
D3: Assistive Technology for Sports and Recreation – Supporting the Seated Athlete

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Learning objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. List five professional skills or areas of knowledge that can be directly applied to adaptive sport and recreation technologies.
2. Understand at least six state-of-the-art AT options available to support individuals with disabilities in sport, recreation and leisure pursuits.
3. Discuss three critical considerations when providing seating interventions for adaptive sports equipment.
4. Identify three resources for more information on adaptive sports and recreation.

Session description:

Individuals who use assistive technology in home, school, or work environments will typically require adaptive equipment for sports and recreational pursuits as well. Limitations resulting from a disability are the same to the individual, regardless of the environment or context in which he or she is participating. The key is to either adapt the environment or provide specific support to the individual to maximize independence. Professional skills necessary to evaluate a client, prescribe equipment, and provide education and training are similar across AT applications. Many professionals advance their knowledge and skills toward specialization in one or more specific areas of AT, however most working in rehabilitation and AT have little exposure to and knowledge of options for supporting individuals in sports and recreation.

This session highlights the significant roles that AT professionals play in sports and recreation applications. In addition to assisting the client to identify activity options with consideration of disability specific limitations, AT professionals must utilize specific clinical skills and knowledge to facilitate successful implementation of a chosen recreational

activity. AT professionals prescribe and modify equipment to optimize performance, biomechanical efficiency, skin protection and comfort. Mobility skills and equipment management training is provided to maximize function while minimizing injury risk. Comprehensive client education promotes consistent integration of a chosen activity in everyday life. Case examples will be utilized to emphasize key points and successful outcomes. To facilitate evidence-based practice, a review of relevant research will be included and topics for necessary further study will be suggested. Additionally, options for adaptive sports and recreation technologies will be reviewed, funding sources will be identified and resources will be shared to encourage AT professionals to “get out there” and get involved in adaptive sports and recreation.