

Tips for measuring and fitting garments without 'in-person' review

With the need to reduce face-to-face appointments in order to minimise the spread of coronavirus, as a clinician you may find yourself having to rapidly alter your mode of practice, and rely on telephone or video reviews to

- Assess your patient's needs for compression
- Prescribe the necessary garment
- Measure for the garment, and then
- Fit the garment.

These are initially challenging to do remotely, but the Jobskin team would like to offer you some tips that may enable you to continue to provide comprehensive and appropriate care during this time of changed practice, social distancing and social isolation.

Firstly, it may be useful to consider whether a simple re-order of a garment is a suitable solution. Most commonly, best practice requires a face-to-face review with the patient and frequently a re-measure. However, with the reduction of in-person reviews, it may be that the best option is to just re-order a garment to enable the patient to continue to wear compression despite an inability to attend an appointment.

Secondly, and if a consultation is required, consult via video link where possible as this enables you to evaluate a patient's need for compression, to complete a garment prescription and to fit a garment with little compromise. Measuring is more challenging but not impossible!

EVALUATION AND PRESCRIPTION

While a video consultation allows us to see a patient's scarring, vascular presentation or oedema/swelling, we lose palpation, which for us as clinicians, is an integral part of our evaluation. If you are new to telehealth review, you will be amazed how quickly you are able to obtain the necessary information to complete a garment prescription with a few tips and tricks

- Use the video zoom function to get close-up vision of areas that you specifically need to examine
- Ask the patient to palpate specific areas and ask questions relevant to the information that you intuitively absorb from palpation eg "is it firm? Or does it 'give' when you press down"
- Ask the patient to range affected joints so that you can assess for contracture that may need to be accommodated in a garment.
- Ask them to don another garment (button-up shirt, jeans) so that you can assess what garment modification may be necessary to enable them to don/doff independently.

MEASURING

Consider using a suitable friend, parent or family member to measure the patient. Your expertise cannot be replaced but with your guidance via video, and preparation of the 'measurer' through the resources available on the Jobskin website, you will be able to achieve an adequate measure.

Prior to commencing the video consult, you will need to post the relevant paper tapes to the patient and request that the 'measurer' does some preparation to become familiar with the measuring process. You will need to ask the 'measurer' to

- a. Go to www.jobskin.com/how-to-measure and go to the appropriate section ie Lower Limb, Upper Limb, Head and Neck, Torso or Other.
- b. Open and read through the document in that section with the relevant measuring instructions
- c. Ask them to watch the relevant measurement video in that same section. These videos are designed to train and support (often) remote therapists with no measuring experience and so will be accessible to your patient's friend and family member.

You can then watch the measuring session via a video link providing instruction and feedback as the measurement is undertaken.

FITTING

For the most part, fitting the garment via video link is straightforward. You can demonstrate the donning of a similar garment, much as you would when doing face-to-face reviews. However, assessing the efficacy of the fit is more challenging.

- a. Firstly, observe them as they don the garment and make an assessment re the viability of independent donning, and whether modifications may be necessary.
- b. Secondly, ask them whether the garment is comfortable and ask them to show you specific potential 'troublespots' eg is the axilla fitting snugly?, is the crotch of a pair of tights sitting at the right height?, does the waistband sit at the waist? and what happens to the waistband when they sit/stand?, where do the webspaces sit? etc
- c. And finally, assess the compression. Ask them to 'pinch' the garment and pull the fabric away from the limb or torso. If they are having trouble getting a 'pinchful' of fabric, the compression is optimal, likewise if they are able to pinch it but can only pull the fabric no further than 1 cm. Any more than that, the garment may need some modification, and so the pinches along the seamline should be marked with a pen or crayon at the fingertips.

CLINICAL SUPPORT

And remember, the Clinical Advisors are still here to help, and would be very happy to support you as you adjust to telehealth reviews. Rosemary (AUS on +61 419 941 407) and Veronica (NZ on +64 21 321 537) are available for reviews via Zoom and other platforms.