

# Patient Education 2.0

**7.16.2014**

1. I have an OT at another VA but my chair still needs some modification. How can I obtain a new power chair that doesn't get stuck on cracks through a different VA?

- Work with OT and the vendors to resolve any problems you are experiencing with your W/C or other DME.

2. I need a new lift because the one I have no longer functions properly. I have done research on what type of lift will work in my house but the VA won't buy it for me. How can I obtain the equipment I want and need through the VA? Or better yet, why is my request for specific equipment not covered by the VA? Please explain.

- The choice of products is determined by existing VA contracts. Competitive bids are solicited from several contractors for the work but the product to be installed comes from a list of approved products.

3. Why does staff not have visible name tags? It would be helpful for patients to know the names of their nurses who are working with them that day.

- Please ask any and all VA personnel, who are working with you, to show you their identification badges.

4. Where can I access a campus map that shows where specific offices are located by their office number or photo of the person whose office it is?

- This type of campus map doesn't exist.
- Ask a fellow Vet for directions and/or take a tour of the facility
- The VA web-site has an interactive map that might be a useful resource.

5. What is the process of home modifications? I lived in an apartment prior to my injury and I know I will need ramps to make my house accessible. Is this something the apartment complex is required to accommodate under the ADA or am I forced to make my own accommodations out of pocket?

- Apartment modifications require negotiations with the owner/management. It is not as same as modifications to a single family home or owner occupied structure.

- The size of the complex, the number of units, determines how the ADA applies to structural modifications. Therefore, smaller complexes are often exempt from many of the ADA rules and regulations regarding access

6. Why do I have a “rough estimate” on my timeline to discharge? How come the date is flexible?

- It is impossible to predict the exact date of discharge at admission. The best that can be done is an estimate derived from past experience. Each case is different and progress is difficult to predict. A longer initial stay is preferred to an early discharged followed by an avoidable readmission.

7. Why do I have to wait a certain amount of time in-between getting new/replaced DME? I feel like I need replacement DME due to breakdown or outgrowing the equipment more often than I am allowed to receive it.

- There are Central Office requirements regarding equipment replacement. There is no established timeline. Replacement is done on an “as needed” basis. Contact Prosthetics if you are having issues with your DME.

8. How can I feel more comfortable/confident with my appearance now that I use a w/c? How do I deal with people’s reactions to me in public?

- Develop some ice breaker type quick responses to help put others at ease around you whom may feel awkward and not understand your injury.
- Just put yourself out there so you get used to “being in your new skin” and maintain a positive outlook. People will reflect back your positive energy.
- Get involved in recreational, peer support, and community activities that will allow you to develop more comfort being with other likeminded people who enjoy the activities you do will ultimately enjoy your presence.

9. I have a power chair and am afraid if there is a power outage about getting it charged to get around. Can I get more batteries?

- Batteries are cumbersome, difficult to change and expensive. Therefore the VA does not supply extra batteries for P/C’s.
- Have an emergency plan in place in case of a power outage
- If you live in a remote area consider purchasing a portable generator

- Contact your local emergency services and Power Company to have your name placed on the list in case of a disaster or major emergency.

10. If I'm by myself and I fall, what should I do? Especially if I have no cell phone.

- Work with OT and PT to learn how to get back into your chair and how to direct others to assist you without making the situation worse.
- Practice fall prevention. Be aware of your surroundings. Think ahead and understand your limitations.

11. I have had several infections. Can I get some tips on prevention?

- Keep yourself, your clothes and your W/C clean.
- Wash hands and keep all problem areas clean and dry
- Keep catheter clean and flowing
- Do daily skin inspections
- Get your Flu shots and all other vaccinations