

## **TRIUMPH FOUNDATION Position Statement on Powered Exoskeletons**

Triumph Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to help children, adults, & Veterans with spinal cord injury and paralyzing disorders to triumph over their disability and to inspire them to keep moving forward with their lives by pushing themselves to get better every day. Triumph provides critical assistance services to people that become paralyzed through its Newly Injured Support, Grants & Equipment, and Adaptive Recreation programs.

Founded in 2008, the organization has touched the lives of over 5,000 individuals with disabilities, provided \$500,000 in assistance to people with inadequate medical insurance and financial hardship, holds over 20 annual adaptive recreational events to support athletes with disabilities, performed dozens of home and bathroom remodels for accessibility, donated ten adapted vehicles to people who did not have the means to purchase one on their own, delivered over 2,000 care packages to people that suffered paralyzing injuries, and regularly visits 18 hospitals and rehabilitation centers throughout Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. More information can be found at [www.Triumph-Foundation.org](http://www.Triumph-Foundation.org).

According to the National Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Statistical Center, approximately 12,500 new SCI cases occur each year in individuals who will lose the ability to exercise volitional movement of their lower extremities. The mortality rates of these patients are significantly higher than their able-bodied peers and has remained unchanged since the 1980's. Persons living with SCI are significantly more likely to incur a variety of disease states including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and stroke, to name a few. Powered exoskeletons have been developed to restore functional ambulation, enabling full weight-bearing when standing or walking. In turn, walking and weight-bearing provide individuals with spinal cord injury with many secondary health benefits such as improved bowel and bladder function, reduced utilization of pharmaceuticals and improved cardiovascular function. The benefits of increased physical activity are well documented and translate into significant improvements in health outcomes and decreased utilization of high cost healthcare. Exoskeletons enable a highly sedentary population to regain walking function and live healthier and higher quality lives.

Triumph Foundation maintains a position supporting the safety and efficacy of powered exoskeletons for patients with spinal cord injury across the continuum of care. After reviewing the available literature on exoskeletons in the rehabilitation and home settings, including 28 publications totaling 414 patients, TRIUMPH FOUNDATION believes that restoring walking function through exoskeletal assisted walking improves health outcomes and that the benefits outweigh the associated risks.

Powered exoskeletons have demonstrated safety and effectiveness in both clinical trials and outside of the institutional setting. Therefore, TRIUMPH FOUNDATION does not consider them to be an experimental or investigative device and we recommend that they not be treated as such when evaluating coverage.

We encourage private health insurance carriers to consider the use of powered exoskeleton devices medically necessary for well selected patients with spinal cord injury.

Please contact TRIUMPH FOUNDATION.

Sincerely,



Andrew Skinner  
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Executive Director