



# Seating and wheelchair accessory benefits

Alberta Aids to Daily Living  
Program Manual Section X

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## **Policy X – 01**

### **Seating and Wheelchair Accessories Benefits Background**

#### **Policy Statement**

AADL seating and wheelchair accessories and services are intended for the long-term management of chronic condition-specific seating needs, based on clinically assessed and eligibility-contingent seating needs level.

The AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefits policies, procedures and approved products list have been developed in close collaboration with clinical experts and informed by research and best practice information.

The maximum funding amounts for seating and wheelchair accessory benefits is listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

Authorizations and claims for seating and wheelchair accessory benefits must be entered on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.

# Policy X – 02

## Eligibility Criteria and Benefit Process

### Policy Statement

Clients must meet the general eligibility criteria found in AADL Program Manual Section GN – General Policy and Procedures, as well as the seating and wheelchair accessory eligibility criteria found below and in the approved product list.

Clients and seating and wheelchair accessory benefit providers must follow AADL general and benefit-specific policies and procedures for obtaining and providing seating and wheelchair accessories benefits.

### Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Eligibility

AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefits are funded for clients where postural support is identified as an essential clinical and functional basic need to enable the safe and effective use of a wheelchair.

AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefits are funded based on a client's clinically assessed clinical and functional basic needs.

AADL only provides funding for one seating system per client, based on the limits described in Policy X – 04 Quantity and Frequency Limits.

The maximum funding for each device or service under seating and wheelchair accessory benefits is listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

A client is only eligible for AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefits if all the following conditions are met:

- Client's clinical and functional basic needs are assessed and confirmed, and equipment is authorized by an AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer (Policy X – 05 Authorizer Qualifications).
- Authorized seating and wheelchair accessories benefits are only chosen from products offered by AADL-approved seating manufacturers (Policy X – 08 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers) and only provided by an AADL-approved seating vendor (Policy X – 07 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Vendors).
- The assessment, trial, and provision of a seating and wheelchair accessory benefit is in compliance with AADL Policy X – 10 Benefit Standards.

Eligibility for specific seating and wheelchair accessory benefits are determined by the client's assessed seating needs level, as defined below.

### Seating Needs Level Eligibility

#### Occasional Wheelchair Users

Occasional wheelchair use is defined as less than daily use of a wheelchair (e.g., clients who do not require a wheelchair for daily mobility; who only require a wheelchair for long distances or transportation).

The client must have a permanent mobility base (i.e., a manual wheelchair or a power wheelchair). The mobility base can be privately owned or AADL-funded, but cannot be a temporary loaner or rental equipment.

Geriatric chairs ("Geri chairs") are not considered to be mobility bases.

Occasional wheelchair users are only eligible for benefit V990 as listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

#### Level A – Basic Seating

To be eligible for seating needs Level A benefits, clients must:

- Have clinically and functionally-assessed basic need for seating needs Level A postural support(s) as assessed, confirmed, and authorized by an AADL authorizer whose status includes seating needs Level A benefits as a product range.

- Have a permanent mobility base (i.e., a manual wheelchair or a power wheelchair). The mobility base can be privately owned or AADL-funded, but cannot be a temporary loaner or rental equipment. Geriatric chairs (“Geri chairs”) are not considered to be mobility bases.
- Be at least a part-time wheelchair user, defined as daily use of less than six continuous hours.

Note: Seating Needs Level A – Basic Seating clients are only eligible for benefits listed as Level A in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

### **Level B – Specialized Seating**

To be eligible for seating needs Level B benefits, clients must meet all Level A criteria, and:

- Must have clinically and functionally-assessed basic need for seating needs Level B postural support(s) as assessed, confirmed, and authorized by an AADL authorizer whose status includes seating needs Level B benefits as a product range, and is concurrently employed by an AADL-recognized Level B specialized seating team.
- Must be one of the following:
  - Pediatric client (0 – 17 years of age), or
  - Adult (18+ years) full-time wheelchair user, defined as daily use of at least six continuous hours, who also has the inability to sit independently, defined as Level of Sitting Scale 1 – 4, and has a significant, documented postural deformity, defined as a deformity in at least one anatomic plane of  $\geq 20^\circ$  or  $\geq 2"$  (5cm).

Note: Seating Needs Level B – Specialized Seating clients are only eligible for benefits listed as Level A or B in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

### **Level C – Complex Seating**

To be eligible for seating needs Level C benefits, clients must meet all Level B criteria and:

- Must have clinically and functionally-assessed basic need for seating needs Level C postural support(s) as assessed, confirmed, and authorized by an AADL Authorizer whose status includes seating needs Level C benefits as a product range, and is concurrently employed by an AADL-recognized Level C complex seating team.
- Must be one of the following:
  - Pediatric client (0 – 17 years of age) who has significant, documented postural deformities, defined as a deformity in at least two anatomic planes of  $\geq 20^\circ$  or  $\geq 2"$  (5 cm).
  - Adult (18+ years) full-time wheelchair user, who has documented, significant postural deformities, defined as a deformity in at least two anatomic planes of  $\geq 20^\circ$  or  $\geq 2"$  (5 cm), combined with a high risk of skin breakdown, defined as Braden score of  $\leq 12$ , or the inability to sit independently, defined as a Level of Sitting Scale 1 – 4.

Note: Seating Needs Level C – Complex Seating clients are only eligible for benefits listed as Level A, B or C in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.

## **Procedure**

### **Authorizer:**

- Use the AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefits Seating Needs Level Eligibility Screening Tool to determine the client’s seating needs level.
  - If the client is eligible for seating and wheelchair accessory benefits, seating needs Level A seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer(s) may refer clients to Level B or C authorizers and seating teams (as needed).
- Complete a comprehensive seating assessment, including a movement assessment tool (MAT) assessment and any other appropriate clinical assessments, to establish and confirm client eligibility for AADL seating and wheelchair accessory benefit funding.
  - Complete an AADL Seating Needs Level Eligibility Assessment form (<https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/pdfs/aadl-seating-needs-level-eligibility-assessment-form.pdf>) or equivalent document. Note the following:
    - The AADL Seating Needs Level Eligibility Assessment form is to be used and completed in the absence of another equivalent document;
    - Any seating assessment form that is used must clearly capture all pertinent seating needs level eligibility criteria, including the MAT assessment and seating summary information; and

- Unless it is for a quantity and frequency review, the AADL Seating Needs Level Eligibility Assessment form or equivalent document does not need to be submitted to Alberta Blue Cross or AADL, but must be retained and provided if requested, or when audited.
- Situations where client eligibility has not been confirmed are subject to cost recovery.
- Check previous seating and wheelchair accessory benefit consumption via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal to confirm the client is eligible to receive seating and wheelchair accessory benefits.
  - If a client has previously received a specific seating and wheelchair accessory benefit(s) from a Level A, B, and/or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer(s), then early replacement will only be considered via the quantity and frequency review request process (see Policy GN – 28).
- In consultation with the seating technician or vendor, and the client:
- Recommend and support a trial of seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment, in consultation with the seating technician or vendor and client, per Policy X – 10 Benefit Standards.
- Have the client sign the Client Consent form.
- Inform the vendor of the specific equipment selected and complete an authorization on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal. Upload the following documentation:
  - AADL Seating Needs Level Eligibility Assessment forms
  - Client Consent form
  - other documentation as required
- Retain documentation on the client's clinical file. Documents may be requested if submitting a quantity and frequency review request. If a quantity and frequency review is approved, Alberta Blue Cross will update pertinent benefit items and quantities for authorization on the online health portal. Otherwise, do not submit any documentation unless required or requested by Alberta Blue Cross or AADL.

**Vendor:**

- Provide the seating and wheelchair accessory equipment to the client once a valid Level A, B, or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorization has been submitted on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- Submit a claim, or claims, for the authorized Level A, B, or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit(s) via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal after delivering the seating and wheelchair accessory equipment to the client
- Refer to Policy GN – 11 for the claims procedure.

**Alberta Blue Cross:**

- Updates benefit items and quantities for authorization on the online health portal.
- Provides operational support to approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers.

**AADL:**

- Provides policy support to approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers.



## Table 1

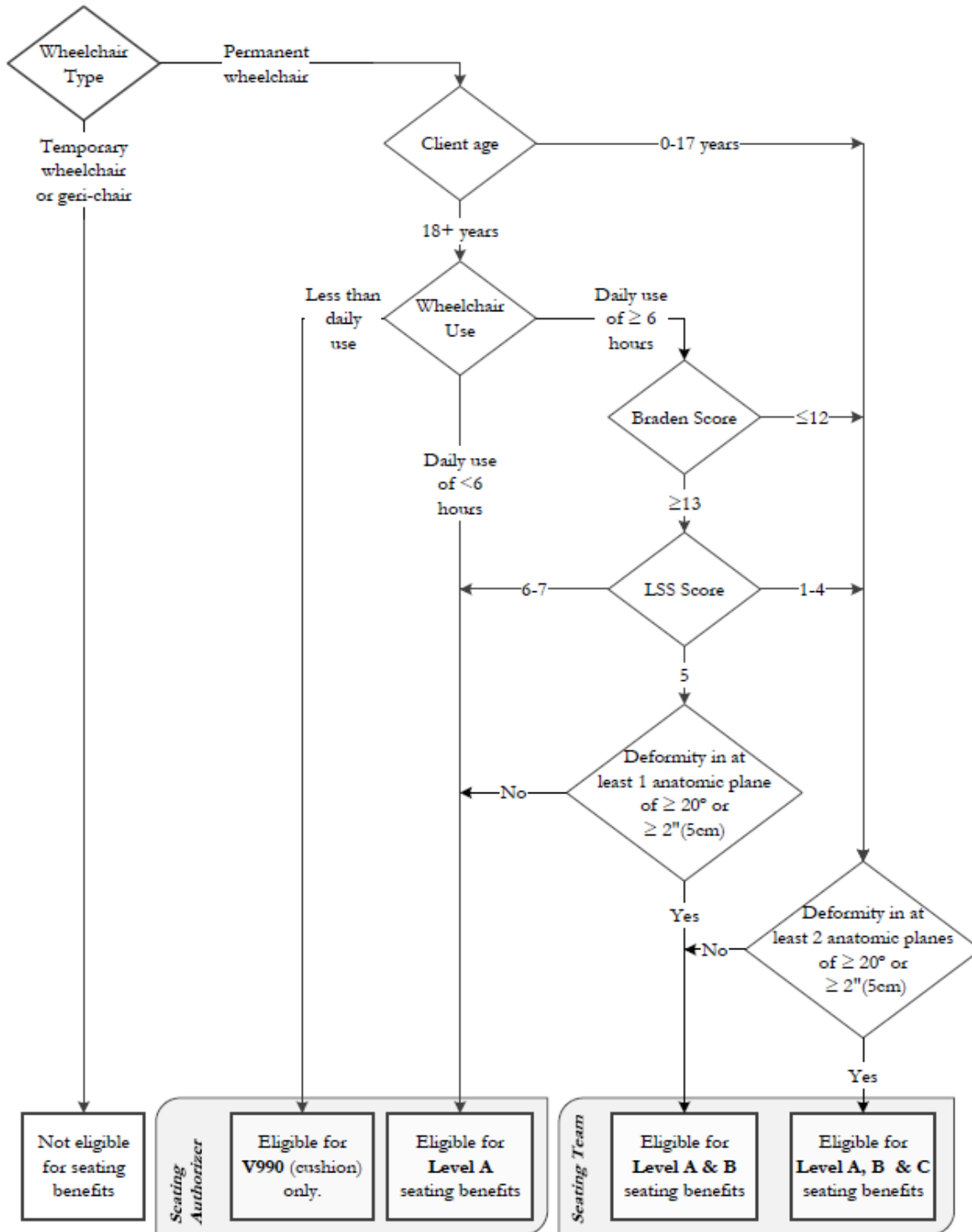
**TABLE 1: LEVEL OF SEATING SCALE (LSS)**

Level 1: Unplaceable	Individual cannot be placed or held by one person in sitting position
Level 2: Supported from head downward	Individual requires support of head, trunk and pelvis to maintain the sitting position
Level 3: Supported from shoulders or trunk downward	Individual requires support of trunk and pelvis to maintain sitting position
Level 4: Supported at pelvis	Individual requires support only at the pelvis to maintain sitting position
Level 5: Maintains position, does not move	Individual maintains the sitting position independently if they do not move limbs or trunk
Level 6: Shifts trunk forward, re-erects	Individual, without using hands for support, can incline the trunk at least 20° anterior to the vertical plane and return to the neutral (vertical) position
Level 7: Shifts trunk laterally, re-erects	Individual, without using hands for support, can incline the trunk at least 20° to one or both sides of midline and return to the neutral position

Notes: The client must be able to maintain the posture for at least 30 seconds. The assessment should take into consideration the fluctuations in the client's ability to sit throughout the day. The final score should be based on the client's average level throughout the day.

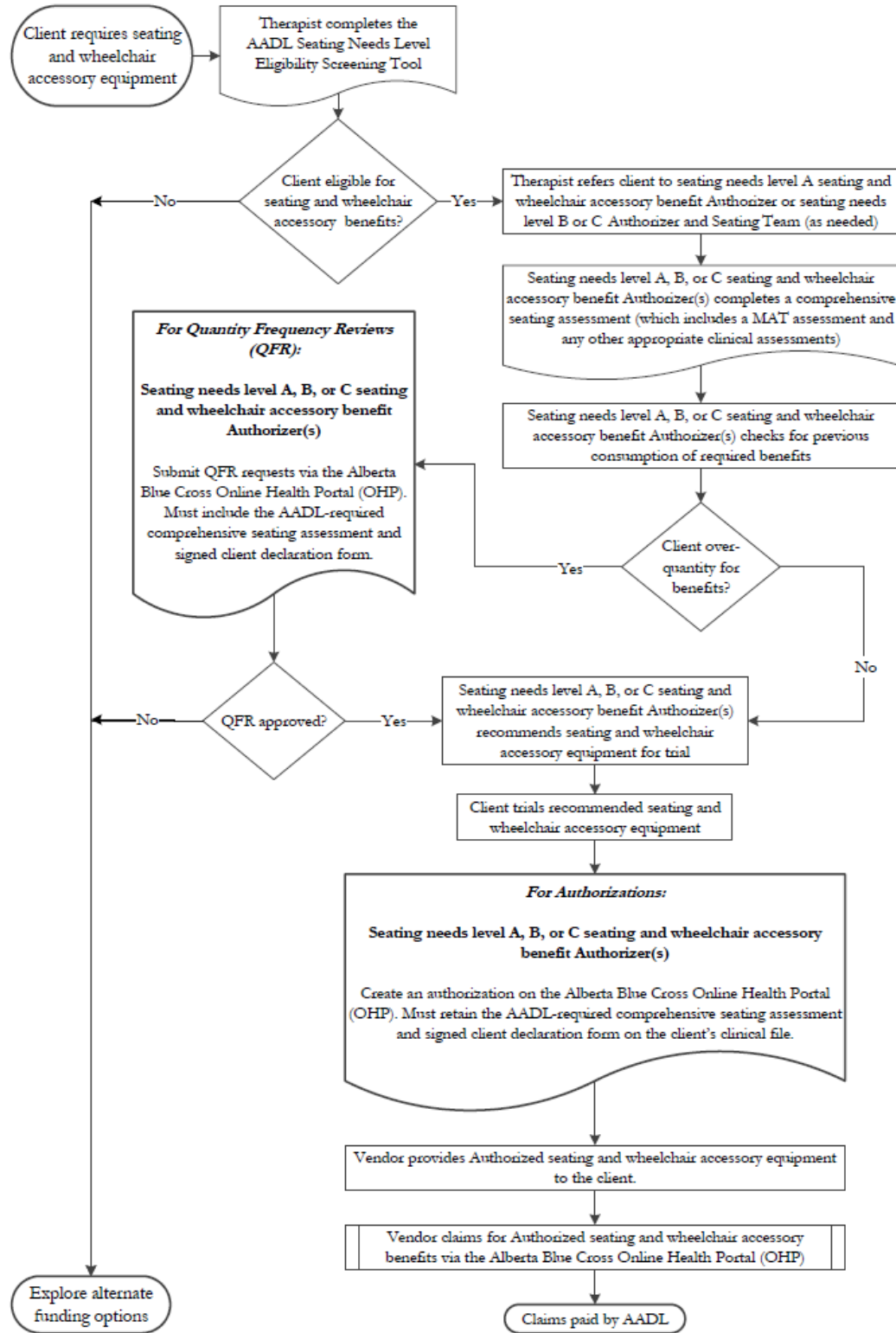
**Figure 1**

Client Eligibility for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits



## Figure 2

### Process for Obtaining Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits



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## Policy X – 03

### Prior Approval for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits

#### Policy Statement

In limited circumstances, AADL will consider requests from Level B or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers for a client to be approved for seating needs Level B or C benefits in the absence of significant, documented postural deformities of greater than 20° or 2" (5 cm).

Consideration for prior approval is only given if the client is otherwise eligible for seating needs Level A or Level B seating benefits and there is a documented advanced progressive neuromuscular condition with anticipated significant postural changes within a two to three year period. Examples include, but are not limited to, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Huntington's disease, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, and Parkinson's disease.

#### Procedure

##### Authorizer:

- Determine the client's seating needs level, per Policy X – 02 Eligibility Criteria and Benefits Process.
  - If the client is eligible for seating needs Level A, but there is strong clinical justification for Level B or C benefits, the Level B or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer must submit a prior approval request to Alberta Blue Cross. This request must include evidence of documented advanced progressive neuromuscular condition with anticipated significant clinical and functional postural changes within a two to three year period.
  - If approved, Level B or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers may authorize Level A benefits via the online health portal, per Policy X – 02 Eligibility Criteria and Benefits Process.
- Contact Alberta Blue Cross regarding inquires or assistance when submitting prior approval via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.

##### Client:

- Accept responsibility for costs of equipment outside of AADL's prior approval limits.

##### Alberta Blue Cross:

- Processes prior approval requests via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- Apprises seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers of prior approval request decisions, and updates the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal to reflect approved benefits (where applicable).
- Notifies Level B or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer of decision related to Level A benefits requests.

##### AADL:

- Determines prior approval limits of seating and wheelchair accessory benefits.
- Reviews seating and wheelchair accessory benefit prior approval requests.

## Policy X – 04

### Quantity and Frequency Limits

#### Policy Statement

AADL sets annual limits on the number of seating and wheelchair accessory benefits funded per eligible client based on current best practice and expected wear. See Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits for specific limits.

AADL only provides funding for one seating system per client. A client is only eligible for one seating system at a time. Clients are responsible for the costs of duplicate seating components if the components cannot be transferred between mobility bases (e.g., between a manual and power wheelchair).

Replacement of AADL-funded seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment only occurs after the frequency period if the previous seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment:

- is no longer suitable to meet the client's needs due to a change in clinical condition, or
- the equipment cannot be cost-effectively repaired

AADL will not fund replacement of equipment for the following reasons:

- client preference
- client refuses to explore alternate funding for replacement, including early replacement
- change of mobility base
  - replacement due to size change must be directly related to a change of the client's anatomic measurements
- client is provided with a second mobility base, or
- the previous equipment has been lost, stolen or damaged

When AADL-funded seating and wheelchair accessory equipment are replaced, the client may not retain the original equipment. If replacement occurred because of a change in the client's needs, and if the original equipment is still in good working order, the equipment may be added to community recycle (replacement covers may be authorized for this purpose if appropriate). If the equipment is replaced because it was not cost-effective to repair, it should be appropriately discarded.

#### Early Replacement

In certain limited situations, a seating benefit may be provided prior to the end of the frequency listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits. This is referred to as an "early replacement." Early replacements are requested through the quantity and frequency review request process (Policy GN – 28 Quantity and Frequency Review Process).

#### Procedure

##### Authorizer

- Advise clients of quantity and frequency limits, explain policy and process to client and only authorize benefits within the limits of Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.
- Pursue alternate funding, such as private insurance, prior to requesting additional funds from AADL.
- If there is a clinically justifiable reason to seek early replacement of a benefit, the authorizer must:
  - confirm request is not for duplicate benefits
  - confirm replacement is not possible under warranty
  - confirm alternate funding has been explored and ruled out
- Follow the quantity and frequency review request process. A comprehensive seating assessment, including a MAT assessment and any other appropriate clinical assessments, must accompany the quantity and frequency review request in order to establish and confirm client eligibility for AADL funding.

- Submit quantity and frequency review request authorization on the online health portal and include the following documentation:
  - Quantity and Frequency Review Request form
  - Client Consent form
  - other supporting documentation
- Receive notification of review decision from Alberta Blue Cross and notify the client.

**Clients:**

- Maintain care of the seating and wheelchair accessory benefit to prolong life of benefit provided through AADL and to prevent need for premature replacement of benefit.
- Consult with AADL authorizer when replacement of AADL equipment is required.
- Ensure replacement equipment authorized meets their basic need during trial and when delivered.
- Seek alternate funding for equipment needs that fall outside the quantity and frequency limits.

**Alberta Blue Cross:**

- Receives and log quantity and frequency review requests.
- Forwards quantity and frequency review requests to AADL for adjudication.
- Updates quantity and frequency review request status on the online health portal which can then be viewed on the provider portal.
- Sends notification of the decision to the authorizer, and the client if necessary.

**AADL:**

- Receives the quantity and frequency review request and supporting documentation from Alberta Blue Cross.
- Adjudicates and provides decision to Alberta Blue Cross.

# Policy X – 05

## Authorizer Qualifications

### Policy Statement

Occupational therapists and physiotherapists who are current AADL authorizers may apply to add seating and wheelchair accessory benefit to their product range for authorization. These authorizers must also meet the following requirements:

- Be registered and in good standing with the appropriate Alberta regulatory college.
- Be experienced in wheelchair seating and mobility. Experience is defined as active participation in the assessment and fitting in collaboration with a current wheelchair seating authorizer or team. The wheelchair seating and mobility experience does not need to be limited to AADL clients.
- Be familiar with wheelchair seating and mobility assessment protocols that include:
  - medical, social and functional history
  - movement assessment tool (MAT) assessment
  - client-centered goal setting
- Be familiar with current, evidence-based practice for wheelchair seating and mobility assessment and interventions as demonstrated by ongoing participation in annual continuing competency activities related to wheelchair seating and mobility assessment and recommendations.
- Be familiar with the equipment in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits for the applicable seating needs level(s).
- Meet the requirements listed for the corresponding seating needs level(s).
- Be approved as an AADL authorizer for AADL-funded wheelchair benefits.
- Completed the following AADL online training modules:
  - Module 1 – AADL general overview, policies and procedures
  - Module 2.4 – Seating Benefits

AADL reserves the right to deny or revoke seating and wheelchair accessory benefit Authorizer status at any time.

### Requirements by Seating Needs Level

#### Level A – Basic Seating

Have a minimum experience of five Level A seating and wheelchair accessory benefit assessments and fittings.

#### Level B – Specialized Seating

Be employed by a seating needs Level B AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team.

Have a minimum experience of participating in 10 Level B seating and wheelchair accessory benefit assessments and fittings.

Must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

#### Level C – Complex Seating

Be employed by a seating needs Level C AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team.

Have a minimum experience of participating in 20 Level C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit assessments and fittings.

Must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

## Procedure

### Authorizer:

- Confirm eligibility and maintain compliance with the requirements.
- Complete the Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits Manual Wheelchair and Seating Needs Level A Authorizer Application form or Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits Seating Needs Level B and C Authorizer Application form and submits to AADL.
- Complete the requisite authorizer training modules, online.
- Notifies AADL of any changes that may affect authorizer status.

### AADL:

- Reviews applications to add seating and wheelchair accessory benefits to an authorizer's product ranges. The decision is made by the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits.
- If required, and at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, review and consultation may occur with the AADL Program Manager of Wheelchair Benefits and/or the Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

### Alberta Blue Cross:

- Approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers will be provided with the appropriate seating benefits product range, and provided access to authorize pertinent seating and wheelchair accessory benefits via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- Provides client and provider-focused operational support to approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers.



## Policy X – 06

### Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Teams

#### Policy Statement

Dedicated seating and wheelchair services within health facilities/programs that meet AADL criteria are eligible to be recognized by AADL as a Level B – Specialized seating team or a Level C – Complex seating team.

#### Requirements by Seating Needs Level

##### Level A - Basic Seating

Level A does not require the Level A seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer to be a member of a seating team.

Assessment of Level A seating needs must be done by at least one Level A seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer (occupational therapist or physical therapist) in consultation with a manufacturer-authorized seating technician.

##### Level B – Specialized Seating

Assessment of Level B seating needs must be done by a multidisciplinary team, including at least:

- one Level B seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer (occupational therapist or physical therapist) in collaboration with other disciplines, and
- one commercial seating technician (see Policy X – 07 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Vendors)

The team must have appropriate operational support to meet the seating and wheelchair accessory benefit needs of seating needs Level B clients. This includes:

- staff, resources, clinical space and equipment necessary for assessments and interventions for seating clients
- employing at least one Level B seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer who is dedicated full-time to seating
- established connections to interdisciplinary allied health services. These services must be accessible to the AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team
- identifying one Level B seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer as the AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit team coordinator
- established processes for managing referrals, managing seating clinics, managing equipment trials, managing authorizations and providing timely follow-up
- operate regular and ongoing seating clinic dates

The team must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

The team must have established working relationships with more than one vendor (where more than one vendor is available) that meets the criteria for a Level B seating vendor.

##### Level C – Complex Seating

Assessment of Level C seating needs must be done by a multidisciplinary team, including at least:

- one Level C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit Authorizer (occupational therapist or physical therapist)
- one additional clinical team member who must be an occupational therapist or physical therapist
- one adaptive seating technician (Policy X – 07 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Vendors)

Level C seating teams must meet all the criteria of Level B and employ at least one Level C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer who is dedicated full-time to seating.

The team must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s). The team must also have established working relationships with more than one vendor (where more than one vendor is available) who meets the criteria for a Level C seating vendor.

### **AADL-Recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team Coordinator**

AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Teams must designate one seating Authorizer as the coordinator. The name and contact information of the coordinator will be included on the list of AADL Recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Teams. The role of the coordinator includes, acting as the main liaison between AADL and AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams and monitoring of ongoing education and training for members of the AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team.

## **Procedure**

### **Seating Team**

- Submits a proposal to AADL to become an AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team.
- Maintains compliance with the above requirements.
- Notifies AADL to changes in AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team composition.

### **AADL**

- Reviews proposals by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel members(s).
- Maintains a list of AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams.

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# Policy X – 07

## Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Vendors

### Policy Statement

Vendors must meet the following requirements to be considered for approval as an AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit vendor.

### Requirements by Seating Needs Level

#### Level A – Basic Seating

In order to provide Level A commercial seating benefits, the vendor must:

- meet AADL’s general vendor criteria (Policy GN – 11)
- adhere to benchmark pricing (Policy GN – 11)
- offer a minimum of three different AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturer product lines for Level A benefits (Policy X – 08 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers)
  - must provide AADL with a distribution agreement letter from an AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturer
- employ at least one full-time manufacturer authorized seating technician
- provide equipment in compliance with Policy X – 10 Benefit Standards
- only provide equipment that complies with Policy X – 09 Equipment Standards

#### Level B – Specialized Seating

In order to provide Level B commercial seating benefits, the vendor must:

- meet all requirements for Level A
- offer a minimum of five different AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturer product lines for Level A and B benefits (Policy X – 08 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers)
  - must provide AADL with a distribution agreement letter from an AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturers
- employ at least one full-time commercial seating technician with the following qualifications:
  - Must have a minimum seating experience of 15 client assessments and fitting of seating systems over a 12-month period<sup>1</sup>
  - Must attend manufacturers’ training annually in all seating products
  - Must have a minimum of 50 hours per year of education in seating products.

Applications for new commercial seating technicians must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

In order to provide Level B custom-made seating equipment, the vendor must meet the criteria for Level C – Complex Seating.

#### Level C – Complex Seating

In order to provide Level C seating benefits, the vendor must:

- Employ an adaptive seating technician with the following qualifications:
  - must have a minimum of 600 hours (75 clients at eight hours/client) of experience in the assessment and fitting of seating systems
  - must be knowledgeable about working with various metals, wood, plastics, viscoelastic, gels and polyurethane foams

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<sup>1</sup> “Experience” is defined as active participation in the assessment and fitting of seating and wheelchair accessory benefits in collaboration with a current seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer or AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team. This experience is not limited to AADL clients.

- must have knowledge of commercial seating components and mobility bases
- must have accrued basic anatomy and biomechanics training/experience

Applications for new adaptive seating technicians must be approved by the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, or at the discretion of the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits, via close consultation with AADL Seating Benefit Panel member(s).

In order to provide Level C custom-made seating benefits, the vendor must meet the requirement of the Level C listed above, and must:

- meet AADL's general vendor criteria (Policy GN – 11 Vendor/Specialty Supplier Section)
- adhere to benchmark pricing (Policy GN – 11 Vendor/Specialty Supplier Section)
- provide equipment in compliance with Policy X – 10 Benefit Standards
- only provide equipment that complies with Policy X – 09 Equipment Standards

In order to provide Level C commercial seating benefits, the vendor must also meet all the criteria for Level B and Level C listed above, and must offer a minimum of five different AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturer product lines for Level A, B and C benefits (Policy X – 08 Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers) and provide AADL with a distribution agreement letter from the AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturers.

## **Procedure**

### **Vendor:**

- Complete the vendor application and submit to AADL Agreements Coordinator. Ensure all requirements are met for the seating needs level of benefits requested.
- Notify AADL to changes in AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit vendor composition.
- Provide annual updates to AADL regarding the status of seating technicians.
- Maintain compliance with the above requirements.

### **AADL:**

- Reviews vendor applications. Refers applications for seating technicians to the AADL Seating Benefit Panel, as required.
- Maintains a list of AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit vendors.

### **Alberta Blue Cross:**

- Provides client and provider-focused operational support to approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit vendors.

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## Policy X – 08

### Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers

#### Policy Statement

Seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment authorized for AADL clients must be from AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit seating manufacturers.

In order to be listed as an AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit seating manufacturer, the manufacturer must:

- Offer products which conform to the commercial seating product minimum standards outlined in Policy X – 09 Equipment Standards.
- Provide annual in-servicing to AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams (including recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers, seating technicians, and vendors).
  - AADL expects in-services to be provided across all regions of the province within reasonable travel distance for AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams.
- Have a manufacturer representative available for Alberta. The manufacturer is responsible to notify AADL in a timely manner of changes to manufacturer representative's contact information.
  - Failure to do so will result in removal from the list of AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturers.
- Permit all AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit vendors to be dealers.
- Facilitate reasonable access to demonstration/trial products when requested by an AADL-recognized Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team.

#### Procedure

##### Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers:

- Contact the AADL Program Manager for Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits to request an addition to the seating and wheelchair accessory benefit AADL-approved manufacturers list.
- Provide annual in-servicing to AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams.
- Notify AADL of changes to manufacturer representative's contact information.

##### AADL:

- Reviews manufacturer requests to be added to the AADL Approved Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Manufacturers List as an AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturer.
- Maintains a list of AADL-approved seating and wheelchair accessory benefit manufacturers including contact information for the manufacturer's Alberta representative.

# Policy X – 09

## Equipment Standards

### Policy Statement

All seating equipment authorized for AADL clients must meet the minimum standards listed below.

Any seating equipment that is intended to be used as part of a restraint system for a motor vehicle must meet the standards in the *Motor Vehicle Safety Act* (Canada).

### Product Minimum Standards for Commercial Seating Products

All commercially available seating products provided in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits must meet the following minimum standards:

- Warranty – The manufacturer must warrant that the product will be free from defects in material and workmanship for the below noted minimum years from the service date of the equipment:

Product	Warranty
Bases, cushions	2 years
Lateral supports, headrests	2 years
Pommels, straps, belts, hip bolsters, wedges, adductors, abductors, foot/leg supports, arm/shoulder supports, trays	1 year
Backrests	2 years

- Equipment limitations – Equipment must have been available for a minimum of one year in the North American market.
- Liability insurance – Equipment provided must have a minimum \$2 million comprehensive general liability insurance provided by the manufacturer.
- Fire retardancy – Materials must meet at least the California Technical Bulletin 117 (CAL 117) flammability standard for upholstered furniture.
- Covers – For equipment that requires a cover, the cover must be a standard, no-charge feature. The latex content of the cover must be indicated in the product information.

### Product Minimum Standards for Seating Products Custom-Made by an Adaptive Seating Technician

All custom-made seating products manufactured by an adaptive seating technician and provided in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits must meet the following minimum standards:

- Warranty – Minimum two-year warranty against defects, materials and supplies in the fabrication of the seating system.
- Fire retardancy – Materials must meet at least the California Technical Bulletin 117 (CAL 117) flammability standard for upholstered furniture.
- Covers – For equipment that requires a cover, the cover must be a standard, no-charge feature. The latex content of the cover must be indicated in the product information.

### Procedure

#### Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Teams and Vendors:

- Ensure that all seating and wheelchair accessory benefit products provided to AADL clients meet the standards listed above.

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## Policy X – 10

### Benefit Standards

#### Policy Statement

AADL has minimum standards for all seating and wheelchair accessory benefit assessments and interventions. These standards are based on current best and leading practice and research (where applicable).

The process of seating and wheelchair accessory benefit provision must include the following steps:

- assessment and recommendations
- trial and fitting
- followup
- ongoing care and reassessment

#### Assessment and Recommendations

Assessment must occur in an environment with appropriate space and equipment for the assessment of clients. This is typically a clinical setting, but clients may be assessed in their own homes or care facilities if appropriate.

Assessment of clients must be undertaken by an appropriate Level A, B, or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers on the basis of clinically assessed and eligibility-contingent seating needs level of clients (Policy X – 05 Authorizer Qualifications). Assessments must include a documented movement assessment tool (MAT) assessment and client-centered goals. The goals must be “SMART” (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-related).

Level A, B, or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers are responsible for all seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment recommendations. An appropriate AADL-recognized Level A, B, or C seating technician shall provide technical guidance and consultation only. Recommendations must be made with consideration for any other postural management strategies, either current or planned (e.g. other postural equipment, medical or surgical interventions) that may affect the final outcome.

#### Trial and Fitting

All seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment must be trialed by the client prior to the final fitting.

Vendors are expected to provide trial equipment for no more than one week.

Equipment that is at risk for soiling or contamination during trial must be protected.

Trial equipment may or may not be the exact equipment that will be provided for the client.

Level A, B, and C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers, seating technicians, vendors and the client should be in close communication during the trial period to ensure the final seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment selection will meet the client’s assessed long-term basic needs.

Level A, B, and C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers are responsible for final seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment selection and confirming appropriate fit of final seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment. It is recommended that the Level A, B, or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer and seating technician attend the final fitting appointment together.

The AADL-recognized Level A, B, or C seating vendor, utilizing the appropriate seating technician, is responsible for ensuring correct installation and adjustment of all seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment.

Level A, B, and C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers must ensure appropriate written instructions are provided to the client and caregivers on the care and maintenance of the final seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment, and overall wheelchair and seating system.

## **Followup**

Level A, B, and C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers must provide at least one followup evaluation within three months to all clients who have received AADL funded seating and wheelchair accessory benefit equipment. This may be in-person, by phone or by mail.

## **Ongoing Care and Reassessment**

Level B and C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams must have a defined process for maintaining and repairing the basic, specialized, and complex wheelchair and seating systems, in addition to the follow up or reassessments.

Formal seating and wheelchair accessory benefit reassessment should occur if the client has incurred significant:

- anthropometric changes, including having outgrown their basic, specialized, and complex wheelchair and seating system
- change or changes in clinical and/or functional status including medical condition change(s) such as surgery
- failure to achieve clinically and functionally-assessed seating and wheelchair accessory benefit outcomes, or
- wear of the seating and wheelchair accessory benefit components or system, including other technical or safety concerns



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## Policy X – 11

### AADL Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits Panel

#### Policy Statement

On an ad hoc basis, AADL will engage a group of Level B and/or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers from AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams to provide oversight and guidance regarding a variety of seating topics. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizer applications
- Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefit Team proposals
- seating technician applications
- Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List X – Seating and Wheelchair Accessory Benefits
- other relevant topics as needed

#### Panel Membership

The panel will comprise Level B and/or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers from AADL-recognized seating and wheelchair accessory benefit teams. Level B and/or C seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers will be invited by the Chair to attend meetings on a rotational basis.

Representation from AHS professional practice leads is encouraged.

A minimum of three panel members are required per meeting, with a maximum of five panel members.

AADL will act as the Chair of the AADL Seating Benefits Panel meetings.

At the discretion of the Chair, Level A seating and wheelchair accessory benefit authorizers may be invited to attend as panel members.

#### Meetings

Meetings will be held at the discretion of the Chair.

Simple majority voting will be used to make panel recommendations. The Chair will not vote except in the case of a tie.

Meetings may be conducted via teleconference to facilitate participation across the province.

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## **Policy X – 12**

### **Service Dates**

#### **Policy Statement**

The service date used for submitting claims for seating and wheelchair accessory benefits is the date the client actually receives the specific device or service.

#### **Procedure**

##### **Vendor**

- Submits claims to Alberta Blue Cross following the provision of seating and wheelchair accessory benefits to the client.

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## Policy X – 13

### Patient Claim Statement

#### Policy Statement

Seating and wheelchair accessory vendors must provide every client with a patient claim statement for each benefit invoiced to the AADL program. The statement can be printed from the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal, and must include general information such as statement details, Alberta Blue Cross contact information and client data.

The patient claim statement is comprised of three sections: statement information, claim summary and claim details.

The claim summary displays the overall breakdown of how much each client is responsible for against the total claimed amount for all claims submitted:

- Total amount claimed – The sum of claimed amounts for all claims submitted.
- AADL will pay – The total amount that AADL will cover for all claims submitted.
- Client will pay – The total amount the client is responsible to pay for all claims submitted. This amount is the sum of any cost-share amount the client owes and upgrade charges that are not covered by AADL.

Clients must be provided with a copy of their patient claim statement.

#### Procedure

##### Vendors:

- Provide clients with a patient claim statement for AADL benefits. The patient claim statement must be printed from the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- For cost-share clients, identify the AADL contribution and the client's cost-share contribution for each benefit.
- For cost-share exempt clients, identify AADL's contribution for each benefit.
- Retain a copy of the patient claim statement on the client's file.

##### Alberta Blue Cross:

- Provide vendors with a patient claim statement through the online health portal as required.