

## EQUIPMENT GUIDE - COMMODES

### Background

- A commode is a portable toilet that does not use water. It may be used when a client has impaired mobility and cannot access a toilet or when client has urinary and/or fecal incontinence.
- WRHA Home Care rents commodes from Materials Distribution Agency (MDA).
- MDA has four styles of commodes available. MDA has a recycled pool of equipment so exact equipment may change over time therefore specifications listed below are general.

### WRHA Home Care Eligibility Criteria for Funding A Commode From MDA:

Commodes should not be used in lieu of purchasing bath seats, shower chairs, overarm toilet bars, grab bars and/or raised toilet seat. Commodes should only be provided if:

- Client cannot access bathroom as living environment is on a different floor than the bathroom and client has difficulty mobilizing on stairs or client cannot mobilize the distance required to the bathroom; OR
- Client cannot access bathroom as equipment will not fit in to the bathroom (i.e., walker, wheelchair, or mechanical lift); OR
- Client has urinary or fecal urgency/incontinence and is at risk for falls; OR
- Raised toilet seat, grab bars and/or overarm toilet bars do not meet client's needs for a safe transfer.

NOTE: One commode per client unless there are extenuating circumstances that require a second commode.

Stationary Commode SAP# 313052	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight capacity 350 lbs./159kgs</li> <li>• Armrests are not removable.</li> <li>• Seat height adjustable in 1"/2.54cms increments from 16 - 22" (40.6-55.9cms), no tools are required to adjust.</li> <li>• Seat width between arms is 18"/45.7cms with an overall width of 25"/63.5cms.</li> <li>• Legs angle out measuring 21.5"/54.6cms at level of seat and 25"/63.5cms at the bottom.</li> <li>• Seat depth is 15-17"/38-43cms most common is 16.5" /42cms</li> <li>• Hole: 8"/20.3cms wide and 9.5"/24.1cms deep.</li> <li>• Splash guard available.</li> <li>• Pail has two small handles.</li> </ul>	
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<p>Wheeled Commode SAP# 313051</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight capacity is 250 lbs/113kgs.</li> <li>• Arm rests drop down with pin-release knob.</li> <li>• Fixed seat height of 19 “/48.3cms. A seat height extension of 2”/5.1cms or 3”/7.6cms can be added.</li> <li>• Seat width of 18”/45.7cms with an overall total width of 22”/55.9cms.</li> <li>• Seat depth of 16”/40.6cms.</li> <li>• Hole: 8.5”/21.6cms wide and 9”/22.9cms deep</li> <li>• Detachable, swing away footrests.</li> <li>• Replacement pails are not available.</li> <li>• Looped handles on pail.</li> <li>• Has 4-wheel locks on casters except some older models only have two.</li> <li>• Note: The backrest frame on this commode can become loose – staff are instructed to check that the knobs are tightly secure before use.</li> </ul>	
<p>Bariatric Stationary Commode SAP# 313054</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight capacity of 750 lbs/344kgs</li> <li>• Armrests can lower to deck level with pushpins or be removed.</li> <li>• Seat height adjustable between 20”/50.8cms to 24”/61cms, in 1”/2.5cms increments; tools are required to make adjustments. If MDA is to adjust height, please specify height on script.</li> <li>• Seat width is 26”/66cms.</li> <li>• Seat depth is 20”/73.7cms</li> <li>• Hole: 9.5”/24.3cms wide and 14”/35.6cms deep</li> <li>• Commode weighs 37 lbs/17kgs.</li> <li>• Loop handles on pail.</li> </ul>	

<p>Heavy Duty Wheeled Commode SAP# 313050</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight capacity 450 lbs/204 kgs.</li> <li>• Drop down armrests with pin-release knob.</li> <li>• Seat height 19"/48.3cms</li> <li>• Seat width 20"/50.8cms is standard. A 22"/55.9cms seat width available but must be specified on order form. Overall width 24"/61cms with 20"/50.8cms seat. 26"/66cms with a 22"/55.9cms seat.</li> <li>• Seat Depth is 16"/40.6cms</li> <li>• Hole: 8"/20.3cms wide and 10"/25.4cms deep</li> <li>• Commode is open on sides to allow width adjustment therefore not full seat coverage.</li> <li>• Assistive Technology can make commode 24"/61cms wide.</li> <li>• Detachable swing away footrests.</li> <li>• Because of width adjustability upholstery can be loosened.</li> </ul>	
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## HOW TO CHOOSE A COMMODOE FOR YOUR CLIENT

All assessments for commodes should consider the following

- Purpose for commode e.g.: client cannot access the bathroom due to immobility; unable to do stairs; or urgent incontinence.
- Whether commode needs to be stationary or wheeled, e.g.: client is transferred by mechanical lift onto commode and it has been assessed as safe to use wheeled commode to move client over top of toilet.
- Type of floor surface e.g.: carpet, hardwood, vinyl, threshold(s) between rooms.
- Location that commode will be used in the home and whether there is adequate space requirements for transfers.
- Transfer method used e.g.: consider type of armrests used if client is using a sliding board to transfer.
- Commode seat height required for safe transfers.
- Client/caregiver/staff available to empty, clean and replace pail; individual's ability to complete safely. At times a wheeled commode may be ordered to allow easy access to the pail or eliminate need for pail if moved over toilet.
- A wheeled commode is not intended to be used as a wheelchair and using it in this manner may result in a client injury. Depending on the client's weight, the space, and floor surfaces it may be assessed as suitable to move the client a short distance e.g. into the bathroom. Footrests must be used when moving a client on a wheeled



commode. However, footrests can also be a fall hazard with transfers for some clients.

- A tilt commode may be required for some clients; client/family is responsible to purchase this type of commode if required.

## GENERAL TIPS

- Minor modifications can be done to commodes (e.g.: changing the height of the commode or padding the seat). Some modifications are commercially available and others are custom through WRHA Assistive Technology Products & Service; an Occupational Therapy consult is required for Assistive Technology.  
<http://home.wrha.mb.ca/prog/csis/files/forms/rehabengindepHSC.pdf>.  
Commercially available products such as a padded seat for certain commodes can be purchased from a vendor. Client / Family Handouts | WRHA Insite
- Commodes are not intended to be used in showers and will rust. WRHA is not responsible for any damage incurred from use of the commode in the shower. Clients should be advised to purchase an appropriate bath seat/bench/wheeled shower-commode chair.
- A referral to Occupational Therapy may be indicated when considering transfer methods, recommended toileting equipment (e.g.: raised toilet seat, grab bars etc. versus a commode), suitability for home environment, modification requirements, safety etc.
- Link to MDA website on care of wheeled commode (SAP 313051)  
[https://mda.gov.mb.ca/pdf/equipment/artisan\\_commode.pdf](https://mda.gov.mb.ca/pdf/equipment/artisan_commode.pdf)

