

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Product Recognition Program

Parsons M-Rail



Available online at www.caot.ca/prp





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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.parsonsadl.com. 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).





Executive Summary

The *Parsons M-Rail* is an adjustable bedside handrail that fits snugly against the mattress and helps individuals to get comfortable, reposition, sit up, balance, stand or transfer to a chair or wheelchair. Reviewers were unanimous in recommending that the M-Rail be accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program. Information and recommendations regarding the performance and usage of the product are provided in this report.



Parsons M-Rail is recognized by CAOT.

Review report

The purpose of this product

The Parsons *M-Rail* is an adjustable bedside handrail that fits snugly against the mattress and helps individuals to get comfortable, reposition, sit up, balance, stand or transfer to a chair or wheelchair. The *M-Rail*, which fits twin to king sized mattresses, as well as standard or pillow top mattresses, is adjustable in height to adapt to varying needs of different users.

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

- The *M-Rail* works well to assist people to roll over in bed and get in and out of bed.
- The bar offers 2 or 3 different socket heights, which can compensate for the thickness of the mattress. Thanks to its “M” shape and the presence of space bars, this equipment offers several sockets in terms of height and angle (vertical, horizontal). It may not be as effective for all mattress heights (i.e. maximum height of the handle is 20” so for a mattress more than 15” thick it would not be as functional).
- The product’s contoured hand grip can allow for different hand positions. The grip itself is a good size and the foam covering is comfortable and non-slip, and remains in place well.
- On the box, there are pictures of a person using the bar in different positions, which helps individuals to understand how to use the bar. The instructions included diagrams and short sentences, and were generally easy to follow.
- The design is well thought out for installing the product. However, this product requires significant physical effort to install (push buttons were very stiff, wrapping the straps around the box spring may be a challenge). The installation may also require two people, as the top mattress needs to be lifted up to put the strap underneath, and someone will need to bend on the floor to grab the strap to attach to the front of the product.
- Placement of the bar needs to be decided on before the final step of fastening the straps, otherwise this step has to be undone and redone. Once installed, no further adjustment is required. The manufacturer recommends daily monitoring to ensure mattress is tight against the *M-Rail*.
 - The manufacturer addresses this adequately in instructions (several times) as well as on the rail itself in clearly visible (red) writing.
 - There may be a temptation by the purchaser to install without the straps – however this is warned against in the instructions. Without the use of the straps there is a risk of the handle moving and a risk of trapping the person lying down.
- The weight capacity is 300 lb (136 kg). The manufacturer also states inappropriate uses (hospital or therapy beds with moving parts) and that the *M-Rail* is not designed to support a person’s entire weight.
- The product is durable and has a powder coated metal finish, metal clips rather than plastic, and a closed cell foam hand grip. The parts fit securely (no shaking).



Important recommendations

As indicated in the manufacturer warnings, the *M-Rail* is not designed to support a person's entire weight. It is further stated on the manufacturer's information sheet that this equipment is not designed for "people who are permanently bedridden". This is an important safety consideration when recommending this product to clients, and may restrict its use to the target clientele.

Consumers and caregivers are invited to read the safety recommendations related to bed rails issued in 2017 by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA, 2017).

Economic considerations

All reviewers felt that the *M-Rail* was good value for money. Reviewers reported that this product is commonly available through several local vendors, and if they do not have the product in stock, it is possible to order the product online or by telephone. For questions, consumers are encouraged (on packaging and in instruction sheet) to contact the company through email or their website. The product box contains information about the product's one-year warranty.

Scientific evidence

According to Healy, Oliver, Milne and Connelly (2008), the role of bed rails in falls prevention is controversial, with many believing that bed rails may be harmful and ineffective while others support their use. However, their review concluded that serious direct injury from the use of bed rails is related to use of outdated designs and incorrect assembly rather than the use of bed rails themselves, and bed rails do not appear to increase the risk of falls or injury from falls (Healy et al., 2008).

A literature review completed by Moore, Ryan and Rhead (2015) indicated that patients with bed rails appear less likely to fall and less likely to be seriously injured if they do fall. The authors emphasize that the decision to use bed rails must be based on an accurate, detailed, comprehensive and individualistic assessment of an individual's care needs and preferences, which must always be determined collaboratively with the individual and/or significant others (Moore et al., 2015).

Review committee

The *M-Rail* was reviewed by 3 occupational therapists with diverse backgrounds, expertise and experience. The first reviewer has 19 years of experience as an occupational therapist, working with geriatric, stroke, and Parkinson's populations, both in inpatient rehabilitation and community rehabilitation settings. Throughout her practice, she has trained clients with the use of many assistive devices for basic ADLs, as well as IADLs. She also has experience teaching a course related to occupational therapy and older adults in a university program. The second reviewer is an occupational therapist who has worked in the field for over 25 years. She currently is a sole charge occupational therapist in a small town, who works with people of all ages, with various diagnoses and in various settings. The third reviewer has also cumulated more than 25 years of practice, in the private practice sector specifically. Her clientele regularly requires home adaptations and modifications in order to maintain their participation in daily occupations.



Final recommendation

Reviewers were unanimous in recommending that the Parsons M-Rail be accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program. This product could be recommended by occupational therapists for clients who need assistance to facilitate transfers and changes in bed positions. This device could be recommended in acute, rehab or community settings, although being able to assess the client's actual bed prior to recommendation may be beneficial in order to determine if the rail will be the appropriate height.

References

- Healey, F., Oliver, D., Milne, A., & Connelly, J. B. (2008). The effect of bedrails on falls and injury: a systematic review of clinical studies. *Age and ageing*, 37(4), 368-378.
- Moore, K. Ryan, A. & Rhead, G. (2015). *A review of the literature on restraints and the use of bedrails*. Retrieved from http://uir.ulster.ac.uk/32105/2/Literature_Review_Report_on_Bed_Rails_July_2015__FINAL.pdf
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). (2017). *Recommendations for Consumers and Caregivers about Bed Rails*. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/HomeHealthandConsumer/ConsumerProducts/BedRailSafety/ucm362843.htm>