

# Disability Accommodations

Accommodations, EPIC documentation, and  
other resources

June  
2026

# ADA and Northwestern Medicine

## Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

A federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability including employment, **state and local government services**, public transit, businesses, and telecommunications.

Health care organizations must provide full and equal access for people with disabilities through:

Reasonable Modifications

Service Animals

Effective Communication

Accessible Facilities

[ADA.gov](http://ADA.gov)

## Non-Discrimination

“Northwestern Medicine is a community of caregivers who welcome, respect and serve all people without regard to age, race, color, national origin, religion, culture, language, **physical or mental disability**, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identify or expression, and military or veteran status. Our commitment to inclusive care extends to patients and companions who have disabilities, and we will provide reasonable accommodations and accessible care at no cost to you for those who benefit from these aids and services.”

Retrieved from NM Patient Relations

**Mission:** “Northwestern Medicine is a premier integrated academic health system where the patient comes first”

## Values:

Patients First

Integrity

Teamwork

Excellence

# How to go about asking patients of needs ?

Do not be afraid to ask! Sometimes patients may have difficulty advocating for themselves or are unaware that accommodations are available to them.

## Prompting Questions

Examples:

How should we best communicate (provide examples if needed)?

How would you like to receive new information (read out loud, PDF copy, electronic version, etc.)?

Do you need any assistance to do your daily activities at home or have certain things become more difficult for you?

## Communicating observation noted and asking if assistance is needed

Example:

I noticed that you are having a hard time reading the paperwork... do you have glasses that I can bring to you? Would you like the paper work in a larger font? We have magnifiers, do you think that would be helpful?

Quick Reference(s): [Disability Accommodations Tips](#) and [How to Offer Help Guide](#)

# Disability Accommodations available to patients at NM

## Accessible Medical Equipment



Adjustable Exam Tables  
OR  
Hospital Beds



Accessible Weight  
Scales



Bariatric Equipment



Lift or Other Transfer  
Aids



Facility Wheelchair

## Bringing Personal Items or Assistance and other supports



Bringing Personal  
Caregiver \*



Personal Wheelchair



Service Animal



Sip N Puff Call light



Light Touch  
Call Light



Magnifiers



TTY or TDD Phone



Adult Changing Area

\*personal caregiver is someone who remains with patient at all times  
(different from visitor/family)

## Accessible written materials



Written Materials in  
Braille



PDF



Large Print Font



Tactile Signature Guides



Plain Language



Sound or Voice Amplifier



Communication Boards



Clear Masks for Lip  
Reading



Notetaking and Reading  
Written Materials



Assistance with Written  
Forms and Patient  
Kiosks



Human Guide for Room  
Orientation and Facility  
Navigation



CART  
(e.g. captioning used  
through Microsoft  
teams)



ASL  
In person sign language  
interpreter or Video  
Remote Interpreter (VRI)



Providing simple  
explanations through  
conversation or written  
communication and  
allowing additional time to  
respond to questions



Assistance with  
transferring, positioning,  
and procedural support



Assistance with Activities  
of Daily Living (e.g.  
changing clothes or  
toileting)



Assistance with  
wheelchair mobility  
after receiving  
permission

# NMH Unit Specific Accommodations

All other accommodation can also be used- this is specific to availability on unit

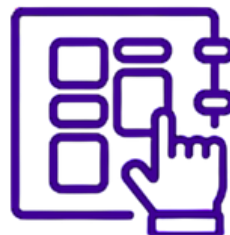
Clear Face Mask



Magnifier



Communication Board



Soft Touch Call Light



Sip&Puff Call Light



Dry Erase Board



Large Text Print

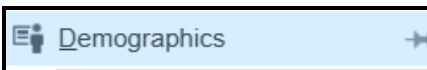


Audio Amplifier

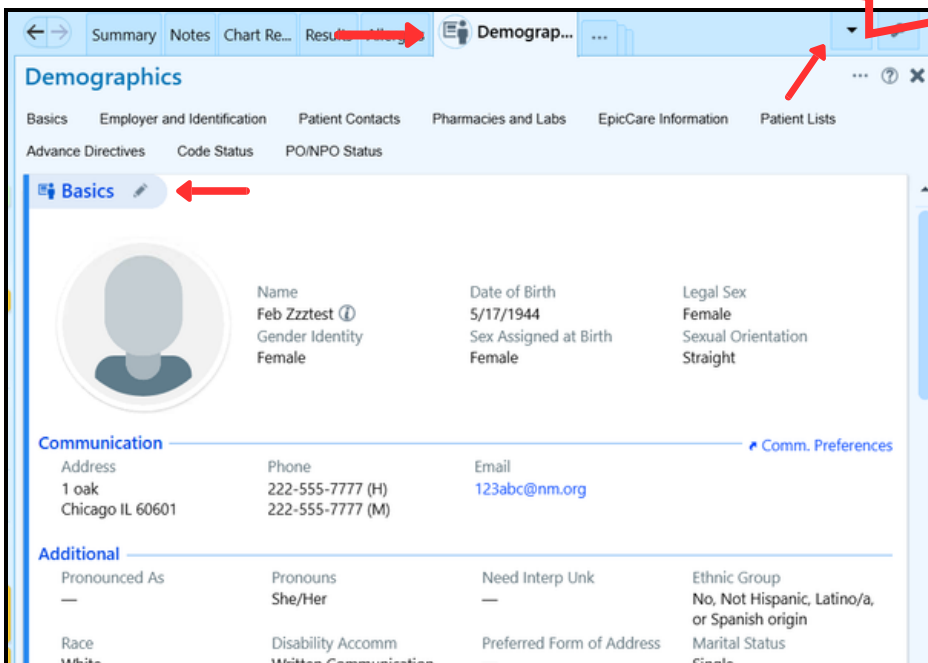
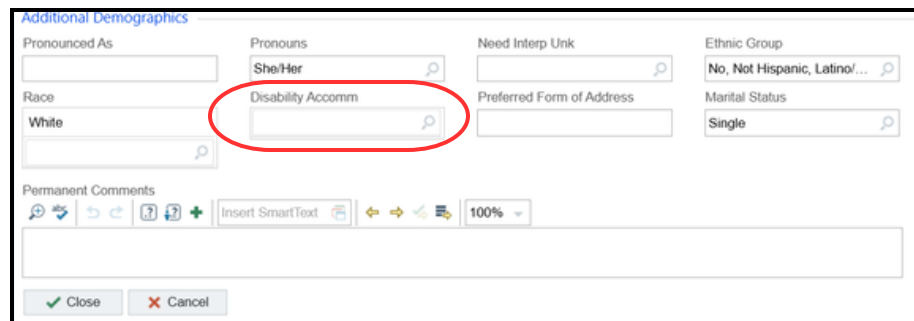


# How to document accommodation usage on Epic

**Step 1:** open the demographics tab

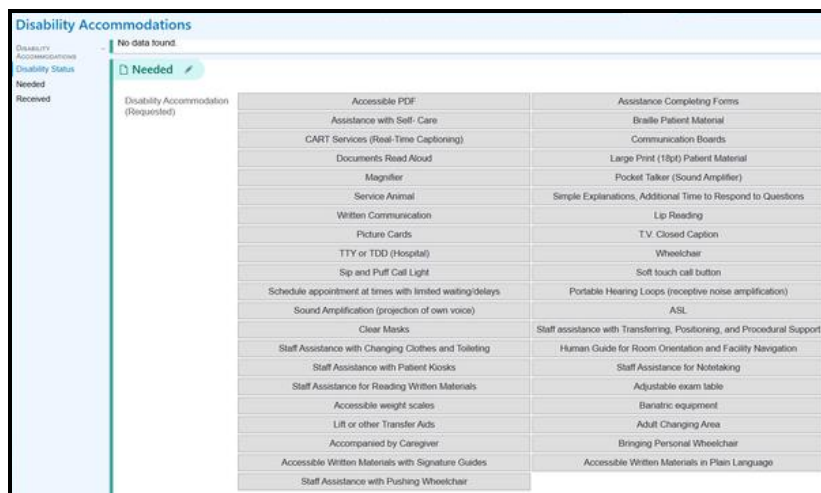


**Step 2:** In the basics tab, under Additional Demographics - go to Disability Accommodations

A screenshot of the Epic Demographics Basics tab. The 'Basics' sub-tab is selected. The 'Additional' section is expanded, showing 'Disability Accommodation' as 'Written Communication'. A red arrow points to the 'Basics' sub-tab.A screenshot of the 'Additional Demographics' form. The 'Disability Accommodation' field is highlighted with a red circle. The form includes fields for Pronounced As, Pronouns, Need Interpretation, Ethnic Group, Race, and Marital Status.

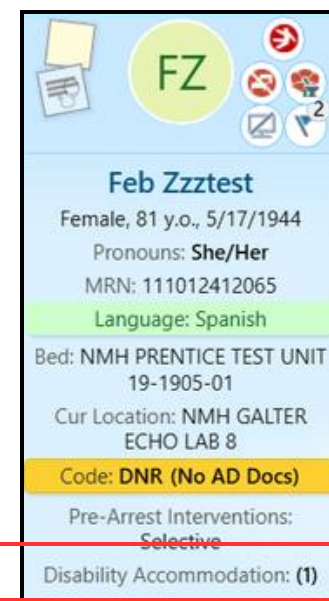
**Step 3:**

Select Accommodations needed for your patient

A screenshot of the 'Disability Accommodations' table. The table lists various accommodations under the 'Disability Accommodation (Requested)' column. The 'Disability Status' is set to 'Needed'. The table includes a list of accommodations such as 'Accessible PDF', 'Assistance Completing Forms', 'Assistance with Self-Care', 'Braille Patient Material', 'CART Services (Real-Time Captioning)', 'Communication Boards', 'Documents Read Aloud', 'Large Print (18pt) Patient Material', 'Magnifier', 'Pocket Talker (Sound Amplifier)', 'Service Animal', 'Simple Explanations, Additional Time to Respond to Questions', 'Written Communication', 'Lip Reading', 'Picture Cards', 'T.V. Closed Caption', 'TTY or TDD (Hospital)', 'Wheelchair', 'Sip and Puff Call Light', 'Soft touch call button', 'Schedule appointment at times with limited waiting/delays', 'Portable Hearing Loops (receptive noise amplification)', 'Sound Amplification (projection of own voice)', 'ASL', 'Clear Masks', 'Staff assistance with Transferring, Positioning, and Procedural Support', 'Staff Assistance with Changing Clothes and Toileting', 'Human Guide for Room Orientation and Facility Navigation', 'Staff Assistance with Patient Kiosks', 'Staff Assistance for Notetaking', 'Staff Assistance for Reading Written Materials', 'Adjustable exam table', 'Accessible weight scales', 'Bariatric equipment', 'Lift or other Transfer Aids', 'Adult Changing Area', 'Accompanied by Caregiver', 'Bringing Personal Wheelchair', 'Accessible Written Materials with Signature Guides', and 'Staff Assistance with Pushing Wheelchair'.

**Step 4:**

Confirm Disability Accommodation is visible under demographic information

A screenshot of the Epic Patient Summary card for 'Feb Zzztest'. The card displays patient information including Name, Date of Birth, Pronouns, MRN, Language, Bed, Cur Location, Code, Pre-Arrest Interventions, and Disability Accommodation. The 'Disability Accommodation' field is highlighted with a red circle and contains the value '(1)'. A red arrow points from the text 'Confirm Disability Accommodation is visible under demographic information' to this field.

# Other helpful documentation areas

Disability Status- questions patient can answer via MyNM Chart or in person during admission

**Disability Status**

Due to a disability, do you need any additional assistance or accommodations during your visit?

☐ Yes, I need additional assistance or accommodation. ☐ No, I don't have a disability, or I don't need additional assistance or accommodation.

☐ I am not sure if I have a disability or if I need additional assistance or accommodation. ☐ I don't wish to answer.

Are you deaf, or do you have serious difficulty hearing?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you blind, or do you have serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Do you have difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a physician's office or shopping?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Using your usual language, do you have difficulty communicating, understanding, or being understood?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

I am still not sure if I have a disability or if I need additional assistance or accommodation.

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

[Create Note](#)

[Restore](#) [Close](#) [Cancel](#)

Patient has received the accommodation(s)?  
Document it!

**Disability Accommodations**

**Disability Status**

**Received**

Time taken: 4/21/2026 0824 [Responsible](#) [Create Note](#) [Macro Manager](#) ☐ Show Row Info ☐ Show Last Filed Value ☐ Show Details ☐ Show All Choices

**Disability Accommodations Received**

Patient Disability Accommodations (Received)

☐ Accessible PDF ☐ Accessible Weight Scales ☐ Accompanied by Caregiver ☐ Adjustable Exam Table ☐ Adult Changing Area ☐ ASL

☐ Assistance Completing Forms ☐ Bariatric Equipment ☐ Braille Patient Material ☐ Bringing Personal Wheelchair ☐ CART Services (Real-time captioning)

☐ Clear Masks ☐ Communication Boards ☐ Documents Read Aloud ☐ Human Guide for Room Orientation and Facility Navigation

☐ Large Print (18 pt.) Patient Material ☐ Lift or Other Transfer Aids ☐ Light Touch Call Light ☐ Lip Read ☐ Magnifier ☐ PDF ☐ Picture Cards

☐ Plain Language ☐ Pocket Talker (Sound Amplifier) ☐ Service Animal ☐ Signature Guides ☐ Simple Explanations, Additional Time to Respond to Questions

☐ Sip and Puff Call Light ☐ Staff Assistance with Changing Clothes and Toileting ☐ Staff Assistance for Notetaking ☐ Staff Assistance with Patient Kiosks

☐ Staff Assistance with Pushing Wheelchair ☐ Staff Assistance for Reading Written materials

☐ Staff Assistance with Transferring, Positioning, and Procedural Support ☐ Staff Assistance with Written Forms ☐ T.V. Closed Caption ☐ TTY or TDD (Hospital)

☐ Voice Amplifier ☐ Written Communication ☐ Wheelchair

[Create Note](#)

[Restore](#) [Close](#) [Cancel](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#)

Patient Lists Edit List Remove Patient Add Patient Open Chart Patient Report PT Scheduling OT Scheduling SLP Scheduling Doc Flowsheets Sign In Sign Out

- My Lists
- Noemi's list
    - All My Patients
    - My Login Department
  - Shared Patient Lists
    - Cardiac OT Shared
    - Disability Accommodations
    - Med 1 OT Shared

Noemi's list: 1 Patient Refreshed 6 minutes ago Search All Admitted P...

| Room | Patient                | New OT Order | OT Eval Order Date       | OT Date Received on | OT Comment | PT Comment | Assigned OT            | Assigned PT | Therapy d/c recommend | Interdepartmental Message | RN Assigned | OT Needs to be seen? | Recommended OT Frequency | IP OT Day Rolling Week Established | IP OT Sessions in rolling period | Dept Spec Com  |
|------|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1905 | Zzztest, Feb 81 y.o. F | —            | 12/18/2025 8:55 AM, 1/28 | 04/08/26            | 3/24       | 7/28       | Corpuk, Katelyn, OTR/L | —           | Home with assistance  | —                         | —           | No                   | 3-5x/wk                  | Thursday 4/2/2026                  | —                                | Pr... use R... |

[Review](#) [Flowsheets](#) [Notes](#)

- Available Lists
- Recent Searches
  - Provider Groups
  - Central DuPage Hospital
  - Delnor Hospital
  - Grayslake
  - Huntley Hospital
  - Kishwaukee Hospital
  - Lake Forest Hospital
  - Marianjoy Rehabilitation--
  - McHenry Hospital

Zzztest, Feb DOB: 5/17/1944 Unit: 19 TEST P Room: 1905 Bed: 01

[PT/OT Orders](#) [Therapy OT Overview](#) [Snapshot](#) [Snapshot - Nurse with Ancillary Consults](#)

PT/OT Orders

Zzztest, Feb #111012412065 (CSN:200050488492) (81 y.o. F) (Adm: 09/07/19) 19 TEST P-1905-01

[PT Orders to Be Acknowledged](#) (From admission, onward) [Comment](#)

# Where to locate resources

**Accommodations Available**

Accommodations are modifications that enable our patients to perform tasks, access services, and participate in activities that might otherwise be difficult

|                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>Use:</b> For patients who are hard of hearing and benefit from lip reading</p> <p><b>How to locate:</b> Contact unit leadership or visit your centralized accommodation storage on unit</p> <p><b>To reorder:</b> NM marketplace #390561</p> <p><b>Additional tips:</b> For urgent needs, contact interpretations services</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | <p><b>Use:</b> For patients with hearing impairments. It amplifies sounds closest to the listener while reducing background noise.</p> <p><b>How to locate:</b> contact nursing leadership or visit your centralized accommodations storage on unit</p> <p><b>For reordering:</b> NM Market place item #309649</p> <p><b>Additional tips:</b> For urgent needs, contact interpretation services. Also referred to as a "pocket talker." Utilize new earbud coverings with each use.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|  | <p><b>Use:</b> For patients with limited manual dexterity</p> <p><b>How to locate:</b> Sentact</p> <p><b>Set up</b></p> <p>Device will come up on an IV pole and bedside staff responsible for setting up device</p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> Plug in electric cord to head wall</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Disconnect nurse call light remote and connect sip and puff device to the call-light cord</p> <p><b>Return</b></p> <p>When the patient is discharged, bedside staff is responsible for removing from room, place IV pole/device in soiled utility room</p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> Disconnect disposable tubing and dispose of it in garbage</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Disconnect Sip Puff device from call-light cord and re-connect nurse call light remote to call-light cord</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> IV pole with mounted items placed in the soiled utility room. Supply chain to come and pick up IV pole</p> <p>*If patient is transferred to another unit, send with the patient to new unit</p> |

## When to use, how to locate, set up, additional tips

- You can refer to \_\_\_\_\_ or your unit leadership for tips on ordering, locating, and familiarizing yourself in utilizing accommodations.

## NM Interactive

Departments → NMHC Departments → Diversity and Inclusion\*  
→ Resources and Training → Disability Accommodations

Resources Departments Policies & Procedures System Links Team Sites

Diversity and Inclusion NM Champion Network

Diversity & Inclusio... NM Champion Network Resources & Training Inclusive Patient Care Bias & Discrimination Reporting

### Disability Accommodations

#### Accommodations

- [Accessible Kits and Equipment Ordering Guide](#)
  - To replenish or replace accommodation kit items or accessible equipment
- [Autism Spectrum Disorder Tip Sheet](#)
- [Clear Mask Tip Sheet](#)
- [Disability Accommodation Guide](#)
  - Detailed accommodation descriptions
- [Disability Accommodation Items and Accessible Equipment Inventory Checklist](#)
- [Disability Accommodation Tips](#)
  - Printable one pager with commonly requested accommodations, behavior and etiquette tips
- [Disability Discussion Guide](#)
  - Refresher guide with scenarios for how to accommodate patients and companions
- [Documenting Disability Accommodations](#)
- [Reasonable Accommodation Kit Tip Sheet](#)
  - Magnifiers, pocket talkers and communication boards
- [Service Animal Tip Sheet](#)
- [How to Offer Help Guide](#)
  - Detailed guide on how to offer assistance effectively and how to respond if assistance isn't helpful

## AND Diversity & Inclusion → Inclusive Patient

Diversity and Inclusion NM Champion Network

Diversity & Inclusio... NM Champion Network Resources & Training Inclusive Patient Care Bias & Discrimination Reporting

### ^ In-Person Communication (LEP, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind)

It is important to provide effective communications for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) and patients who are deaf or hard of hearing. As always, it is important to ask patient what format or language they prefer to receive information in and work with them to meet their needs.

**Tips and Etiquette**

\*Resource page location to be changed in the near future to *Office of Health Equity*

# Thank you

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