Enable NEW ZEALAND®

Bridging the Gaps in Clinical Reasoning

Turn Assessments into Strong ACC Reports

Presented by: Nafi Lefono

Clinical Service Advisors, Enable NZ

10/04/2025

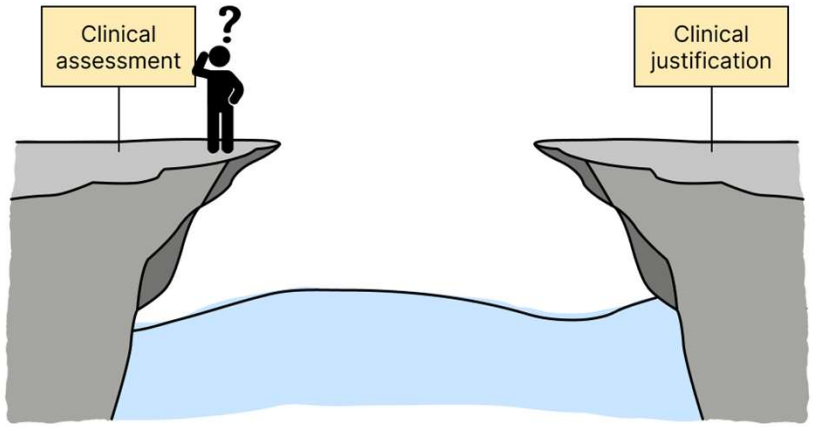
Objectives

1. Apply a 3-part framework for assessments.
2. Link assessment findings to equipment features and benefits.
3. Justify equipment recommendations effectively.
4. Use a template to make justification easier.

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Gaps in Clinical Reasoning

- Gaps in clinical reasoning – about 20%.
- “Can a structured framework improve clinical reasoning?”
- “Can a table template help assessors organize their thinking?”
- Framework + template = strong justification?



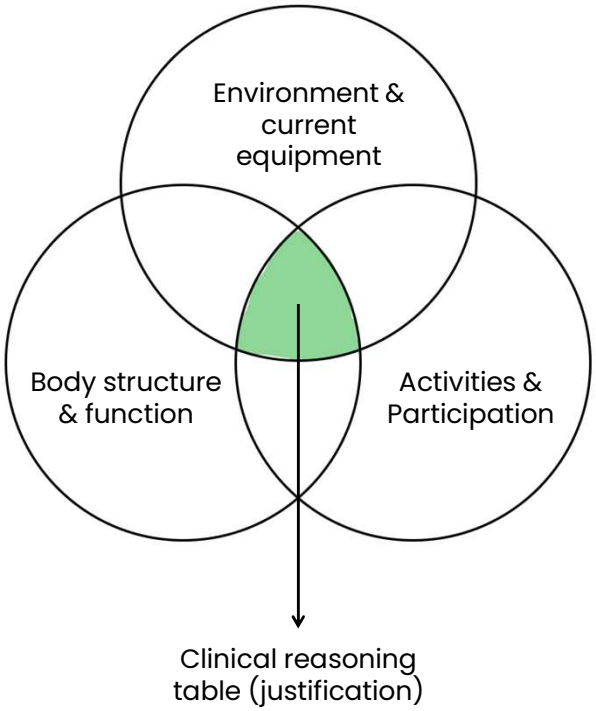
Enable NEW ZEALAND

Clinical Reasoning: Bridging Problems, Solutions, and Decisions

Clinical reasoning is a specialized cognitive process that uses thinking and sometimes talking (narrative) to facilitate effective problem-solving and decision-making (Reed & Sanderson, 1999)

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Three Key Areas for Effective Client Assessments



(Armstrong et al., 2008; Rehabilitation Engineering & Assistive Technology Society of North America [RESNA], 2011)

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Body structure & function

Diagnosis & Prognosis

- T7 ASIA B spinal cord injury (stable prognosis)

Neuromuscular System

- Strong upper limbs, propels manual wheelchair independently
- Well-supported balance in chair
- Transfers without aids

ROM & Skeletal Alignment

- Flexible left low pelvic obliquity
- Posterior pelvic tilt (functional & comfortable)

Skin Integrity

- Pressure injury 4 years ago (impact injury, 3-4 weeks bed rest)
- No recent pressure injuries but remains high risk
- Good seating limits risk, the client is diligent with skincare

Current & Past Mobility Equipment

- Uses a 3-year-old ZR manual wheelchair (meets needs)
- Freewheel for off-road terrain
- Stopped using Smart Drive (Bluetooth issues)

Broader equipment needs

- Any needs for a bed, shower, environmental controls, or exercise?

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Environment & current equipment

Devices Used

- Uses a manual wheelchair and freewheel (suitable for flat surfaces and slight inclines)
- Has a Smart Drive but stopped using it (Bluetooth issues)
- Struggles to keep up with son on bike rides, avoids steep hills
- Can’t go for walks with family because of a hilly neighborhood

Environments

- Visits the park 1–2 times weekly (handles concrete paths but avoids inclines, off-road)
- Watches from the grass at the beach—wants to access the sand
- Hilly neighborhood
- Drives using a modified station wagon (transfers in/out easily)

Support System

- Gets 3 hours of home help weekly for household tasks
- Manages personal cares independently

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Activities & Participation

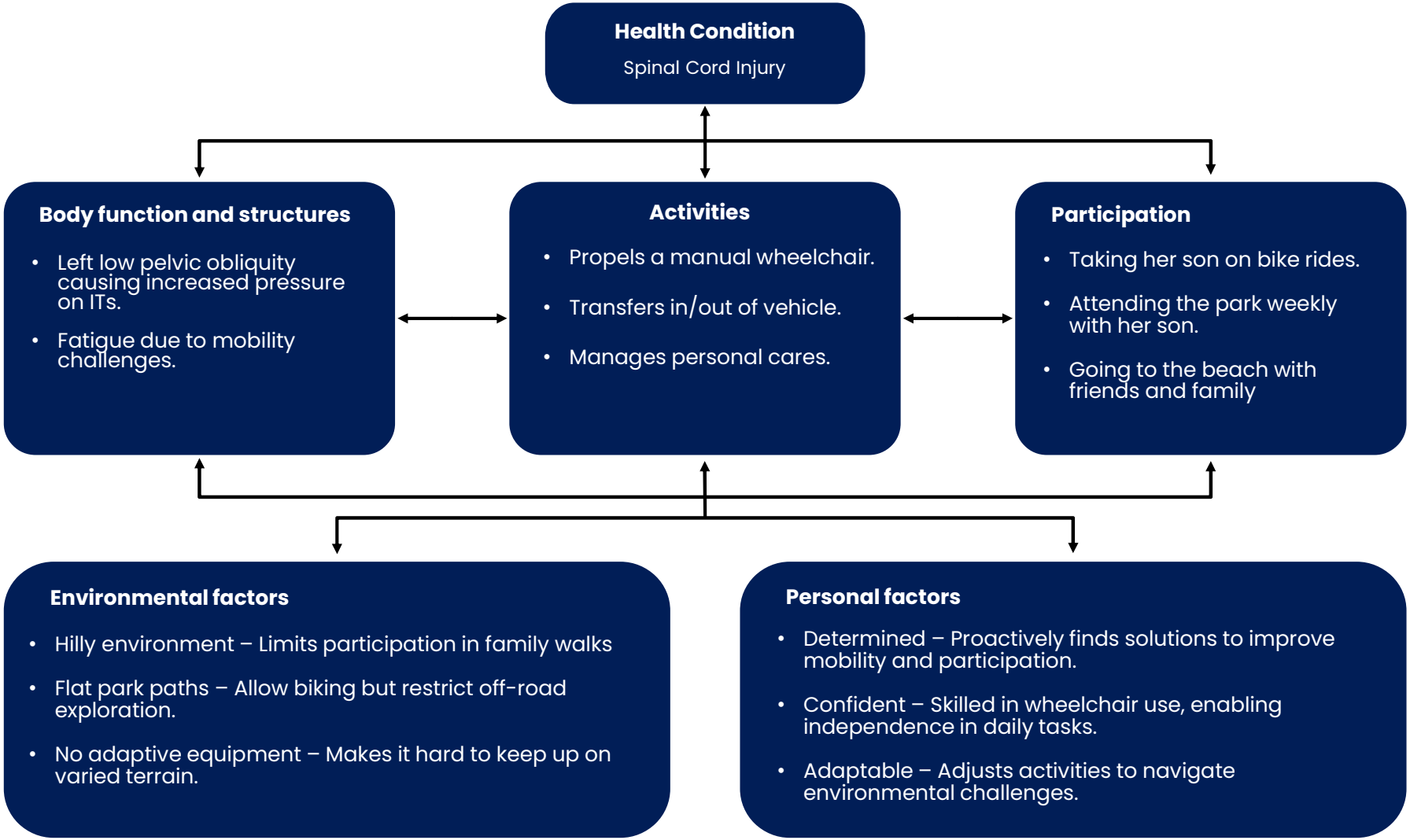
Current & Desired Independence

- Can only manage concrete paths when biking with son
- Fatigues quickly and avoids challenging off-road trails.
- Wants to explore more trails and keep up without exhaustion
- She wants to join her family on the beach
- She wants to go for walks with her family

Movement Technique

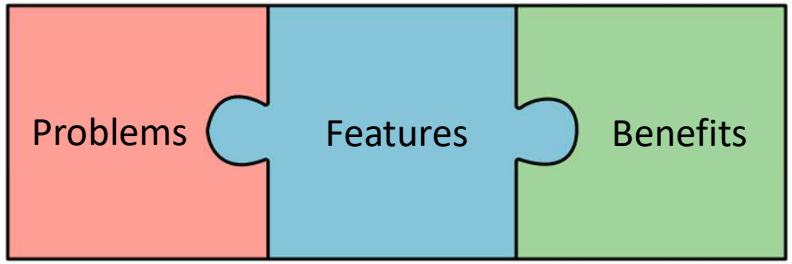
- Efficient self-propelling due to well-set-up wheelchair

Enable NEW ZEALAND


Health Condition
Spinal Cord Injury
Body function and structures
Left low pelvic obliquity causing increased pressure on ITs.
Fatigue due to mobility challenges.
Activities
Propels a manual wheelchair.
Transfers in/out of vehicle.
Manages personal cares.
Participation
Taking her son on bike rides.
Attending the park weekly with her son.
Going to the beach with friends and family
Environmental factors
Hilly environment – Limits participation in family walks
Flat park paths – Allow biking but restrict off-road exploration.
No adaptive equipment – Makes it hard to keep up on varied terrain.
Personal factors
Determined – Proactively finds solutions to improve mobility and participation.
Confident – Skilled in wheelchair use, enabling independence in daily tasks.
Adaptable – Adjusts activities to navigate environmental challenges.

Justification - Piecing the puzzle together

1. Problem list
2. Equipment features – what it has
3. Equipment benefits – why it matters to the user



Equipment	Features	Benefits
Tilite ZR	Weight – 4kgs	Makes it easy to lift the wheelchair in and out of the vehicle
Freewheel attachment	Portable	Can easily fit in the boot to take away on family trips
ADI back support	Active contour	Allows her to turn and reach objects

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Goals	Problem list	Equipment	Equipment features	Equipment benefits	Considerations
1. To bike with my son and explore off-road biking tracks. 2. To keep up with my son and not feel fatigued. 3. To go for walks with my family. 4. To have a portable device that's easy to use and light enough to lift into the car's boot.	1. Mrs. X struggles to keep up with her son during bike rides and on uneven terrain, resulting in fatigue and limited participation. 2. Mrs X can't access off-road trails, limiting engagement with her son 3. Mrs. X can't go for walks with her family because of a hilly neighborhood.	Triride Special Compact HT. Klaxon Klick Race.	- 11kgs - 50km range - Can access urban and off-road terrain	- Light enough that the client could lift it into her vehicle. - The client will be able to explore more challenging terrain with her son, improving her quality of life. - Compact to fit the client's boot with her son's bike. - This will allow her to go for walks with her family around their neighborhood.	- BMX wheels if she needs more traction in off-road environments. - Lifting power add-on safe? - How to use safely – speed, equipment limits. - How often will it be used? Storage? Goals
		Triride Special HP16.	- 13kgs - 50km range - Can access urban and off-road terrain		
	4. Mrs X has a flexible left low pelvic obliquity, which increases pressure on her left IT and increases her risk of pressure injury.	Pelvic obliquity kit.	Foam build-up.	Reduce pressure injury risk by having pressure distributed between the IT's.	
	5. Mrs X has a faulty Smart Drive.				Log repair job with Enable or have it returned for reissue.
	6. Mrs. X can't access beaches, which limits her from engaging in family activities.				This isn't a consideration because the client's primary goal is to bike with her son and explore off-road bike tracks. We discussed the All-Wheel Drive from Triride as a future option.

Key takeaways

1. Structured reasoning strengthens assessments.
2. Link findings to equipment features and benefits for better justification.
3. Templates improve clarity & efficiency.
4. Better reasoning → Better client outcomes

Enable NEW ZEALAND

Contact us

Website: www.enable.co.nz

Email: nafi.lefono@enable.co.nz

Email: acc.advisor@enable.co.nz or CSA@enable.co.nz

Phone: 0800 362 253

References

- 36th International Seating Symposium. (2020). Syllabus: Across the Lifespan. Vancouver, BC, Canada: The Westin Bayshore. Retrieved from https://dentistry-ipce.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2020/02/36th_ISS_SYLLABUS-ONLINE.pdf#page=188
- Armstrong, W., Borg, J., Krizack, M., Lindsley, A., Mines, K., Pearlman, J., et al. (2008). Guidelines on the provision of manual wheelchairs in less resourced settings (Vol. 1). World Health Organization. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/disabilities/publications/technology/wheelchairguidelines/en/index.html
- Reed, K. L., & Sanderson, S. N. (1999). Concepts of occupational therapy (4th ed.). New York: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Rehabilitation Engineering & Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA). (2011). RESNA Wheelchair Service Provision Guide. Arlington, VA. Retrieved from http://www.rstce.pitt.edu/RSTCE_Resources/RSTCE_Res_Doc/RESNA_PP_WSProvisionGuide2011.pdf

Enable NEW ZEALAND