

What is a Bed stick?

A bed stick is used to assist with rolling over in bed, sitting up from a lying position, getting in and out of bed and providing support when standing.

A bed stick is NOT designed to prevent someone from falling out of bed

Clinical Assessment Considerations

- Before providing a bed stick, ensure alternative techniques have been assessed.
 - Can the person roll, use the edge of the bed to pull on?
 - Could silky sheets or silky sleep wear assist?
 - Can the bed be raised or lowered to assist with bed transfer?
 - Can options such as a bed wedge or backrest raise be trialed?
 - Is the prescription of an adjustable bed appropriate?
- If the prescription of a bed stick is being considered use the SWEP '**Bed, Mattress & Bed Equipment Assessment Tool**' to evaluate the risk associated with prescribing a bed stick. Document your clinical reasoning and decision in all clinical notes
- Be aware that there are different bed stick styles (e.g. single point vs curved/dual pole vs horizontal bed stick). Consider match of bed stick style and consumer attributes (e.g. transfer technique, impalement risk, entrapment risk)
- If prescribing a bed stick to be used consider level of entrapment risk. If the level of entrapment risk considering entrapment zones (zones 1 and 3 may be relevant). Use SWEP '**Bed, Mattress & Bed Equipment Assessment Tool**' - **Appendix 1**
 - Take steps to eliminate non-compliant zones or consider whether prescription of a bed stick is appropriate
- There will be times where prescription of a bed stick is not an appropriate solution to support independence in bed mobility or transfers.
 - Consider alternatives such as increased carer support or alternative AT item options (eg slide board).

Precautions/Recommendations

- A bed stick should **NOT** be provided if the user has a history of falling / rolling out of bed.

Bed Stick Clinical Considerations for AT Practitioners

For more information contact Independent Living Centre 1300 885 885

- Review person's risk of bed stick use if the person currently has a bed stick in place and has recently fallen or is at increased risk of falling / rolling from the bed
- If there is an anticipated risk of the person falling against / onto the bed stick during bed transfers, a round ended bed stick should be provided
- Use caution in prescribing a bed stick if the person has an existing upper limb pain/ injury
- Consider if the person's cognition or medication use impacts on their safe use of a bed stick
- The bed stick should typically be positioned close to the waist when the person is lying in bed, and not too close to the head/upper body
- Two styles of bed sticks pictured below are not recommended for use at all due to high risk of impalement:



Bed Stick Standard



Bed Stick Mambo

If a person being reviewed is using these styles of bed sticks consideration should be given to removal or replacement.

For non- adjustable beds:

- Do **NOT** tie or fix the bed stick to the bed (unless it has been designed for this purpose) as the mattress may still move/flip
- Ensure sufficient weight is placed upon the bed stick to limit its movement while the user is in bed and using the item for repositioning and/or transfers.

If mattress weight is not sufficient the bed stick may be **unstable**.

- Under mattress bed sticks are **NOT** suitable for water beds, beds with an elevating bed head or metal-based beds with springs
- Non-slip matting may be used to assist with keeping the bed stick in place, however consideration of weight on bed stick when in use.

For adjustable beds:

- **Only** use clamp on bed sticks with adjustable beds (moving parts within adjustable beds make slide in bed sticks unsafe for use)
- The clamp must be the **same size** for the bed frame so there is not movement in the bed stick

Installations Considerations

- Must be installed by supplier or your AT Practitioner
- Position bed stick at the side, near the waist of the person using it.
 - Ensure the bed stick is not too close to the bed head
- Adjust the bed stick position after trial with the person as required
- Consider marking the optimal position of the bed stick on the bed frame to ensure correct placement
- To minimise entrapment risk, ensure there is no gap between the vertical component(s) and mattress. Check that the bed stick and mattress cannot easily move and create a gap
- If using the clamp on variety on an adjustable bed, install by clamping firmly in position. The clamp size needs to be the same as the Bed frame tubing.
- Check that the bed stick is not bending when the person is using it

Person/Carer Instructions

- Demonstrate to the person how to turn over, get in and out of bed and sit up as appropriate
- Observe the person doing above
- Advise the person/carers that both the bed stick and the mattress may move and create a gap, posing a risk of trapping parts of the body and causing injury
- Instruct person/carers(s) to check the bed stick **DAILY** to ensure the bed stick has not moved out of position
- If the bed stick is a clamp on variety (for adjustable beds) instruct the person/carers to check that the clamp is still holding on a **DAILY** basis
- Instruct person/carers not to hang items (e.g. face washer, handkerchief etc.) on the bed stick

Review

Every 12 months (were practical) and more frequently if the person is heavy, transfers awkwardly, or if the following changes occur, e.g. if a person's:

- Condition deteriorates
- Cognition decreases
- Has a fall during bed transfers
- Has a fall / rolls out of bed
- Changes to medication are made, with significant side effects
- Communication ability decreases such that person can no longer make needs known
- An entrapment incident occurs
- Carer availability decreases

Check that:

- Item is still in place, in use and appropriate for the person
- The person can still demonstrate safe use of the item
- Bed stick has not bent and end cover of single point stick is in place
- If bed stick is a clamp on variety (for adjustable beds) check that clamp is functional and is secure
- Bed entrapment risk level assessed and an assessment of entrapment zones occurs as required
- Person/carers have been given information sheet "**Bed Stick Fact Sheet**"