

Rifton Activity Chair

A Sample Letter of Medical Necessity

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Rifton Activity Chair

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 Activity Chair.

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

John Doe has a diagnosis of spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy and currently is maximally supported in a wheelchair system due to his inability to control his head, trunk, arm and leg movements. He is unable to hold his head upright for more than ___ seconds and can only sit when fully supported at his hips and trunk. John Doe can bear his own weight for ___ sec (min) to minimally support his own weight to assist with transfers out of his wheelchair to bed or bath. He currently has no other opportunities to be out of his wheelchair. As he grows in height and weight this factor becomes significantly more important to his caregivers.

Discuss the impact on the beneficiary's life, noting the limitations without adaptive equipment:

Because of these very limited opportunities for John Doe to be out of his wheelchair, he has no opportunities to learn basic functional sit, stand, walk, and transfer skills. It is essential for John Doe to have many repeated opportunities throughout his day, to practice purposeful and meaningful movements in order to learn meaningful motor skills, such as active, dynamic sitting, for doing functional seated tasks. It has been shown that even the most significantly involved person, given enough repetitions, can learn these new skills but there must be many opportunities to practice them. Without a seating system that offers a prompt reducing supports system, John Doe is unable to sit upright and is totally confined to a wheelchair.

Show how the requested equipment will result in an increase of function and other physical benefits:

The Rifton Activity Chair is designed to enable functional sitting positions with a prompt reducing system that allows for growth. The tilt-in-space, a standard feature with the chair, promotes active, functional sitting and transfers, as well as recline for rest. With the support of prompts, John Doe's active, functional sitting skill levels will improve, allowing for continuous reduction of prompts and further improvement. Prompts are reduced over time so dependence on special equipment is minimized. With the many features of the Rifton Activity Chair, John Doe will be able to work on the following skills:

- Head control by adjusting tilt and angle of the chair seat and backrest, providing forearm support, and utilizing adjustable headrest options.
- Trunk control by adjusting tilt and angle of chair seat and backrest, providing forearm support, and decreasing accessory prompt options at trunk.
- Leg control can be achieved by adjusting tilt and angle of chair seat, backrest, and/or footboard, providing pelvic positioning with accessory options, and decreasing prompt accessory options for lower extremities and feet.
- Ease of transfer, transfer-assist and sit-to-stand practice with height adjust/forward tilt of seat and removable armrests, and a footboard that can flip up, swing back out of the way, or lock down as a step for transfers.
- Ease of inclusion with height adjust of seat to different table and desk heights
- Reduction of wheelchair time because of alternative mobile seating with locking casters.



Describe equipment, adjustments for growth, and psychological benefits to beneficiary and caregiver:

The Rifton Activity Chair will allow John Doe to grow in both weight and height because you can adjust seat depth, seat width, and the seat height distance to footboard or floor. The psychological benefits of the chair are of profound importance. If John Doe is sitting up and participating in class, or at home alongside his peers and family, he becomes even more motivated to sit unassisted. When children are level with their peers, their social, emotional and psychological development is enhanced. This inclusion is a profound motivator for learning to sit. If John Doe doesn't learn to sit as he grows bigger, his caregivers will suffer repetitive physical strain. The Rifton Activity Chair will not only allow John to learn how to sit, but as he learns, caregivers will be able to enjoy the benefits of the Push handle and the chair's mobility.

Describe other equipment experiences and why they didn't help John Doe:

A _____ was tried in the (home/school) _____ environment without success because _____.

Make person real and include IEP goals:

John Doe hopes to someday be able to go to the ice cream parlor without his wheelchair. Without the requested equipment, he will not have the opportunities he needs to be out of his wheelchair in order to gain strength and the experience necessary to achieve his greatest functioning potential.

Discuss the cost of not having the equipment:

Being confined to a wheelchair is devastating to individuals both therapeutically, medically, and economically in the following manner:

- Expensive surgeries.
- Increase in therapy/medical interventions as John Doe grows and function decreases.
- Caregivers suffer back injuries due to increasingly difficult transfers.
- Decubitus care.

Discuss the cost benefits with the equipment:

- Costly and cyclical problems can be eliminated.
- As John Doe gains an increased postural ability to move with purpose while sitting and as he grows, he will require a much simpler and less costly wheelchair. This also translates to fewer costly pieces of equipment in the future.



Itemization of the Rifton Activity Chair:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p>Standard base</p> 	<p>Allows for safe and independent sitting.</p>
<p>Adjustable legs</p> 	<p>Adjustable legs allow user to be seated in chair height that enables user to actively assist with transfers in and out of the chair.</p>
<p>Adjustable legs with casters</p> 	<p>Adjustable legs with casters eliminate transfers when transitioning environments.</p>
<p>Footboard</p> 	<p>The footboard allows for foot placement, and facilitates weight bearing through legs and feet during functional sitting activities and for transfers. It also allows placement of sandals or ankle straps to meet a child's specific positioning needs. The footboard can flip up, swing backward out of the way for sit-to-stand transfers, or clients can use the footboard as a step for transfers. Leg positioning and control is facilitated with the footboard's knee angle that adjusts easily, extending forward to support approximately 45° knee flexion, while the footplate angle adjusts in increments of 5° over a range of 20° to support specific ankle and foot positions.</p>
<p>Hi/lo base</p> 	<p>Allows for safe and independent sitting. Hi/Lo base enables user to be lowered to actively assist with transfers in and out of the chair. Hi/Lo base enables user to be raised to practice feeding and table activity skills at the same level as family, peers, and caregiver staff. Positioning close to an adult is necessary for adult monitoring and assistance for user to improve related task function safely while seated.</p>
<p>Adjustable backrest</p> 	<p>The backrest height (from the top of the backrest to the seat) is available in a range of positions, adjusted easily, tool-free. Backrest angle adjust 5° forward and 15° backward. Adjustability enables optimal positioning for active, participatory sitting and alternatively for reclined, receptive positioning.</p>
<p>Adjustable backrest with spring</p> 	<p>Spring allows for user-initiated movement, allowing the chair to "bounce." This can offer a self-calming effect for children with autism, as well as "give" in the backrest for children with extreme extensor tone, reducing strain. Backrest adjust 5° forward and 10° backward, and then offers 10° further backward angle in combination with spring.</p>

Itemization of the Rifton Activity Chair continued:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p>Tilt-in-space*</p> 	<p>Tilt-in-space moves the entire seat and backrest from an active, functional sitting position to a reclined, rest position and vice versa, maintaining the seat to back angle throughout. This aids in providing rest between functional seated activities to minimize fatigue and maximize function. Tilt-in-space adjustability: 850 Hi/Lo: 15° forward, 25° back. 840 Standard: 15° forward, 15° back.</p>
<p>Tilt-in-space with seat spring</p> 	<p>(Standard base only, all sizes) Seat spring allows for user-initiated movement, allowing the chair seat to "bounce." This can offer a self-calming effect for children with autism, as well as "give" in the chair seat for children with extreme extensor tone, reducing strain.</p>
<p>Armrests</p> 	<p>Armrests provide lateral boundaries for the seated posture as well as a surface for upper extremity weight-bearing assist to aid trunk control. Armrests provide an attachment point for the tray and can be set at a range of forward and backward angles, from horizontal up to 60°(up or down).</p>
<p>Forearm prompts</p> 	<p>Forearm prompts adjust fully to position upper extremities and facilitate trunk and head control while sitting. Secure distal placement of upper extremities enables use of pelvic girdle and trunk core muscles for improved postural stabilization and strengthening.</p>
<p>Pads</p> 	<p>Seat and backrest pads are essential for providing cushioned support and preventing decubiti.</p>
<p>Lumbar and seat support kit</p> 	<p>Lumbar and seat support kit provides support padding to be custom-cut for extra postural support allowing proper positioning. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities, and for proper alignment of the spine, which helps prevent scoliosis. The lumbar support is secured behind backrest pad for additional low back support, and the seat support is secured toward front of seat (under seat pad) to help prevent user from sliding forward.</p>
<p>Backrest filler pad</p> 	<p>Backrest filler pad can be used for additional lower back support when chair backrest is in the top 3 available positions, resulting in an open space between bottom edge of the backrest and the seat.</p>

* Tilt in Space is a standard feature built into the frame of this chair. It is not an option, the chair cannot be purchased without it, and it is of NO ADDITIONAL COST. The seat and back cannot be used without it.



Itemization of the Rifton Activity Chair continued:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p>Push handles</p> 	<p>Push handles provide an easy and ergonomic way for caregiver to maneuver chair and transport user.</p>
<p>Headrest</p> 	<p>Flat or contoured head support that adjusts vertically. Provides high level of support for client with poor head control.</p>
<p>Laterals</p> 	<p>Assists with good body alignment. Important for proper alignment of the spine, which helps prevent scoliosis.</p>
<p>Laterals with chest strap</p> 	<p>Safety attachment for trunk. Provides added trunk support for clients who do not have upper torso control.</p>
<p>Chest strap (wide)</p> 	<p>Safety attachment for trunk. Provides added trunk support for clients who do not have upper torso control.</p>
<p>Butterfly harness</p> 	<p>Provides anterior support while allowing freedom of movement. Necessary for client needing maximum support for trunk control while sitting. Adjusts to fit snugly and comfortably giving client sense of security and safety.</p>
<p>Tray</p> 	<p>Tray that attaches to the seating system for work surface with raised edges. Necessary for placement of learning tools for communication/academic learning, hand positioning and motivational materials to promote interest for longer periods of time in safe sitting position. Can help with body alignment.</p>

Itemization of the Rifton Activity Chair continued:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p>Handhold</p> 	<p>Attaches to tray for hand positioning. Necessary for clients with spastic musculature. Controls spasticity of arms/hands by allowing proper positioning. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities.</p>
<p>Pelvic harness</p> 	<p>An alternative to the more typical seatbelt. Gives a very stable base for developing sitting postural control. Controls extreme extensor spasticity that results in sacral sitting. The pelvic harness firmly positions the user's pelvis by securing hips and upper thighs, without placing pressure on the abdomen. Used in place of the seatbelt. Adjusts to fit snugly and comfortably giving client sense of security and safety. Important for proper alignment of the spine, which helps prevent scoliosis.</p>
<p>Thigh belt</p> 	<p>Provides additional support and security for user's thighs, and helps adduct user's knees.</p>
<p>Hip guides</p> 	<p>Placed at sides of client pelvis to adjust client's torso position. Necessary for client needing maximum support for trunk control while sitting. Adjusts to fit snugly and comfortably giving client sense of security and safety. Important for proper alignment of the spine, which helps prevent scoliosis.</p>
<p>Adductor (pair)</p> 	<p>Adductors can be used to limit lateral movement of user's knees and provide a comfortable lateral boundary. For clients with limited muscle control that results in abduction of lower extremities. Necessary to maintain body alignment in sitting by supporting each leg individually. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities and improve independence in postural control.</p>
<p>Abductor</p> 	<p>Insert that separates knees, is adjustable forward and backward, and is removable. Helps to control spastic muscles that cause legs to scissor. Necessary for good body alignment and tone. For clients with dysfunctional muscle control. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities.</p>
<p>Leg prompt</p> 	<p>Straps that pass around the front of each leg. Necessary to maintain body alignment in sitting by supporting each leg individually. For clients with limited muscle control. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities.</p>

Itemization of the Rifton Activity Chair continued:

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p>Ankle straps (pair)</p> 	<p>For clients with limited muscle control that results in excursion movement of feet and lower extremities while seated. Used with footboard to secure user's feet, yet will enable a bounded range of movement for improving independence in postural control. Necessary to maintain body alignment in sitting by supporting each leg individually. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities.</p>
<p>Sandals (pair)</p> 	<p>Supports for each foot that can be adjusted to fit client to position feet correctly. Necessary for clients unable to control leg movements. Aligns body for optimum positioning that enhances good posture. Important for proper joint alignment, which helps prevent deformities.</p>
<p>Wedges (pair, requires sandals)</p> 	<p>Supports for each foot that can be adjusted to fit client. Necessary for clients with specific ankle positioning needs and/or have unequal leg length. Used to raise heels or toes. For different leg lengths combine two wedges under one sandal. Aligns body for optimum positioning that enhances good posture.</p>
<p>Mini kit (for small chair only)</p> 	<p>Mini kit makes the small Activity Chair a prime option for the smallest child—from approximately six months up to two years. Remove it as the child grows and use the same chair for many more years.</p>
<p>Whitmyer Adapter</p> 	<p>Some Whitmyer headrests can now be installed on all Rifton Activity Chairs. This adapter gives you the option to use a Whitmyer M2100 headrest mounting bracket and the Whitmyer Onyx headrest support system. (Note: Rifton supplies only the adapter and T20 power tip. Whitmyer mounting brackets and headrests must be purchased from a Whitmyer supplier.)</p>

Reiterate cost benefits at the end of the letter:

Once again, with a Rifton Activity Chair many future costs can be avoided: costs to John Doe’s health and well-being, the cost of further equipment and the cost of caregiving.

Don’t forget to include pictures of the Rifton Activity Chair:



R840 Required components



R840 Required and optional accessories



R850 Required components



R850 Required and optional components

