Adaptive Equipment
Learning Objective

Participant will develop knowledge and understanding of adaptive equipment, its use, care, replacement, and initial and ongoing identification.
What is Adaptive Equipment?

- Devices that help people do simple, everyday tasks more independently.
- There are two broad types of adaptive equipment:
  - Assistive Technology
  - Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
Let’s Talk…

Does anyone here use adaptive equipment?

What are some examples of adaptive equipment?
Don’t be awkward!
Now Let’s Discuss!

• What did we learn about adaptive equipment or assistive devices?
• What should we be aware of while supporting people?
What is the purpose of Adaptive Equipment?

To Assist people with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)

ADLs INCLUDE:

- Bathing
- Dining
- Dressing
- Grooming
- Using the Restroom
- Using Equipment in the Home

Has anyone heard of Universal Design?
Some Examples of Adaptive Equipment:

**Durable Medical Equipment**
- Bath Safety – Rails and chairs
- Diabetic Supplies – Testing supplies
- Homecare Beds – adjustable, mattresses
- Power Chairs
- Scooters/Walking Aids
- Standing Aids
- Wheelchairs
- Mealtime utensils/dinnerware

**Assistive Technology**
- Eyeglasses or magnifiers
- Talking Dictionary, screen readers
- Switches, joysticks, foot pedals
- Eye controlled computers
- Communication Boards
- Hearing Aids
- Signaling devices, headphones
- Electronic Books, Closed Captioning
Identifying the Need for Adaptive Equipment

Who is Responsible?

The answer is EVERYONE!

The Direct Support professional works the closest with people and knows what could help them be more independent. Family members, advocates as well as the person may let you know a need exists!

So when you know there may be a need for adaptive equipment, tell someone such as the nurse, your supervisor, or someone in the circle of support!

Do not wait!
Obtaining Adaptive Equipment and Using It

- **Step 1:** Someone notices a need. A person’s circle of support should be informed that an assessment is being obtained.

- **Step 2:** A specialized assessment should be completed by the specialist (e.g., OT, PT, speech therapist) to truly determine the need for the equipment and what type of equipment is right for the person.

- **Step 3:** The proper equipment is ordered and/or obtained

- **Step 4:** All staff and the person are trained by the specialist or vendor on the proper use, cleaning and maintenance of the equipment.

Everyone is trained on how to properly use the adaptive equipment!

DO NOT use something if you do not know how to!
Let’s talk about a real example of how equipment gets broken when we do not know how to properly use it.

- Anti-tippers on custom wheelchairs can break easily.
- If you do not know how to properly load someone into their van and secure them, anti-tippers on wheelchairs can be broken and damaged.
- This then may prohibit a person from getting out of their house until the problem is fixed.
- Can you imagine if this was you?
- What if you had really special things scheduled in your day that you had to miss?

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?
BROKEN EQUIPMENT OR EQUIPMENT THAT IS NOT USED PROPERLY IS:

- Unsafe!
- Can cause injury!
  - Using broken equipment or equipment that you have not been properly trained on could cause an injury to someone!
- If something is broken, tell someone!
- If it is dirty, clean it!

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!
The role of the Direct Support Professional

- Be observant!
  - Your information is valuable to the person and the team

- Receive training on proper use of equipment
  - Practice using it
  - Be familiar with the equipment and or protocol for its use

- Encourage proper use and cleaning by the person and by others
  - When you are confident on how to use something, this helps build trust with a person.

- Don’t use damaged equipment. Ask if there is authorized backup equipment.

- Continually report damage of adaptive equipment until it is fixed.
  - If needed call and call again!

REMEMBER YOU ARE AN ADVOCATE!
As advocates we need to be aware that a person’s adaptive equipment is a support that allows them freedom and independence. As a value statement, we must recognize, that we are the frontline of ensuring a person can exercise independence and rights!
NEVER DO THIS!

THE USE OF ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT SHOULD NEVER BE FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF STAFF OR OTHERS!

AN EXAMPLE OF THIS WOULD BE PROVIDING A WHEELCHAIR FOR SOMEONE JUST BECAUSE THEY WALK SLOWLY.

Let’s discuss this, why is this important?
What happens behind the scenes?

- All adaptive equipment is tracked. We do this so:
  - Each person has an inventory.
  - We know who the vendor is.
  - We know who to contact when we need a repair or replacement.
- All equipment should be continually assessed to ensure it does what the person needs it to do.
- If there are any questions, the team should consult with the specialist.
- Medicaid has limits on what they will replace so we need to help people maintain their equipment in good, clean working order.
- Independence is power!
Questions

- What questions do you have?
- What did you learn?