



FUNDING TOOLKIT

Support for Clinical Documentation
and Insurance Coverage

Documentation and Language to Support the Medical Need for LUCI

Given LUCI's unique position in the healthcare landscape, we know that the justification for insurance coverage and medical necessity is uncharted territory. The following pages have been developed for support as you navigate the process of acquiring funding for LUCI.

The extent and content of both materials and language to support the need for LUCI varies case-by-case for each individual end-user. The justification must explain how the end-user would be more efficient, safer, functional, and/or independent with the use of LUCI. It is also important to include the consequences of NOT receiving this technology to the end-user, such as continued safety risk. Since LUCI is new and this type of technology did not exist until now, justification should also include an introduction to this technology and its benefits. Your documentation should be specific to the individual wheelchair driver and their normal day. Include activities of daily living (ADLs) and how LUCI will impact completion of these ADLs. Document what additional independence LUCI provides to the wheelchair driver. Keep in mind, insurance reviewers do not know the individual wheelchair driver. It is important to paint a picture of the end-user so that their needs – and the benefits of LUCI – are clear.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION

The following information may be helpful for clinicians writing a letter of medical necessity to successfully obtain funding approval. Any clinical documentation should include a description of the technology as well as the justification for why it is medically necessary for a specific power wheelchair driver. All documentation needs to be individualized to the specific end-user and should be supported within other clinical notes.

- » A power wheelchair is used to provide functional mobility. LUCI is a system that can be retrofitted to a current or new power wheelchair for the purpose of increasing safety and efficiency in driving for the end-user who has motor, sensory, and/or cognitive limitations.
- » LUCI will compensate for various limitations (i.e. motor, visual, and/or cognitive) with collision avoidance, tip alerts and drop-off protection. LUCI will increase driving safety by preventing collisions with people or environmental obstacles which will reduce environmental damage and potential injury to the driver or others, will alert the driver that the wheelchair is at an angle which could lead to tipping; and will prevent movement of the wheelchair over a drop-off, such as a curb.
- » In addition to safety, LUCI may increase driving efficiency. Using less effort and/or time to complete a driving task can conserve energy and prolong the time and distance a wheelchair user can drive throughout the day.
- » The end-user can drive a power wheelchair even with low vision or visual perceptual limitations. However, driving efficiency and safety may be compromised. LUCI will compensate for visual acuity and perceptual limitations through its collision avoidance, tip alerts, and drop-off protection. LUCI will allow this end-user to be independent vs. being dependent on a caregiver to push them in a manual wheelchair.
- » A power wheelchair driver with cognitive limitations can drive competently but is more prone to distraction and may not fully comprehend the consequences of collision to themselves, others, and the environment. LUCI will compensate for cognitive limitations through its collision avoidance, tip alerts, and drop-off protection.

Additional examples of how LUCI would benefit a power wheelchair driver include:

- » Collision avoidance with walls and other objects, protecting the environment from damage and the driver from injury to the feet, ankles and knees, and the stress and fear that come with those potential injuries.
- » Easy navigation through a doorway, without contact with the doorframe.
- » Safe navigation on a ramp to and from a home entrance.
- » Safe navigation on a ramp in and out of an accessible vehicle.
- » Movement through a crowded hallway or community venue, with automatic speed responses to change in walking speed of the people around the power wheelchair.
- » Drop-off protection to prevent the wheelchair from going off a curb and tipping, which could lead to driver injury and equipment damage.
- » Detection of inclines (tipping dangers) to alert the wheelchair driver that continuing may cause tipping, such as moving sideways on a steep slope.
- » Compensation for visual limitations, including for drivers who cannot see certain obstacles (such as an item on the floor) or accurately gauge distances.
- » Reassurance for driver and caregiver that driving will be a safe and successful experience.

HOW TO EXPLAIN LUCI TO FUNDING SOURCES

LUCI is a system which is added to a power wheelchair to make driving better, safer, and smarter. Using a combination of sophisticated sensors, LUCI prevents the driver from colliding with obstacles, including walls and people (collision avoidance).

The wheelchair end-user is still able to continue driving, however movement toward an obstacle will automatically slow and then stop while allowing movement in another direction. LUCI can also detect and prevent drop-offs, such as a curb (drop-off protection). If the driver moves onto a slope that could lead to the wheelchair tipping over an alert is sounded (tip alert). Alerts can also be sent to caregivers, including low battery, collision avoidance, location of the driver and stability warnings. LUCI collects data which can be analyzed by the seating and wheeled mobility team.

LUCI provides safe and functional driving for people who are not driving to their potential or have been unable to successfully use a power wheelchair due to motor, cognitive, and/or visual limitations.

LUCI's Insurance Coverage

Being a new technology in the mobility world, the question of whether LUCI is covered by insurance or not is a difficult one to answer. At this point, there is no direct coverage policy by any insurer. This simply means each case will have to be individually reviewed. Some insurers will provide a prior authorization for LUCI. In these cases, clinicians will provide the required clinical documentation. The key will be for the ordering clinician to clearly justify why the end-user medically needs LUCI – specifically, how LUCI increases function, safety, and independence in a power wheelchair.

For LUCI to be reimbursed, an insurance claim must be filed. If the patient chooses to forgo insurance and private pay, an Advance Beneficiary Notice (ABN) must be completed by the patient for Medicare and other insurers prior to receiving LUCI.

Patients' preference to pay out-of-pocket for LUCI depends heavily on their circumstances. For Medicare and some other insurers, they may have the option to pay out-of-pocket. In these cases, a claim can still be filed with the insurance company (called a “non-assigned” claim), and any reimbursement will go directly to the beneficiary. For end-users with Medicaid or other plans, it may not be as easy, if allowed at all, as claims can only be filed as “assigned” – meaning payment cannot be collected up-front.

The team at LUCI is starting to work with insurers and clinicians to educate them on what LUCI is, how it functions and, most importantly, the clinical benefits this technology provides to its users. This process takes time. If needed, we are happy to work with you during the appeal process.

CODE, CLAIM AND BILLING INFORMATION

The HCPC's codes available are extremely limited, therefore Code K0108 – Wheelchair Component or Accessory, Not Otherwise Specified – is the most appropriate code to-date. The miscellaneous code is recommended for billing this new technology, as LUCI does not readily fit into any other available code.

The key clinical items required to file a claim requesting coverage and payment of LUCI include a “practitioner's” prescription (MD, DO, NP, PA) and thorough documentation supporting the medical need for the specific individual. This additional documentation would come from a clinician experienced in complex rehab technology and powered mobility.

IF COVERAGE FOR LUCI IS DENIED

We are here to help.

Contact us and we will work with you and your funding source to the best of our abilities. This is new and uncharted territory for everyone, but we will be fully supportive in assisting you with “the fight” to have LUCI covered when appropriately justified.