Effective Health Care
Assessment for Wheelchairs
Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Assessment for wheelchairs will be considered for a potential technical brief by the Effective Health Care Program.

- To see a description of a technical brief, please go to http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/research-for-policymakers-researchers-and-others/.

- If this topic is developed into a technical brief, key questions will be drafted and posted on the AHRQ Web site. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care Program topics are posted, please go to http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/.

Topic Description

Nominator: Public payer

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the best method of assessing the appropriateness of wheelchairs and options for wheelchairs in patients. The nominator questions what role functional status and patient demand may play in this process. In addition, the nominator questions which professionals should be involved in this evaluation.

Key Questions from Nominator: None

Considerations

- Wheelchairs are one type of mobility assistive equipment (MAE) which can help improve activities of daily life for patients with certain conditions. Many types of wheelchairs exist on the market including customized power wheelchairs with options for different seating, steering, and wheel customizations, as well as additions including multiple programmable controls and additional support devices.

- Assessment of patients for wheelchair needs is dependent on many aspects of the individual patient including body mechanics, cognitive function, conditioning, and underlying conditions.

- The nomination incorporates many factors such as patient preferences that can be hard to answer in an evidence-based manner. This topic may be more appropriate for a technical brief, which could outline the different device types and modifications available as well as present any evidence that may exist for these modifications.