

# Wave Bathing & Transfer System

## A Sample Letter of Medical Necessity

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# Rifton Wave

## 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 Wave. This durable medical device was prescribed by John's physician, is distinctly medical in nature, and would not normally be of use in the absence of illness and injury. This DME is necessary for daily activities related to health and personal hygiene, particularly bathing and showering. Bathing is among the activities of daily living considered essential to personal hygiene, health, and well-being.

What follows is a breakdown of John's needs, safety issues and space management issues.

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

*(Describe ability to sit, stand, walk, and transfer including amount of assistance needed for each activity pertinent to the process of bathing or showering, including transfer into the bathtub or shower. Where appropriate, describe other related equipment in use, such as mobility device, patient lift, etc.)*

John Doe has spastic quadriplegia with resulting difficulty in controlling his head, trunk, arm and leg movements. He presents with scoliosis and a right hip deformity. He is currently positioned in a wheelchair as he can only sit upright when supported at the trunk, hips and legs. John has insufficient leg strength or postural control to effectively achieve manually assisted transfers in and out of his wheelchair and currently relies on the Rifton TRAM for all transfers to and from his wheelchair. John also has recurrent episodes of bowel/bladder irregularities, including constipation and diarrhea due to medicine side effects, and has a history of urinary tract infections and one incident of skin decubitus, now resolved. These medical issues are in part directly related to the difficulties of maintaining proper hygiene for John. The Rifton Wave is medically necessary for John Doe as he is currently unable to safely use the bathtub or shower in his home.

### **Discuss the impact of the above diagnosis on the beneficiary's and caregiver's life. Note the limitations without the requested equipment.**

*(Include details about the recipient's current equipment or how the recipient is currently bathing, and specific and detailed information about why it is no longer meeting the recipient's needs or cannot be repaired.)*

Because of John's impairments, he is dependent for all positioning, transfers and activities of daily living including hygiene care. Currently in the home environment his hygiene care is done on his bed; as a result his hygiene suffers as well as his dignity and quality of life. Being bathed like a baby in a horizontal position is humiliating and has a psychological cost. Additionally, as John eventually grows into his teenage years, transferring him to the bed and re-positioning him as needed for hygiene care will become more strenuous, time-consuming and risky. At present when John Doe requires a thorough clean, John's father transfers him from wheelchair to the bathtub, physically holding onto him throughout the bathing process to maintain his seated position. This is a physically demanding transfer with limited space to maneuver and is potentially hazardous on the often wet bathroom floor. His father's effort and fatigue in maintaining John's seated position while in the tub limits the time that John can sit for the necessary cleaning to be performed. Additionally, John's own postural effort to help maintain his sitting balance on an uncomfortable surface does not allow him to relax appropriately, and the spasticity of his limbs and involuntary movement of his body against the hard surfaces of the bathtub places him at risk for significant injury.



**Discuss the needs and safety factors for children/adults with significant support needs** *(include the benefits the requested equipment will provide).*

Finding a bathing and transfer system that meets the needs and safety issues of significantly involved children presents a multitude of challenges. This is further complicated when taking into consideration a variety of bathroom sizes and configurations. The incidence of client injury is significantly higher in this area of care because of these obstacles.

A bathing system must offer supports and adjustment options for head, trunk, hips and legs as needed for safety and positioning while allowing freedom of movement so that the client can learn and perform related skills in the area of personal hygiene. The bathing system must be designed with a surface that accommodates deformities to decrease pressure on skin areas and that allows water flow throughout the bathing or showering process. It must also enable improved ease of transfer from wheelchair to bathing system. To accommodate for growth, a system must allow progression from tub to shower.

Funding for the Rifton Wave is being requested for John Doe as this system offers solutions to the multitude of problems discussed above and more.

**Describe needs and safety issues for caregivers.**

To prevent back injuries, caregivers must have an environment conducive to level lateral transfers with adequate room to maneuver themselves, a wheelchair, the child or adult and the equipment used for bathing or toileting. All of this must be done without the supportive advantage of clothing and is further complicated by the slipperiness of soap and water. In addition to this, as children grow, caregivers and/or family members are at a greater risk of injury due to increasingly difficult transfers.

Current literature suggests that no caregiver should lift more than 35 pounds 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 to perform John's hygiene care.

Although John can momentarily bear weight in a standing position while fully supported, the Wave is medically necessary due to his medical condition which causes him to be unstable with ambulation and places him at risk for falls/injury.

**State the type of equipment and accessories being requested. Describe equipment and its adjustments for growth.**

I am requesting a Rifton Wave for John's use in the home with the features and accessories described below. The Wave is designed for bathing and/or showering in instances of disease, injury, or disability. This device is designed and manufactured as durable medical equipment.

This device provides for alleviation and compensation in the case of disability due to injury or disease. Specifically, John Doe requires consistent, regular and thorough cleaning in order to prevent infection of the perineal area. Due to his diagnosis John is unable to bathe or shower without being seated, and additionally he is unable to transfer to and from a tub. John is at risk for injury should he attempt this required functional daily activity. For these reasons, this device with accessories as specified is medically necessary.

The intended use is not for self-help, convenience, or personal comfort. The provision of a Wave for John Doe is consistent for clients with his medical condition and level of disability. Therefore I request funding for this medically necessary device.



The Wave provides the supports and positioning options that John needs to sit independently and safely while in the bathtub or shower and provides the additional positioning options necessary for cleaning all parts of his body to provide effective hygiene health.

- The Wave has incremental adjustments of the backrest angle, plus incremental adjustments of seat angle that are independent of the adjustment of the calf rest angle. The adjustment range of seat, back and various accessories will allow John's caregivers to position him with stability and in an appropriate position for proper hygiene care. Meeting John's needs for adequate postural support using the angle adjustments of seat and calfrest will also effectively reduce tone and promote relaxation while John is in the bath chair, enabling better care. These features are unique to Rifton's Wave, and will enable John to be positioned with appropriate hip and knee flexion to reduce his spastic extensor tone and improve his tolerance for the seated position during bathing.
- The Wave has soft polyester knit fabric with generous padding that is removable and washable. This fabric accommodates John's physical deformities and protects his skin integrity. It is sufficiently porous to enable effective bathing by spraying water with a shower nozzle through the fabric.
- The seat is extra wide with open sides, facilitating easier transfers and comfort while bathing. The weight-bearing surfaces of this device are of polyester knit fabric with padded areas so John can sit with comfort for longer cleaning sessions when needed with less chance of adverse pressure or skin breakdown. The Wave accommodates a wide range of growth, with an open design that allows John Doe to continue to sit comfortably as he grows.
- Optional chest straps, head blocks, and leg straps will enable appropriate positioning and assure safety. These supports can be temporarily released for freedom of movement as necessary. The chest strap opens easily and is designed to be placed out of the way so that it will not impede transfers.
- The Wave is also designed to be thoroughly cleaned when required, including laundering the fabric, assuring effective sanitizing and infection control.
- The Wave adjusts from sitting to reclining and can be used outside the bathroom as a supportive seating system in other environments. This offers John Doe a safe and comfortable alternative seating option out of the wheelchair.

The Wave has three bases: tub stand, shower stand, and a tub transfer base.

Any size of Wave bath chair can be configured onto these bases. This will reduce costs as John grows and requires a larger bath chair. Because the tub stand, shower stand, and tub transfer base accommodate any bath chair size needed by the growing user, it eliminates the need for John to obtain a second larger size base as he grows older.

The Wave is a simple and cost effective solution that will not require remodeling John's bathroom and will eliminate ineffective and strenuous bed baths.

- The tub stand rests securely on the tub floor and raises the bath chair to a comfortable height for the caregiver, enabling greater ease and improved care with the transfer and bathing process. The tub stand legs can be placed in two positions, raising the bath chair either 5 ½" or 11 ½".
- The shower stand allows the bath chair to be rolled into a shower stall at a height that enables thorough cleaning and better hygiene for John Doe. This stand is designed with 4" locking casters for smooth and easy maneuverability.
- The tub transfer base has height adjustable legs, that can be adjusted up to 19" high to fit over the outer side of the bath tub at the level of a wheelchair for ease of transfers to the tub area. With the tub transfer base, John can be transferred from a wheelchair into the Wave bath chair which is on the tub transfer base using a mechanical lift. It can then be easily moved and rotated over the tub, which enables John to sit independently with zero lifting for the caregiver. The Wave will then allow John to sit independently in the tub. No other bathing device offers this tub transfer base that enables manual or lift-assisted transfers from wheelchair to bath chair, and subsequent no-lift positioning of a bath chair over a tub. This particular tub transfer base is medically necessary for John Doe, as he is unable to safely transfer to and from the bath chair without the use of the tub









transfer base. The tub transfer base cannot be considered a duplication of equipment because the client does not currently have a patient lift that can be used effectively for transfers of the client over the tub.







- The Wave bath seat and the tub transfer base fold for easy storage.

**Itemization of the Rifton Wave:**



*Include only those product features that will be applied for.*

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Chest strap without lateral positioning</b></p> 	<p>Positioning strap adjusts securely around torso to provide trunk support.</p>
<p><b>Chest strap with lateral positioning</b></p> 	<p>Positioning strap adjusts securely around torso with adjustable lateral straps to maintain trunk alignment.</p>
<p><b>Headblocks</b></p> 	<p>Head blocks provide lateral support to maintain head in safe midline position.</p>
<p><b>Leg straps</b></p> 	<p>Fully adjustable leg straps place hips in abduction, support each leg individually in cases of spasticity, and provide additional security for safe positioning.</p>
<p><b>Calfrest</b></p> 	<p>Calf rest supports lower extremities when feet do not reach environment surface, such as when tub or shower stand is in use. Prevents lower legs from being suspended into the force of gravity, cutting off circulation behind knees and/or resulting in pooling of fluid in feet/ankle areas.</p>
<p><b>Tub stand</b></p> 	<p>Bath chair snaps on to tub stand for height adjustability to place client at height above tub floor surface and/or water level as required by client's medical condition. Tub stand also prevents strain and injury to caregiver by improving ergonomics and reducing maladaptive postural positioning of caregiver. Accommodates small, medium, or large Rifton Wave.</p>

**Itemization of the Rifton Wave continued:**

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Shower stand</b></p> 	<p>Shower stand with 4" locking casters places the chair on wheels at caregiver's standing height for improved ease of lateral transfer into chair and ease of rolling into shower stall. It places client at a height that enables better hygiene and cleaning care of client for improved health. Improves ergonomics of caregiver, preventing strain and injury. Accommodates small, medium, or large bath chair.</p>
<p><b>Tub transfer base</b></p> 	<p>Tub transfer base enables manual or lift-assisted transfer from wheelchair to bath chair, and subsequent no-lift positioning of bath chair over tub. Accommodates small, medium, or large Rifton Wave bath chair.</p>
<p><b>Additional head block</b></p> 	<p>Additional head blocks can provide additional lateral support to upper trunk to maintain posture in safe midline position.</p>
<p><b>Additional fabric cover</b></p> 	<p>Additional fabric cover necessary to assure alternating use of available fabric covers, and laundering of the fabric when not in use, for effective sanitizing and infection control.</p>
<p><b>Additional chest strap without lateral positioning</b></p> 	<p>Additional positioning strap adjusts securely around torso to provide trunk support.</p>
<p><b>Additional chest strap with lateral positioning</b></p> 	<p>Additional positioning strap adjusts securely around torso with adjustable lateral straps to maintain trunk alignment.</p>



<p><b>Conversion kit with calcrest</b></p> 	<p>Conversion kit is a significant cost-saving option, that allows the client to transition from small to medium size by obtaining just a new back, seat, calf rest, and cover.</p>
<p><b>Conversion kit without calcrest</b></p> 	<p>Conversion kit is a significant cost-saving option, that allows the client to transition from small to medium size by obtaining just a new back, seat, and cover.</p>

**Make the person real and discuss psychological benefits as well as benefits to caregiver.**

The Rifton Wave will allow John to be bathed properly on a regular basis and will enable him to begin to participate in learning bathing skills. Through being an active participant in his own bathing routine, John will learn basic living skills of personal hygiene that will help him achieve a sense of independence and dignity. This device also has tremendous benefits to John’s family and caregivers. Utilizing the tub transfer base assures a safer transfer for John and the risk of caregiver injury and fatigue will be reduced. The Rifton Wave will fulfill John’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 into adulthood. If these needs are met, John will be happier, healthier, and better able to benefit from his home and school environment.

**Discuss the cost of not having the equipment. Reiterate and summarize the cost benefits.**

*(Describe other less costly ways to meet the recipient’s needs that have been considered and why they are not adequate. Include details, for example, the make and model of less costly items considered and rejected.)*

Bathing people with significant support needs is often one of the most difficult tasks for families and caregivers. Without this device John will not experience proper bathing with regularity, putting him at an increased risk for medical complications including urinary tract infection and skin breakdown. All of these will drive up overall medical costs for pharmaceutical and other medical interventions.

As John continues to grow he will become a further liability for injury to himself and his caregiver during transfers. This could result in potential additional costs of injury claims.

The adaptability, adjustability, and compactness of the Rifton Wave takes all the obstacles presented in the bathroom environment into consideration and lowers the risk of injury to caregivers. No other device in the market offers the angle adjustability of the seat, back and calf rest that will reduce the extensor tone that John exhibits, and enable a more relaxed seated position during the bathing process. In addition, no other device on the market offers the tub transfer base for effective transition from wheelchair to bath chair and over the tub with zero lifting for the caregiver.

Because the Rifton Wave accommodates for growth and can be used as an alternative floor positioning/seating device, it can reduce the cost of John’s medical care by lasting longer than similar equipment and potentially eliminating other costly equipment.



Taking the above factors into consideration, I feel that the Rifton Wave will not only meet the needs of John Doe, his family and his caregivers, but also in the long run save the insurer money over other options.

### **Summary/conclusion.**

Using the Rifton Wave can alleviate or overcome the many difficulties presented in bathing and hygiene care in the bathroom environment. The Rifton Wave has the adjustability and adaptability to accommodate the needs of the client for comfort, stability and function while seated for bathing. This DME is essential and is intended for persons with disabilities and chronic conditions. Providing this DME enables people with disabilities to accomplish tasks that they would otherwise be unable to perform.

Bathing is an activity of daily living that is essential to health and personal hygiene. John's physician has ordered a hygiene management program to prevent the health issues of urinary tract infection and decubiti. John Doe has a medical history of these conditions, which have previously required significant medical attention with associated costs. The features, support options and accessories of the Rifton Wave directly address the areas of stability, comfort and good positioning that are medically necessary for essential daily cleaning and hygiene management. In the home setting, John's family will use the device both in the bathtub and in a roll-in shower. This will allow John to consistently follow his hygiene routine as prescribed by his physician to address the management necessary due to his incontinence and integumentary issues.

John Doe is unable to safely and promptly access the bathtub or shower in the bathroom at home because of his medical condition. This is the same medical condition that makes a standard tub bench or shower chair unsafe for John, whereas this requested item will address the recipient's medical condition(s). As specified by physician's orders, John's specific medical condition(s) require(s) him on occasion to be lowered into the bathtub to soak in the water rather than being positioned for a shower, particularly when his skin health is at risk. This device enables this option for John.

This device will be used daily by him. This should be considered when evaluating the need for this necessary equipment.

John's living arrangement and caregiver status have been reviewed carefully and are shown to be compatible with this device. The requested equipment is appropriate to the recipient's height and weight. A trial has shown that the requested equipment will fit in all necessary areas of John's home. Other less costly ways to meet John's needs have been considered and they will not meet his needs.

A complete evaluation by [physical therapist/occupational therapist/other professional] with experience evaluating bathing and toileting equipment was performed in John Doe's home with caregivers present, and this evaluation determined this device to be appropriate for John Doe.

Taking these factors into consideration, the Rifton Wave 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. This device is medically necessary for John with his particular medical condition because without use of the equipment he is unable to safely bathe or shower.

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





## The Rifton Wave Bathing and Transfer System



**Bath chair with tub stand**



**Bath chair with tub transfer base**



**Bath chair with shower stand**



**Large Z230**



**Medium Z220**



**Small Z210**



**Medium Wave bath chairs with calf rests.**

