

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Product Recognition Program

Report of the review of the FreedomWand®



Available online at www.caot.ca/prp



Report last updated April 2017

Disclaimers

The information compiled in this report was designed for informational purposes and to communicate the final conclusions of a documented review process. The decision to award a seal of recognition does not supersede or replace other codes, requirements or regulations set by authoritative organizations of a specific jurisdiction. CAOT encourages health professionals to act in a responsible manner and according to best practices for the recommendation, assessment, installation and maintenance of this product. It is critical to follow the recommendations set by the manufacturer and/or distributor of this product and, when relevant, engage domain expert for training, use, installation, maintenance and repair.

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Specific questions related to this product(s) (including usage, availability, pricing, etc.) should be addressed directly to the manufacturer and/or distributor. Please visit www.freedomwand.com or call 616-931-0886. Concerns or questions related to the content of this report should be addressed to Julie Lapointe, Director of Knowledge Translation Programs, at jlapointe@caot.ca or at 1(800) 434-2268 ext. 260

The conclusions presented in the current report are derived from the best information available. In the case that new information becomes available and grants a modification to the conclusions, CAOT reserves the right to update and issue a new report of this product at any time.

Acknowledgement

The generation of this report would not have been possible without the contribution of occupational therapists and members of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT).



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Executive Summary

The FreedomWand® is a toileting aid that holds toilet tissue, a shaver, a loofah and an ointment sponge. There may be stigma associated with using an assistive device for managing toileting activities. However, certain features of this device will help minimize this concern. Specifically, the FreedomWand®'s compact size and the possibility to be stored and carried in a small bag makes it more discrete than many other products intended for this use. Reviewers were unanimous in their decision to recommend that the FreedomWand® be accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program. Information regarding the performance of the product as well as recommendations on its usage are provided in this report.



The FreedomWand® is recognized by CAOT.



Extra extensions can be added to make it longer if needed.



The strap can be added to the handle for extra leverage when gripping or dropping the FreedomWand is an issue.



Review report

The purpose of this product

The FreedomWand® is a toileting aid that holds toilet tissue, a shaver, a loofah and an ointment sponge. Its length can be set at 7, 14 or 21 inches. This product is intended to support independence in performing personal care. It can hold other small items such as a piece of tissue as long as they can be inserted securely in the device's head.

Performance of the product (efficacy, usability, safety, reliability, durability)

- This product has multiple uses and can hold various interchangeable accessories required to manage the toilet tissue, a shaver, a loofah and an ointment sponge.
- This product comes in three pieces (handle, extension and head) and with a bag so it can be disassembled for discretely storing or carrying outside the home. The product is small enough to fit inside a purse or bag.
- Users still need to be able to manipulate the product, comprehend and execute several steps for the setup of the personal hygiene aid. A certain amount of dexterity and strength is required to assemble the product and operate the slide button for the gripper.
- The contrasting colors on the handle help to identify the button and gripper as well as to line up the pieces for assembly.
- Helpful and specific instructions are provided by the manufacturer on correct use with different items such as toilet paper or a loofah to decrease any risk of injury, such as the risk of injury to skin integrity if the grippers are not adequately covered during personal care.
- The photos on the instructions are easy to follow, but could be larger. An instructional DVD is included as well as links to online information and videos.
- In terms of maintenance and monitoring, the FreedomWand® requires cleaning after each use and monitoring of the gripper pieces for any wear.
- The FreedomWand® has been found to be robust and well made. The greatest risk for damage occurs when the FreedomWand® is dropped as the head's plastic grips could break. As such, it is recommended that these be retracted whenever not in use. The company does provide a replacement option in case of breakage.
- One reviewer suggested that providing more options for the adjustment of the angle of the head would be an improvement.
- A strong benefit to this product is that it has multiple uses for people that have difficulty reaching. This product allows people to have one base which they can use many low-cost, easy to access items for hygiene- ointment sponge, razors, loofah and toilet paper. This decreases the need to purchase additional long-handled items as well as the amount of storage required.
- The most useful features of the FreedomWand® are the compatibility with standard shavers and ointment sponges. It could be challenging for someone with limited mobility to adapt toilet paper and a loofah for use with the FreedomWand®. The toilet paper with the elastic around it and the FreedomWand® loofah (which can both be purchased from the company) were easier to use than trying to do it yourself.



Important recommendations

- Professionals and clients should be aware of the return policy and options before purchasing the FreedomWand as not all distributors will take the product back due to hygienic reasons.
- Freedom Creators Inc., the manufacturer, may offer more options in terms of return policies and warranties.

Please contact Customer Service for more information at 1 (866) 931-0886

Economic considerations (value for money, retail and customer service)

Reviewers determined that the FreedomWand® is of reasonable price and a good value for money given its multiple uses. However its cost may be prohibitive for some clients as these products are not typically covered by equipment funding programs.

Scientific evidence

No scientific publications were found specifically related to the use of toileting aids. In a knowledge transfer article, Harman and Craigie (2011) identified that toileting aids can preserve the dignity of those who may otherwise have to rely on others to assist them with toileting.

Review committee

The three reviewers cumulated extensive experience in serving clients with chronic and progressive conditions requiring the recommendations of cost-effective devices to support engagement in activities of daily living. One reviewer is specialized in working with people with obesity and is involved in training of practitioners.



Final recommendation

There may be stigma associated with using an assistive device for managing toileting activities. However, certain features of this device will help minimize this concern. Specifically, the FreedomWand®'s compact size, ability to be easily disassembled and reassembled, and ability to be stored in a small bag help to make it more discrete than many other products intended for this use. This product could be recommended by occupational therapists to clients experiencing physical limitations in performing their self-care activities. It can also be used as part of an activity of daily living (ADL) re-training program. Through the support of autonomy, using the FreedomWand® can also decrease the demands on caregivers.

Reference

Harman, D., & Craigie, S. (2011). *Gerotechnology series: Toileting aids. European Geriatric Medicine*, 2(5), 314-318.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.eurger.2011.01.017>