

Plus size seating assessment guidance

This document is intended to be used as an 'aide memoir' to help gather important information and provide guidance prior to considering plus size seating options. It is not intended to be a substitute for clinical judgement and the variable factors associated with plus size management.

OT:

Service user:

Date of assessment:

Product options

Do you as a prescriber have a sufficient knowledge base to prescribe this kind of equipment?

Assessment notes:

Review notes:

Identify user's weight distribution (apple, pear, gluteal shelf and proportionate)

Assessment notes:

Review notes:

Has the chair successfully accommodated this?

Is the user prone to fatigue?

Assessment notes:

Review notes:

Has the chair improved this situation?

Does the user have any medical issues that would affect their ability to which could affect their ability to breathe/tolerate recline or tilt-in-space (i.e. cardiac issues)?

Assessment notes:

Review notes:

Has the chair allowed for these?

Are there any environmental restrictions to consider?

Assessment notes:

Review notes:

Has the chair integrated into the environment?

Seating assessment

Hip to hip (or at user’s widest point):

- Note this may not necessarily be at the hip area depending on distribution of weight. I.e. the widest point could be at the top of the thighs. This depends on where the excess tissue is.
- Consider how this may relate to chair width – narrow enough to provide support and to enable the arms to be close enough for a good transfer but wide enough to provide freedom of movement.
- Consider and compare any existing seating products (shower chair, wheelchair etc.) to give some guidance on an appropriate seat width.
- Measure from behind wherever possible.
- Measure across, not around – use a clipboard on each side to assist as required.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

How appropriate is the selected seat width?

Popliteal Fossa (back of knee) to floor:

- This may be difficult to measure due to added weight around calf and thigh.
- Sometimes due to the extra weight around the calf and thigh, a lower seat height may have to be selected. However Plus Size chairs with low seat heights can be expensive.
- This can be difficult if the user cannot bend the knees and is fixed in plantar flexion (leg extended). In this case, a lower seat height than usual may have to be considered. Be aware that a lower seat height can lead to more difficult transfers. It is advisable to trial selected chairs prior to prescription.
- Consider and compare any existing seating products (shower chair, wheelchair etc.) to give some guidance on an appropriate seat height.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

How appropriate is the selected seat width?

Back of bottom to back of knee:

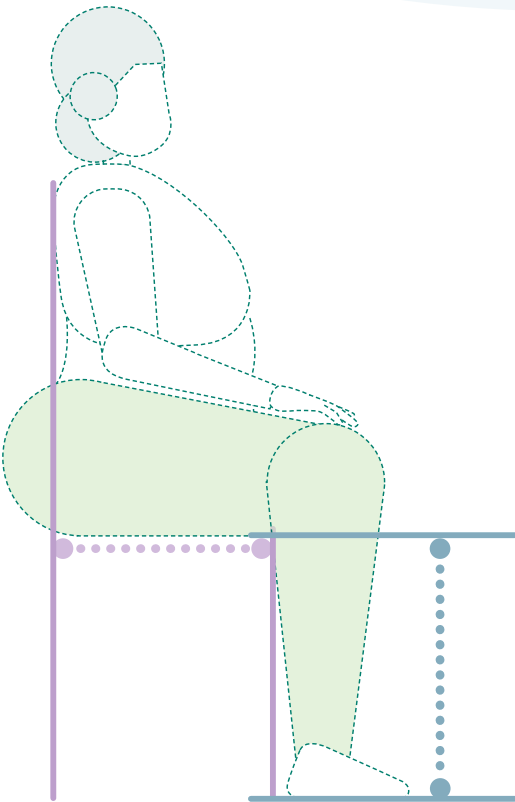
- Some Plus Size users have a ‘gluteal shelf’ (added weight around the bottom) which can increase this measurement considerably. For seating provision, it is very useful to also take this measurement excluding the gluteal shelf.
- The gluteal shelf can then be accommodated by removing stuffing from the lower pillows of the chair.
- Be aware that excessive seat depth can lead to lack of support for the back and head.

Assessment notes:
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Review notes:.....
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How appropriate is the selected seat width?
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Has the gluteal shelf been accommodated?
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What is the user’s overall weight?

- Remember each leg could be 15.7% of the user’s overall weight (ref Chaffin D.B, Anderson GBJ, Martin BJ (1999). Occupational Biomechanics 3rd ed New York: J Wiley and Sons).
- Consider lymphatic legs.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

Does the user have a large pannus? YES / NO

- If yes consider the consequences of a pannus static loading on the patient groin/upper limb for long periods of time, it could be a contributory factor to non-healing lower limb tissue damage as it is restricting circulation.
- Consider size of pannus as this might gravitate down onto the legrest. This means you would need to check the safe working load of the legrest; as the combined weight of the legs and pannus could exceed the safe working load.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

Has the chair successfully accommodated this?

Consider tissue viability requirements

- Level of risk.
- Any existing damage and what category it is.
- Select pressure cushions to cater for these requirements.
- Integrated cushions to avoid adding to seat height of chair which could cause postural deviation and transfer issues.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

Is the user comfortable and free from pressure damage?

Describe any postural requirements:

- Is extra support needed to reduce tendency to lean to one side?
- Is the posture flexible or fixed?
- Are there any fixtures or contractures?

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

Has the chair successfully accommodated this?

Further assessment required

Would a joint visit be useful to trial the chair before order/prescription?

- Contact the supplier to discuss options.

Assessment notes:.....

Review notes:.....

How useful have you found this form?

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐

Comments:.....

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How could the form be improved?

Comments:.....

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What could/should be added to the form?

Comments:.....

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What could/should be removed from the form?

Comments:.....

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