
D2: Custom Contoured Seating: Ensuring Successful Outcomes

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Learning objectives:

1. Describe 4 of the 7 critical determinants of a successful outcome with custom contoured seating that were discussed in this course.
2. Describe one benefit of doing a seating simulation as part of the initial seating assessment, prior to the shape capture.
3. Translate information from three mat exam procedures into a component of a postural alignment plan.

Session description:

What variables contribute to a successful outcome when custom contoured seating is used for an individual with complex postural support needs?

In this course seven elements are proposed as critical determinants of a successful outcome with this type of complex seating intervention. These elements are explained and supported as we discuss the necessary steps and problem solving involved in the assessment and implementation of custom contoured seating. We will begin by reviewing some basic clinical concepts related to custom contoured seating, including clinical indications and contraindications. Next, we will review the critical components of the wheelchair seating assessment and shape capture process that are required for successful outcomes, with an emphasis on how to translate mat exam findings into a Postural Alignment Plan prior to the shape capture. An overview of the differentiating features of various product technologies available for generating custom contoured seating systems will allow the participant to understand how these parameters can affect outcomes for clients with differing clinical presentations. The roles and responsibilities of the therapist and supplier during these processes will be highlighted. The strategies and procedures discussed in this course are not product specific, and can be applied when using any custom contouring system.

Content references:

1. Cook, AM; Hussey, SM. Assistive Technologies: Principles and Practice, 2nd Edition, St. Louis, M.O., 2002, Mosby-Year Book, Inc.
2. Petito, C (2015). The Global Evolution of Custom Molded Seating: Options and Methodologies. Accessed from: <http://www.rehabpub.com/2015/05/global-evolution-custom-molded-seating-options-methodologies/>
3. Waugh, K., and Crane, B. (2013). A Clinical Application Guide to Standardized Wheelchair Seating Measures of the Body and Seating Support Surfaces (Rev. Ed). Denver, CO: University of Colorado Denver (363 pgs). Available from: www.assistivetechpartners.org