**Eastern Montana Veterans Home Policy Owner: Nursing EMVH**

**Managed by Glendive Medical Center** Applies To: Facility Wide

**Policy & Procedure Manual**

**SUBJECT: Electric WheelchairS**

**Written / Revised By: Christy Kemp**

**Effective Date: 08/19**

**Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_**

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**Policy:**

It is the policy of Eastern Montana Veterans Home (EMVH) to allow electric wheelchair use for residents determined to be appropriate and safe. Proper assessment and care planning will be necessary and will include many factors related to safety, not only the resident’s physical ability to use the chair. EMVH staff have the responsibility and right to determine whether a particular resident is or is not safe to operate an electric wheelchair in this setting.

**Purpose:**

* To determine each individual resident’s ability to safely use an electric wheelchair
* To provide a standardized assessment and decision making process for that determination

**Definitions**

* **Electric Wheelchair:** There is a distinct difference between an electric wheelchair and a scooter. For the purposes of this policy, however, whenever referenced the term “electric wheelchair” is meant to be interchangeable with the term “scooter” or “power chair” as the same policy with apply to each.

**Procedure:**

**Safety Assessment and Care Planning**

1. Any resident who requests to use an electric wheelchair will first need to undergo a thorough nursing assessment prior to initiating use of the chair.
2. Nursing will use the standardized assessment in the Saunders software program to initiate the assessment.
3. Based on the findings from that assessment nursing’s recommendation and related concerns will be presented to the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) for discussion.
4. The Director of Nursing will make the final determination as to whether the resident will be allowed to initiate use of the electric wheelchair.
5. The Care Planning Team will develop a care plan for the resident and staff to follow to ensure individual safety with the electric wheelchair use.
6. Any time thereafter an incident involving the use of the electric wheelchair occurs and occurrence report will be submitted by the staff member witnessing the event.
7. If concerns absent of a specific safety event arise, the Interdisciplinary Team will be notified.
8. The IDT will consider all incidents and concerns presented to them and determine appropriate action to follow, which may include reassessment, re-evaluation of the care plan, and possible suspension of the electric wheelchair use until adequate time is allowed for reconsideration of the resident’s use of the chair.
9. Anytime a Charge Nurse determines a significant safety risk exists related to a resident’s use of an electric chair, use may be suspended until the IDT has an opportunity to make a final decision.

**Maintenance**

1. Any general maintenance that an individual would usually be able to accomplish in their home may be provided by the Engineering Department by submitting an appropriate work order.
2. If a more technical repair or parts replacement is needed the resident and/or their responsible party will contact the company who provided the chair and make necessary arrangements themselves.
3. If the resident is not able to make those arrangements EMVH staff may assist.
4. If the resident is eligible to request VA benefits for coverage of repairs or parts, EMVH staff will assist in obtaining prior authorization through the VA system.

**Storage**

1) If a resident has an electric wheelchair or parts that are not in use, EMVH will provide storage only if available. Otherwise the resident’s family will be notified of the need to remove the chair or parts from the building.