



## Recommendations for Person-Centered Care of Patients with Physical Disabilities

	<b>Tips:</b>	<b>Examples:</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<p>Always communicate directly with the patient.</p> <p>Use “person-first” language unless the patient asks to be referred to in another manner.</p> <p>Respect autonomy.</p> <p>Avoid making assumptions about what assistance the patient needs.</p> <p>Show empathy and sensitivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caregivers or interprets may be present but speak directly to the patient.</li> <li>• Maintain eye contact and speak clearly.</li>   <li>• i.e. person who uses wheelchair</li> <li>• Don’t be afraid to ask the patient questions if you are unsure.</li> <li>• Ask how you can help them and respect their answers.</li>   <li>• Always involve patients in decision-making regarding their care and respect their choices.</li> <li>• Presume that patients are competent to handle their own medical care.</li> <li>• If patients do not have anyone to assist them, do not ask them whether they brought an aide or a companion.</li>   <li>• Offer assistance, wait for offer to be accepted, and wait for instructions.</li> <li>• Don’t hesitate to ask the patient about their specific needs and preferences for medical care. They are the experts on their own bodies and experiences and can provide valuable insights to improve the quality of care they receive.</li> <li>• Look out for common clinical care needs (e.g. mental health, social isolation, health literacy).</li>   <li>• Recognize the challenges patients may face in their daily lives and provide support and encouragement when needed.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Exam Room Set-up</b></p>	<p>Secure accessibility in the exam room prior to the patient visit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure assistive devices and supports such as transfer boards or Hoyer lift.</li> <li>• Ensure there is enough room in the patient room for assistive devices.</li> <li>• Secure appropriately sized examination tables and medical equipment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accessibility Prior to Appointments</b></p>	<p>Provide resources for patients to know what they should expect when they arrive at the clinic.</p> <p>Educate yourself prior to appointments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send instructions on any arrival information such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parking instructions, valet parking</li> <li>○ Location of ramps, doorways, elevators, where to sign-in</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the specific disability, its causes, symptoms, treatment options, and potential complications.</li> <li>• Stay updated on advancements in field of disability medicine. Attend workshops, seminars, and conferences to expand your knowledge and skills in providing care to patients with physical disabilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How to Make the Clinic Accessible During the Appointment</b></p>	<p>Assist patients in using assistive devices as needed during examinations or procedures.</p> <p>Adapt your physical examination techniques as necessary to accommodate the patient's disability.</p> <p>Collaborate with Specialists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect personal space, including wheelchair and assistive devices.</li> <li>• Do not propel the wheelchair unless asked to do so.</li> <li>• Provide assistance as needed, such as by clearing obstacles from the path of travel or helping patients transfer to equipment if accessible equipment is unavailable.</li> <li>• Do not separate patients from their wheelchairs.</li> <li>• Be patient and take your time to ensure a thorough examination without causing discomfort or embarrassment.</li> <li>• Do not examine patients while seated in their wheelchairs if the examination requires a person to lie down.</li> <li>• Work with physical therapists, occupational therapists, and rehabilitation specialists as needed to develop comprehensive treatment plans tailored to the patient's needs and goals.</li> </ul>