

# **THE MANUAL WHEELCHAIR TILT-REST SKILL: A SURVEY OF AWARENESS, CAPACITY AND PERFORMANCE AMONG EXPERIENCED WHEELCHAIR USERS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The tilt-rest skill is achieved by tipping an occupied manual wheelchair back and leaning it against a solid object with the wheel locks on. The benefits of this skill include buttock pressure reduction, having the hands free (e.g. for reading or writing) and allowing a comfortable neutral neck position when interacting with a standing person. However, there is very little published research on this skill. The objectives of this descriptive study were to assess awareness of the skill among experienced wheelchair users, skill capacity (*can* do) and skill performance (*does* do). Each participant was asked about his/her awareness of the tilt-rest skill, his/her capacity to perform the skill (by self-report and demonstration) and whether he/she used it on a regular basis (performance). Of 16 surveys completed, 8 (50%) participants were aware of the skill, 3 (19%) could demonstrate the skill and 1 (7%) reported using it on a regular basis. An insufficient proportion of manual wheelchair users are aware of this skill and only a small minority of them can demonstrate the skill or report using it on a regular basis. These findings have implications for wheelchair skills training.