

# Wheelchair and Accessories: Training and safety guidelines

## For your safety

Follow the safety guidelines below to help reduce potential risks. Refer to the manufacturer's website if you would like further information about your equipment.

- Use a seat belt as needed to maintain proper positioning in the chair.
- Keep your weight centered in the chair when reaching for objects — shifting forward or back could cause the chair to tip over or roll out from under you.
- Keep anti-tippers in the down position unless going over curbs.
- **DO NOT** use the wheelchair to do "wheelies."
- **DO NOT** use the wheelchair on an escalator.
- **DO NOT** use the wheelchair for sitting in a vehicle.
- Use the wheel locks to stabilize the chair during transfers.
- Wheel locks are not brakes — don't try to stop a moving wheelchair with them.
- Keep hands and fingers away from the moving parts of the wheelchair.

## How to use your wheelchair

### Unfolding the wheelchair

- 1 Tilt the wheelchair toward you, raising the opposite wheel and caster off the floor.
- 2 Place your hand on the top of the seat rail closest to you where the seat upholstery is attached.
- 3 Point your fingers and thumb to the inside of the wheelchair.
- 4 Press downward on the top of the seat rail until the wheelchair is fully open.
- 5 Engage both wheel locks and open the footrest/legrest.

### Folding the wheelchair

- 1 Swing the legrests to the front, locked position.
- 2 Push the footplates to the vertical position.
- 3 Stand or sit facing 1 side of the wheelchair.
- 4 Grasp the middle of the seat at the front and back edge and pull up to close the hinged frame.



### Transferring to and from the wheelchair

- 1 Remove or swing away any armrest, footrest, and/or legrest that may be in the way, if possible.
- 2 Position the wheelchair as close as possible to the seat to which you are transferring.
- 3 **LOCK the wheels.**
- 4 Shift body weight to the seat.

Only try transfers by yourself if you have good mobility and upper body strength. Practice with a caregiver before performing the maneuver alone. Use a transfer board and/or a caregiver if necessary.

## For caregivers, when you are pushing a wheelchair

### Going forward over a curb

- 1 Turn anti-tippers to the up position.
- 2 Tilt the chair back to the balance point and then roll it forward until the front casters clear the curb.
- 3 Set the casters down and push the chair forward so that the rear wheels roll up and over the curb.
- 4 Return the anti-tippers to the down position.

### Going backward over a curb

- 1 Turn anti-tippers to the up position.
- 2 Stand on the upper sidewalk with the rear wheels against the curb.
- 3 Readjust the anti-tippers to the down position.
- 4 Pull the chair up and over the curb.

More than one caregiver may be needed to go over a curb backward.

### When should I call my provider?

Call your healthcare provider if:

- Your needs change and you want to exchange or replace the type of wheelchair or accessories you are using
- You or your caregivers need more training on transferring to your wheelchair or getting around better

## Equipment care

### Clean your wheelchair and accessories

- Wipe down the metal parts and vinyl upholstery once a week or more often if it gets dirty. Use a soft cloth and a mild cleaner.
- Use a commercially available upholstery cleaner to clean cloth upholstery once a month or when soiled.

### Look for signs of wear and tear

- Examine tires and casters.
- Look for loose rims and cracks.
- Check the spokes for proper position and connection to the wheel.
- Look for any wobbling motion in the wheels.

### When should I call Intermountain Homecare & Hospice?

Call Intermountain Homecare & Hospice at 1-800-527-1118:

- If you notice signs of wear and tear
- If you experience any problems with the wheelchair or accessories
- When you are ready to return the wheelchair