

VA Funding for a Power Wheelchair with Power Adjustable Seat Height:

Safe seat elevation allows the veteran to:

1. Elevate and descend while continuing to drive their PWC. Safe seat elevation allows for seamless operation and does not call the veteran's disability out like other systems where the vet has to stop, elevate/descend and then proceed with their mobility.
2. See and be seen while using their PWC. Safe seat elevation allows the veteran to safely maneuver and navigate the PWC on level terrain at the same height and speed as those they are with.

The VA will consider funding a power wheelchair with the ability to change vertical position for ANY veteran if the technology will:

1. Improve self-esteem;
2. Improve social function;
3. Enhance employment potential;
4. Enhance communication; and,
5. Improve quality of life.

Seat elevation may also result in improved functional independence, allowing the veteran to access surfaces that cannot be reached from a fixed seated position but this is NOT the only criteria considered.

Indications:

1. Criteria for power mobility have been met.
2. Functional goals have been identified that can be achieved by changes in vertical position.
3. Vocational goals have been identified that can be achieved by changes in vertical position.
4. Communication goals have been identified that can be achieved by changes in vertical position.
5. The veteran desires elevation capability and understands/accepts limitations of using a chair with this capability.

Contraindications:

1. Demonstrated inability to safely operate a PWC, even with appropriate accommodations and training. This may include, but is not limited to physical ability; mental capacity; judgment; coordination, or vision deficits.
2. A history of active seizures in the last 6 months. Note: documentation from a neurologist that the veteran's seizures do not prohibit safe use of a PWC will override this contraindication.
3. A documented history of reckless behavior that threatens physical harm to self and/or others such as that due to drug/alcohol impaired functional abilities.
4. Frequent failure of prior prescribed wheeled mobility devices suggesting a pattern of misuse, abuse, or neglect.
5. Home/Community environment will not support use of the PWC.
6. Fails training with device(s). Every effort should be made to resolve deficiencies and should include consideration of retraining and equipment alterations and modifications.