

## Lesson 1: Introduction

Getting dressed and undressed is an important activity that uses thinking, vision, and physical skills. Supporting people to get dressed or undressed as easily as possible is important for their quality of life.

When dressing and undressing a person should consider:

- Dressing position
- How to get dressed and undressed
- Different types of clothes and shoes.

A person may also find dressing and undressing easier by using a dressing aid.

Dressing aids are assistive products that can help people with physical difficulties to get dressed and undressed. Examples include:

- Reach and grab tool
- Dressing stick
- Button hook and zip puller
- Sock aid
- Long handle shoe horn.

## Lesson 2: Select

People need different skills to get dressed/undressed. Skills include:

- Thinking skills
- Vision skills
- Physical skills

Assessment helps you to:

- Find out what skills a person may have difficulty with.
- Decide if a dressing aid could assist
- Identify the need for other assistive products or a referral to other health or rehabilitation providers.

Many people will get dressed or undressed with the assistance of a family member or caregiver. If the person usually has assistance, ask if they would like to include their family member or caregiver in the assessment interview.

After the assessment, make a plan with the person which includes:

- The type of dressing aids they might need
- What you may need to teach the person
- Referral to other services
- A follow up appointment date.

## Lesson 3: Fit

It is important to check the fit of a dressing aid to make sure it will be safe for the person to use.

Before fitting a dressing aid, check the product is in good working order.

Check the dressing aid is suitable by checking the:

- Size to hold
- Weight to lift
- Length to reach
- Person's ability to operate any moving parts.

## Lesson 4: Use

For a person to use dressing aids more easily, support the person to:

- **Select a suitable dressing position.** A person might feel safer and find it less tiring sitting down to get dressed and undressed. If they feel unsafe sitting, they may prefer to lie down.
- **Consider how to get dressed and undressed.** For example if a person has a weaker side of the body, it may be easier to:
  - Put clothes on the weaker side first
  - Take clothes off the stronger side first.
- **Consider using different types of clothes and shoes.** For example, stretchy or loose clothes or shoes with Velcro closures.

Demonstrate how to use selected dressing aid/s.

Teach the person how to look after dressing aids:

- Use a gentle cleaning product
- Store in a dry location and not in direct sunlight
- Check for cracks, loose screws, tears or damage to cords, triggers, or hooks.

## Lesson 5: Follow up

Follow up should be done for any person using dressing aids long term.

If a person has difficulty learning to use their dressing aid, follow up in 1 to 2 weeks after providing the product.

It is important people know they can contact the service if their needs change and if they have difficulty using the dressing aids to dress and undress independently.

During follow up:

- Check the condition of the dressing aid:
  - Plastic parts for cracks
  - Wooden parts are smooth
  - Hooks and / or screws are firmly in place and not loose
  - Any moving parts work.
- If the person is unsure about using the product, provide further training
- If the person's needs have changed, reassess them
- If needed, refer for other assistive products or to another health service.