

Prescriptive Seating for Wheeled Mobility

Volume 1: Theory, Application, and Terminology

by Diane E. Ward, MEd, OTR/L

This book discusses the prescriptive process and provides clinical rationale for selecting appropriate seated-mobility equipment. It describes issues that affect a person's ability to function while seated and using a wheelchair. After addressing the human need for safety, vertical orientation, movement, independent mobility, and meaningful activity; the book elaborates on "The Domains of Prescriptive Fit" as they relate to seated health and function.

The later part of the book applies prescriptive seating theory and uniform terminology to the selection of equipment that will meet client needs. Issues such as orientation in space, postural alignment, sensory-perceptual function, and motor coordination are addressed as well as special needs for each body segment and environmental demands.

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Prescriptive Seating includes:

- Observations about how human function is affected by sitting and the chair.
- A framework for uniform terminology to describe the sitter's needs and equipment.
- A discussion of the clinical ramifications of seated-mobility equipment parameters.

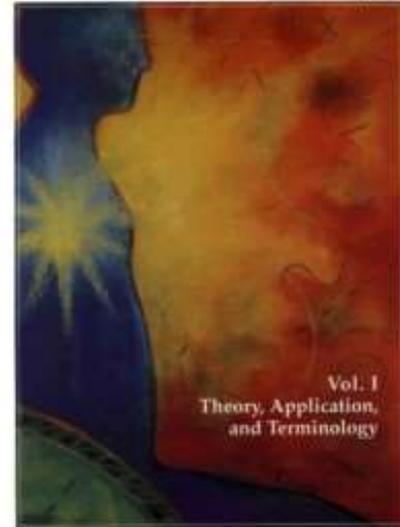
Prescriptive Seating is essential for the seating novice – providing a foundation for the development of prescriptive reasoning strategies. It is useful for occupational and physical therapists who already work with seating teams, offering them the tools to more clearly communicate their clients' seated-mobility needs. For equipment specialists and third-party funding agents, this book provides insight into the prescriptive rationale that ensures successful selection of seated-mobility equipment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diane Ward, an Occupational Therapist, wrote this book after 20 years of experience in recommending seated-mobility equipment. Having observed that participants of the seating team had quite divergent approaches to discerning the needs of a seated person, she wanted to help bridge the gap between therapists' understanding of clients' needs and suppliers' knowledge of seating and mobility equipment.

Diane's perspective as an Occupational Therapist is demonstrated by her client-centered focus on optimizing the clients' potential for health, independent function, and meaningful activity with an awareness that achieving these goals demands seated-mobility equipment that fits clients' lifestyles, environments, *as well* as their bodies.

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Diane E. Ward MEd, OTR/L

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Recommended for

- Occupational Therapists
- Assistive Tech Practitioners
- Physiatrists
- Speech Pathologists
- Physical Therapists
- Rehab Technology Suppliers
- Nurses
- Special Educators
- Rehab Engineers
- Wheelchair/Seating Specialists
- Funding Agents
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Book Review by Karen A. Bena, MS, OTR/L

American Journal of Occupational Therapy, November/December 1996, Volume 50, Number 10, p 914

This book contains the fundamental theory and application of prescriptive seating, which has not been presented in other texts. The purpose of the book is to (a) support seating specialists in practicing with excellence in their daily work, (b) encourage researchers to discover more economical and reliable methods for clinically evaluating clients' seating needs, and (c) inspire seated mobility manufacturers to continue developing products that prescriptively respond to sitters' individual needs.

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Part I discusses a theoretical frame of reference for the practice of prescriptive seating as a therapeutic activity and introduces a uniform approach to seating terminology. The author presents a philosophical overview, evolutions in prescriptive seating and seating assessments, and reasoning processes. Her approach emphasizes the need to focus on and evaluate the client's seating potential. The seating assessment is an interactive process that involves interview; physical, cognitive, and emotional evaluation; and simulation of proposed equipment. This part is well presented and complemented by easy-to-follow charts and diagrams. Chapter 3, A Uniform Approach to Seating Terminology, is hard to conceptualize in one reading. The discussion of the planes and axis of motion is confusing and difficult to understand without having the clinical experience of prescriptive seating to visualize these concepts. For prescriptive seating team members to use this uniform approach, they need to read the text and practice the concepts together. The illustrations are helpful in demonstrating the points, but time is needed to digest the information for application in the second part of the book.

Part II applies the prescriptive seating theory and uniform terminology from Part I to the selection of equipment to meet clients' individual needs. All body segment position options are discussed individually then as an interactive whole, with consideration given to environmental demands. The author's knowledge and experience of prescriptive seating is evident through her clinical examples of equipment and how the seating system functions as a whole. Case studies and photos of actual client seating systems would have fit well in this section, unless the author plans to use these in volume II.

Overall, this text is a great resource, provides a foundation for professionals working in prescriptive seating and for students interested in learning the basics, and establishes a comprehensive framework and uniform terminology. The illustrations, references, and suggested readings in each chapter complement the information presented by the author. This book will enhance the occupational therapist's skills in helping the seating team incorporate the client's physical, cognitive, and psychosocial needs and accent the clients' role in the prescriptive seating team.

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