

# **ADP daily living component activity 5 – managing toilet needs or incontinence**

## **Index**

This chapter covers the following topics:

- Introduction
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor A
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor B
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor C
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor D
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor E
- Daily living component activity 5 descriptor F

## **Introduction**

1. This chapter provides information on activity 5 of the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment (ADP).
2. This chapter should be read and applied in line with the Overview of Decision Making and the Daily Living Component Introduction.
3. Daily living component activity 5 considers an individual's ability to get on and off the un-adapted toilet, to manage evacuation of the bladder and/or bowel and incontinence, and to clean afterwards.
4. Daily living component activity 5 does not consider the ability to manage clothing, climb stairs or move to the toilet.
5. The daily living component activity 5 descriptors describe six levels of functional ability to complete the activity:
  - A. can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided
  - B. needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence
  - C. needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs
  - D. needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs
  - E. needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel
  - F. needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel.<sup>1</sup>

*1 ADP regs, Schedule 1 Part 2 - Daily Living Activities, Activity (5)*

6. Managing incontinence means the ability to manage involuntary evacuation of the bladder and/or bowel, including the use of a collecting device or self-catheterisation, and cleaning oneself afterwards.
7. An individual may use an aid or appliance to assist them in completing this activity and this may mean that they satisfy daily living component activity 5 descriptor B, which is covered later.

8. A case manager should consider both aids and appliances that an individual uses, and aids and appliances that they could reasonably be expected to wear or use.
9. Case managers will also consider if the individual needs prompting, supervision or assistance from another person to complete the activity.
  - 'prompting' means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. This does not have to be in the physical presence of the individual
  - 'supervision' means the continuous presence of another person for the purpose of ensuring an individual's safety. The supervision can be in relation to any risk to the individual's safety, whether or not the risk directly results from carrying out the activity in question.
  - "Assistance" means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech.
10. An individual with a catheter (either permanent (indwelling) or long-term use of an external sheath catheter) or stoma, should be considered incontinent for the purposes of this activity.
11. If the urinary tract has normal function, there is likely to be little risk of incontinence, no matter how long it takes an individual to move to the toilet.
12. If an individual has a bladder condition and will be incontinent before they reach the toilet, then a commode could be considered as an aid for the bladder condition (toilet needs) and not for moving to the toilet (mobility needs).
13. Conditions that cause an urgency to evacuate the bladder and/or bowel will be relevant in this context.
14. Case managers should note however, that this activity is not limited to conditions that impair the voluntary control over the bowel or bladder. An individual can score under this activity if their incontinence is as a result of mobility issues too.
15. An individual may tolerate incontinence without seeking help. They may have accepted this, as part of having children or the ageing process, and purchase their own incontinence pads, in which case, daily living component activity 5 descriptor B may be appropriate.
16. The volume of incontinence may vary between individuals and each individual may tolerate different volumes of loss before feeling the need to purchase or obtain incontinence pads, including where use is on a precautionary basis.
17. There is no requirement for an individual to have a formal diagnosis, but the case manager will need enough evidence to determine which descriptor applies to the individual.

18. Managing toilet needs describes the following process:

- getting on and off an un-adapted toilet
- evacuating the bladder and bowel
- cleaning oneself afterwards.

Help is needed with managing toileting if an individual needs prompting, supervision or assistance with one or more of these three actions.

19. Daily living component activity 5 does not consider the following:

- loosening or removal of any clothing as daily living component activity 5, as far as toilet needs, is assumed to start at the toilet with clothing removed as required
- any movement or steps required to get to the toilet
- the use of a commode where the principal impact on an individual is related to mobility and not management of bladder and/or bowel.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor A (0 points) – can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided**

20. Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity unaided means without either the use of aids or appliances, prompting, supervision or assistance.

21. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor A may apply to an individual who uses a commode due to limited mobility (and therefore has difficulty moving to the toilet) but otherwise can manage their toilet needs or incontinence.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor B (2 points) – needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence**

22. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor B is most likely to apply to an individual who needs the assistance of an aid or appliance, because of their physical abilities.

23. Aids or appliances used to assist an individual to manage toilet needs or incontinence can include but is not limited to the following items:

- raised toilet seat
- commode
- long handled bottom wiper
- bidet
- grab rail(s)
- stoma bag
- catheter bag
- incontinence pad(s)

24. Information on commodes:

- a commode is most likely to be used by an individual with mobility needs that prevent them from walking to the toilet
- there may be circumstances where a commode is used not because of mobility needs but because of a bladder or bowel condition which causes a sudden urge to fully evacuate the bladder or bowel
- a commode may be considered an aid if an individual has a bladder or bowel condition which causes a sudden urge to fully evacuate the bladder or bowel

25. Information on stoma bags and catheter bags:

- if an individual has a stoma bag or catheter bag, this is likely to be considered an aid. For example, an individual with an indwelling catheter that they can manage themselves is likely to satisfy descriptor B
- if an individual has a stoma bag or catheter bag, they are likely to be considered incontinent
- if an individual has a stoma bag or catheter bag which they cannot manage themselves due to their functional ability, they are likely to receive a higher descriptor for daily living component activity 5 (descriptor E or F)

26. Information on incontinence pads:

- an incontinence pad is likely to be considered as an aid, where an individual experiences a lack of control over their bladder or bowel function
- dribbling of urine when sneezing and / or coughing is usually unlikely to satisfy daily living component activity 5 descriptor B

**Example: an individual who has a permanent catheter who satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor B**

Joey had prostate cancer and had an operation to remove his prostate gland. There was a complication that means he now has an indwelling (permanent) catheter. This is a tube in his bladder that transfers urine into a catheter bag.

He has a letter from his practice nurse that shows he is prescribed replacements of his catheter and all the accompanying catheter equipment. His application for ADP shows that he is able to manage the catheter himself and he is able to connect new bags and empty these whenever he needs to.

As Joey has an indwelling catheter, he is considered to be incontinent. Joey manages incontinence himself using the catheter. The catheter and bag are considered to be aids.

The case manager determines that Joey satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor B because the catheter is an aid to help him manage incontinence.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor C (2 points) - needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs**

27. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor C is most likely to apply to an individual living with mental health and/or cognitive conditions.
28. Prompting means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. Supervision is the continuous presence of another person to help the person complete the activity safely. For this descriptor, prompting is likely to apply to an individual who needs to be reminded to go to the toilet or needs supervision to ensure that they clean themselves afterwards as part of the activity.
29. If an individual has significant symptoms due to a mental health condition or conditions, they may need encouragement to go to the toilet to prevent incontinence. A large amount of information is likely to be available to support the descriptor being awarded for mental health, including but not limited to one or more of the following support categories:
- mental health care plans
  - higher levels of health professional or social work mental health officer input
  - potent medication prescribed by a qualified health care professional.
30. If an individual needs encouragement to go to the toilet but is usually incontinent when reaching the toilet, a higher descriptor for daily living component activity 5 (descriptor E or F) is likely to be considered.

**Example: an individual living with dementia, who satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor C**

Jen has dementia and her ADP application form was completed by her mum. She has a letter from her practice nurse that confirms that she is prescribed incontinence underwear to use every day.

In her application, her mum has written that Jen needs to be reminded to use the toilet because she doesn't remember that she hasn't used the toilet recently or recognise the feeling that she will need to use the toilet soon. Jen's mum explains that she needs to be prompted to check if her incontinence pad is wet and is encouraged to change it if it is.

Jen needs the encouragement of another person to manage her toilet needs, both to use the toilet to an acceptable standard and to manage her incontinence. When she is encouraged, she is physically able to do this herself.

The case manager determines that Jen satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor C, because of the need for encouragement and prompting from another person to perform this activity to an acceptable standard.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor D (4 points) - needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs**

31. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor D is most likely to apply to an individual who has needs relating to physical and/or cognitive conditions.

32. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor D may apply to an individual who needs assistance to complete any part of the following process of managing their toilet needs:

- to get on and off the toilet
- to evacuate the bladder and bowel
- to clean themselves afterwards.

33. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor D is usually unlikely to apply to an individual who needs assistance due to incontinence. Where an individual who needs assistance is also incontinent, a case manager may consider a higher descriptor for daily living component activity 5 (descriptor E or F) appropriate.

**Example: an individual with fibromyalgia, who satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor D**

Pat has fibromyalgia and completed her ADP application form, although she notes that it took a few days because she is tired all the time and sleeps a lot. She has a letter from an occupational therapist that shows she was prescribed a handrail for her bathroom to help her stand but that this was removed because, with the weakness and pain in her arms and legs, she was unable to use it effectively.

In her application form, she explains that she needs help from her sister, whom she lives with, to stand up from the toilet now that she can't use her arms or the handrail to push herself up to standing. She notes that she is not incontinent.

As Pat has difficulty standing and needs the help of another person, she needs assistance to perform this activity in a timely and acceptable manner.

The case manager determines that Pat satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor D, because of the assistance she requires from another person to stand up from the toilet.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor E (6 points) - needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel**

34. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor E is most likely to apply to an individual who has needs relating to physical and / or cognitive conditions.

35. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor E may apply to an individual who has a catheter, incontinence bag or stoma bag and needs help to manage these devices for either their bladder or their bowel function. For example, an individual who needs assistance to change a stoma bag.

36. The process of learning to manage an incontinence device would usually be considered to take a short period of time. If this was the only reason preventing self-management of the incontinence device, then daily living component activity 5 descriptor E would not usually apply.

**Example: an individual with epilepsy and a learning difficulty, who satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor E**

Luke has epilepsy and a learning difficulty. When he has seizures, as noted in a letter from an epilepsy nurse, he experiences bladder incontinence so wears incontinence underpants. The letter explains that he can have a seizure once a day and that these are usually triggered by anxiety. He does not lose control of his bowels, but he needs help with cleaning himself after he has been to the toilet.

In his ADP application form that was completed by his sister, it notes that every time he has a seizure, he experiences bladder incontinence and needs to be helped to change his underpants by someone else. He does not understand that he needs to change his wet underpants.

As Luke does not understand that he has to change his underwear when it is wet and because he experiences bladder incontinence when he has a seizure, he needs help from someone else. He also needs help to clean himself after using the toilet.

The case manager determines that Luke satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor E, because of the assistance he needs to manage bladder incontinence.

**Daily living component activity 5 descriptor F (8 points) - needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel**

37. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor F is most likely to apply to an individual who has needs relating to physical and/or cognitive conditions.
38. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor F is most likely to apply to an individual with incontinence of both their bladder and their bowel.
39. Daily living component activity 5 descriptor F may apply to an individual who has a catheter, incontinence bag or stoma bag for both their bladder and their bowel function and requires help to manage these devices. For example, an individual who requires assistance to change a catheter and stoma bag.
40. The process of learning to manage an incontinence device would usually be considered to be a short period of time. If this was the only reason preventing self-management of the incontinence device, then daily living component activity 5 descriptor F would not usually apply.

**Example: an individual with a brain injury, who satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor F**

Cara had a brain injury as a result of a work accident 18 months ago, which caused paralysis. She is now unable to move her arms and legs. She underwent significant

surgery at the time and now has a catheter to collect her urine and a stoma to empty her bowel. All of this is confirmed in a hospital discharge letter.

In her ADP application form, her partner outlines the care they provide for her. Her partner empties and changes her stoma bag daily and empties her catheter bag as often as needed.

As Cara does not have the physical ability to change either of these collection devices, they cannot be considered as aids.

The case manager determines that Cara satisfies daily living component activity 5 descriptor F because she needs assistance to manage incontinence of both her bladder and bowel.

**[End of chapter]**