

Clinician or Therapist Overview

Who

Your second wheelchair team member will be a clinician or therapist. This person is usually an occupational therapist (OT) or physical therapist (PT). It is recommended he or she be certified as an [assistive technology professional \(ATP\)](#) or a [seating and mobility specialist \(SMS\)](#).

Your doctor will likely refer you to a clinician who is a seating specialist for your Wheelchair Evaluation. However, you have a right to choose your OT or PT, so you do not have to use your doctor's referral.

To find an OT or PT on your own you can:

- Ask people you know for referrals
- Connect with organizations and support groups like [Spinal Cord Central](#) for referrals
- Search the [Seating and Mobility Specialists' certification websites](#) for qualified assistive technology professionals. *More information about Assistive Technology Certification is below.*

When

You will meet with your therapists after you meet with your doctor. Remember, the therapist will need a **prescription** from your doctor in order to complete the assessment with you. We review this process in greater detail in [Chapter 3](#). [LINK](#)

What

The clinician will conduct your Wheelchair Evaluation and Assessment in which they help you match your physical abilities and your lifestyle to specific features of a wheelchair. Usually, the clinician works closely with the medical equipment supplier during the evaluation. An overview is below and the details of a Wheelchair Evaluation and Assessment are in Chapter 3 of the Mobility Map.

This process will include the following:

- Collecting information from you about your needs
- Learn about all facets of your life that affect your mobility including your home and work environments
- Assess you physically
- Work closely with the supplier to decide what equipment is best for you

Assistive Technology Certification

In the wheelchair world, an ATP is usually a physical therapist, occupational therapist or supplier who has met the ATP standards for knowledge about wheelchairs and seating products along with other assistive technologies.

Assistive Technology Professional (ATP)

Basic certification is available for providers who have extra knowledge and experience in providing assistive technology (AT) including wheelchairs. This Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) certification is through the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America ([RESNA](#)). An occupational therapist, physical therapist or a wheelchair supplier is eligible for this certification.

An Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) is a certified "service provider who analyzes the needs of consumers with disabilities, assists in the selection of appropriate assistive technology for the consumer's needs, and provides training in the use of the selected devices." Source: Rehab Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America.



Your Wheelchair Team Members: Clinician or Therapist

Seating and Mobility Specialist (SMS)

In 2010, RESNA introduced an additional advanced certification in seating and mobility. This certification is called the Seating and Mobility Specialist (SMS) certification. This certification is available for providers who have extra knowledge and experience in providing assistive technology such as wheelchairs. This certification is also through the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America ([RESNA](#)).

To search a list of certified AT professional you can go to the [RESNA website](#).