appropriate anatomical position for elimination. Meeting John's needs for adequate postural support will also effectively reduce tone and promote relaxation while on the toilet.

Specifically, caregivers can adjust the footboard to provide the recommended base of support for the feet and if appropriate, raise the footboard to position the knees slightly higher than the hips to achieve a position of better elimination. The "squat" position relaxes the puborectalis muscle, straightens the rectum and works with gravity for faster, easier, and more complete elimination. [Rad S. Impact of Ethnic Habit on Defecographic Measurements. Archives of Iranian Medicine. 2002; 5(2): 115-7.]



Additionally, caregivers can combine a slightly posterior tilt-in-space position with tilting the backrest forward so the trunk is slightly forward. This in conjunction with an anterior support achieves an ideal toileting position. The anterior support provides a surface onto which John can lean or brace his upper extremities for additional stability.

This same device will act as a shower chair as well in the posterior tilt-in-space position. Depending on John's overall health, the option of using the device as a free-standing system is necessary for the times when medical complications reduce John's energy level and he needs to utilize the system at bedside. This is also necessary for nighttime use when John is drowsy and less cooperative from his sleep medications or exhibits an urgent need to urinate.

The Rifton HTS includes a portability base, required for continuity of John's prescribed bowel and bladder management program during weekend family travel. The portability base along with the seat and backrest can be packed into a canvas tote bag for easy transport.

The HTS also allows for growth to adulthood. With the large size, John will need only one system for both toileting and bathing for the rest of his life, an option not offered with other toileting systems and thus another significant saving.

### **Make the person real and include IEP goals:**

The Rifton HTS will allow John to be toileted regularly and to participate to a greater extent in the stand/pivot transfers to and from this toilet system. Through being an active participant in his own toileting and bathing routines, John will learn basic living skills of personal hygiene that will help him achieve a sense of independence and dignity.

This also has tremendous benefits to John's family and caregivers. As John becomes more independent with his care and able to assist with transfers, the risk of caregiver injury and fatigue will be reduced.

The Rifton HTS will fulfill John Doe's need for security and freedom of movement to develop the skills necessary for him to optimize his health and avoid adverse medical problems as he grows to adulthood.

### **Discuss the cost of not having the equipment:**

Without this device John will not experience toileting regularity, putting him at an increased risk for medical complications including constipation, incontinence, urinary tract infection and skin breakdown. All of these will drive up overall medical costs for pharmaceutical and other medical interventions.

He will also remain dependent in his transfers and as he continues to grow larger he will become a further liability for caregiver injury. This could result in potential additional costs of future injury claims.

### **Summary/Conclusion:**

Toileting and bathing often are the most difficult tasks for families and caregivers of persons with significant support needs. Using the Rifton HTS can alleviate or overcome the many difficulties presented in hygiene care or in the bathroom environment.

Foremost, the toileting system improves safety by reducing the number of dependent transfers and enabling transfers to occur in a safe and dry environment.

Equally important, the Rifton HTS system has the adjustability and adaptability to accommodate the needs of the client for comfort, stability and function while seated on the toileting system. It also accommodates a wide range of growth, eliminating the need to obtain a second larger size as John grows older. It is also designed to be easily and thoroughly cleaned between every use, assuring maximal sanitizing and infection control.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the Rifton HTS will certainly meet the needs of John and his family and caregivers and at the same time, offer a less costly alternative to hygiene care for John.



## Itemization of the Rifton HTS:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Stationary base: non-tilt</b></p> 	<p>Required to support toilet seat, back, and footboard for safe and independent sitting. Adjustable legs allow client to be seated at appropriate height</p>
<p><b>Mobile base: non-tilt with footboard</b></p> 	<p>Required to support toilet seat, back, and footboard for safe and independent sitting. Adjustable legs allow client to be seated at appropriate height.</p> <p>Rolls on lockable, corrosion-free casters. Unlocked casters enable caregiver to maneuver system between room, bathroom and shower while client is seated for effective toileting/showering eliminating unnecessary transfers.</p>
<p><b>Mobile base: tilt-in-space with footboard</b></p> 	<p>Tilt-in-space moves the entire seat from 5° forward to 25° backwards tilt, maintaining the seat-to-back angle throughout. The tilt-in-space feature is medically necessary for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward tilt can facilitate a stand/pivot transfer, putting less demand on caregivers to perform strenuous manual lifting.</li> <li>• The forward-tilt feature in combination with a slightly increased backrest angle, use of the anterior support and well supported feet provides optimal anatomical positioning to promote bowel movement (forward-leaning). This position can also help reduce abnormal postural patterns associated with increased muscle tone such as extensor thrust.</li> <li>• Utilizing backwards tilt for a few minutes initially, can enable the client to relax into the seated position, reducing spasticity and extensor tone prior to the voiding opportunity.</li> <li>• The back-tilt position can provide pressure relief as needed.</li> <li>• The back-tilt position is appropriate when using the device as a shower chair.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mounting bar for round or elongated toilets</b></p> 	<p>Essential for safety in mounting of toilet seat, back, footboard and accessories onto a regular toilet. Enables appropriate positioning for daily toileting opportunities on regular toilet. Additional mounting bar is necessary for use of device in more than one bathroom.</p>
<p><b>Footboard for mounting bar attachments</b></p> 	<p>Height and angle adjustments enable specific foot placement and some weight-bearing through legs and feet during voiding. Allows placement of ankle straps and calf support to meet a client's specific positioning needs. Adjustment of footboard. Footboard can accept client's full weight as a step during transfer or can be folded up out of the way for floor-level transfers.</p>
<p><b>Push handles</b></p> 	<p>Using the push handles, caregivers can easily move a client for necessary transitions in the bathroom environment before and after toileting.</p>

## Itemization of the Rifton HTS:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Seat and back</b></p> 	<p>Adjustable seat depth accommodates 3" of growth. Seat and backrest are removable for complete sanitizing. Backrest angle adjusts 6° forward and 18° backwards. The backrest angle adjustment in combination with footrest placement can accomplish appropriate seated positioning both to promote bowel movement (forward-leaning) and to provide needed rest periods (back-leaning). Product includes seatbelt for safety. The backrest provides for attachment and use of accessories as required for maximum support.</p> <p>Contours of the seat and back are designed to promote lower extremity abduction and reduce likelihood of sacral sitting.</p>
<p><b>Armrests</b></p> 	<p>Provide lateral boundaries as well as a surface for upper extremity weight-bearing assist to aid trunk and head control. Armrests provide an attachment point for the anterior support. Armrests are detachable to increase ease of stand/pivot transfer. The toilet seat can accommodate any size of armrest (low, medium or high) as needed to optimize postural control of client.</p>
<p><b>Seat and back pads</b></p>  <p>rear-open, rear-closed, no-hole</p>	<p>Seat and back padding is required to provide a comfortable surface suitable for the client, particularly in the case of sensitive skin or curvature of the spine during prolonged periods of toileting or bathing.</p> <p>The rear-open seat option has an opening to the rear to facilitate hygiene care. When combined with the 5° forward tilt-in-space, this opening is ideal for cleaning the client posteriorly while client is still sitting and relaxed.</p> <p>The no-hole seat pad enables use of the HTS for comfortable seating, such as when showering. The no-hole seat pad comes with a rigid hole filler for the medium and large HTS.</p>
<p><b>Headrest</b></p> 	<p>Contoured head support adjusts in depth, angle and height for increased support for a client with poor head control.</p>
<p><b>Butterfly harness</b></p> 	<p>Provides anterior support while allowing freedom of movement. Adjusts to fit snugly and comfortably, giving client sense of security and safety.</p>
<p><b>Anterior support</b></p> 	<p>Provides support for a forward-leaning position to optimize physiological process of defecation. This forward-lean position can help reduce abnormal postural patterns associated with increased muscle tone such as extensor thrust. Can be utilized as a surface for upper extremity weight-bearing assist to aid trunk and head control.</p> <p>Surface for placement of communication devices or hygiene articles.</p>
<p><b>Laterals</b></p> 	<p>Lateral supports assist with good body alignment. Adjust separately, in height, angle and width. Will ensure alignment, stability and safety during toileting and bathing. Available in two sizes.</p>
<p><b>Laterals with chest strap</b></p> 	<p>Chest strap in addition to lateral supports provides anterior trunk support for clients who do not have upper torso control. Will ensure comfort, stability, alignment and safety during toileting and bathing.</p>

## Itemization of the Rifton HTS:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Bowl adapter</b></p> 	<p>Required if there is a lack of alignment between the seat opening and toilet hole, to assure a secure fit and prevent leakage. Inserts at the front of the HTS seat edge under the seat pad, for example in the case of a wall-hung toilet or when using a large HTS over a round-front toilet.</p>
<p><b>Hip guides</b></p> 	<p>Necessary for client needing maximum support for lateral control of pelvis while sitting. Provides for adjustment of the width of the seat allowing for growth. For clients with limited muscle control that results in abduction of lower extremities, provides a comfortable lateral boundary.</p>
<p><b>Pan</b></p> 	<p>Pan slips easily into place under the seat. Required when using device as a free standing system.</p>
<p><b>Standard deflector</b></p> 	<p>Deflector can be positioned into seat after client is seated, and provides splash protection to maximize personal hygiene.</p>
<p><b>Splash guard</b></p> 	<p>Provides more coverage than the standard deflector for total splash protection. It is held in place by the seatbelt or the butterfly harness.</p>
<p><b>Abductor</b></p> 	<p>Used for controlling lower extremity adduction. Mounts on toilet seat to offer knee comfort and positioning while toileting or bathing. Adding the abductor to the standard deflector provides stability to the deflector.</p>
<p><b>Ankle straps</b></p> 	<p>Necessary for clients unable to control leg movements. Used with footboard to position user's feet with a bounded range of movement. Optimal foot positioning on the footboard contributes to effective lower extremity load-bearing during toileting, which promotes bone health.</p>
<p><b>Calfrest</b></p> 	<p>Provides support at the back of the calf, to assure comfortable and stable positioning of the lower extremities when footrest is elevated. This is particularly important when the device is in posterior tilt.</p>
<p><b>Tub base</b></p> 	<p>Required for use of the device when bathing client in a bathtub.</p>
<p><b>Portability base with carry bag</b></p> 	<p>A light-weight foldable frame with a carry-bag that allows the seat and back to be utilized as a free-standing system or over a toilet. Required for continuity of prescribed bowel and bladder management program between environments.</p>

**Don't forget to include pictures of the Rifton HTS.**



**ON the toilet**



**OVER the toilet**



**OFF the toilet**



**Tilt-in-space**



**Three sizes: small, medium and large**

