

Procedures: Equipment for Patients

Date Written: 08/07

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Sumlar Therapy Services, Inc.

Childrens' Rehabilitative Services (state agency): (334)699-6600

You may refer any child to CRS for services, including case management and “clinics,” in addition to assistance with ordering and purchasing equipment and assistive technology. There are CRS branches in Dothan and Montgomery, as well in several other cities across the state.

Orthotics/Prosthetics

Patients may be referred directly to any local orthotic or prosthetic company. Medicaid and insurance covers most braces. Communicate with the othotist/prosthetist prior to the appointment, or arrange to have a detailed prescription faxed from the doctor's office to the O & P office prior to the appointment. Most braces, etc., should be made locally for patient convenience, as adjustments generally have to be made by the maker.

Equipment In the Schools

When a student needs a piece of equipment to better assist them in accessing their education, please take the appropriate measures to help order it, or find out if the school already has something similar within their system that no one is currently using. If the equipment is something that the school should own (for example, something that could be shared with various students or is to be used only in the school environment) then you may speak with the special education director to request the equipment and learn their correct procedure for ordering equipment. Do not make statements, verbal or written, to parents that may be construed as committing the school to buy equipment for a child.

If the equipment is very specific for the student (cannot be shared, custom), and is to be used in more than just the school environment, then the student should be directed to CRS (Children's Rehabilitative Services) which is a state agency designed to assist children with special needs. Another alternative is that parents can pay “out-of-pocket” for items or call their insurance company/case manager. Occasionally community service organizations will assist families in purchasing needed equipment. Sumlar Therapy also has some equipment to lend.

Equipment In Early Intervention

Some EI programs have items to lend to their participants. Check with the IFSP holder or special instructor about this possibility. You may also ask if the program could purchase a piece of equipment that they would then lend to the participant. Do not make statements that may be construed as committing the program to buy equipment for a child.

For equipment that would be considered custom or that the patient needs long-term, direct the parents to CRS. Another alternative is that parents can pay “out-of-pocket” for

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Equipment for Clinic Patients

Typically, we refer patients to CRS. We may also contact equipment and wheelchair vendors directly, and provide the necessary documentation (Letter of Medical Necessity) to facilitate the order. If the insurance company or Medicaid won't cover an item, you can direct the families to church and civic organizations for assistance. Sumlar Therapy also has some equipment to lend.

Where Do We Order Equipment?

CRS can order all manner of large equipment and wheelchairs from established vendors. Also, orthotists and prosthetists are good resources for splints, braces and various equipment. Therapists in free-standing clinics, such as Sumlar Therapy, are not authorized to bill for products distributed or produced in-house. Therapists in hospitals, however, are exempt from this rule, and can be reimbursed for hand splints, walkers, etc.

Sumlar Therapy's Equipment Lending Program

Sumlar Therapy has equipment which may not be in use in the clinic. This equipment may be loaned to patients for home or school use. The parent or school official will need to sign a form indicating that they understand the equipment is to be returned to Sumlar Therapy when it is no longer needed, so that other children can also benefit from it's use. The equipment should be clearly marked as Sumlar Therapy's in at least two places with a permanent marker. Let parents and schools know that we are accepting donated items to add to our Equipment Lending Program.