

Visual aid lending

Principles and guidelines

Insured Visual Aids and Related Services Program

We would like to thank the following individuals for their invaluable contribution:

Hugues Boulanger, Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec

Ginette Diamond, Centre de réadaptation InterVal

Lyne Dufresne, Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec

Véronique Tremblay, Centre de réadaptation en déficience physique Le Parcours

Nancy Vallée, ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Produced by:

Direction des communications, ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

This document was edited in limited quantity and is now available online at www.msss.gouv.qc.ca, in the **Documentation** section, under **Publications**.

Masculine pronouns are used generically in this document.

Legal deposit

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2011

Library and Archives Canada, 2011

ISBN : 978-2-550-61987-1 (printing)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61988-8 (PDF)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61995-6 (large print)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61996-3 (accessible PDF)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61991-8 (braille)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61992-5 (e-text)

ISBN : 978-2-550-61998-7 (Daisy audio)

All rights reserved for all countries. Any reproduction whatsoever, translation or dissemination, in whole or in part, is prohibited unless authorized by Les Publications du Québec. However, reproduction or use for non-commercial personal, private study or scientific research purposes is permitted, provided the source is mentioned.

© Gouvernement du Québec, 2011



Visual aid lending Principles and guidelines

This document presents the principles of the Insured Visual Aids and Related Services Program. In it you will find the major guidelines that must be followed in allocating visual aids, explanations that illustrate how the specialized rehabilitation team must apply the program, as well as user responsibilities.

● Who is the program for?

You have access to the Insured Visual Aids and Related Services Program if you have a visual deficiency leading to significant and permanent disabilities that prevent you from:

- reading and writing;
- getting around in unfamiliar environments;
- carrying out activities related to your daily routine;
- performing your social roles (work, study).

If this is your situation, the program could allow you access to certain technical aids to compensate for the disabilities arising from your visual deficiency, and these aids could help you be more independent in your current activities.

● **Evaluation of your needs at the physical deficiency rehabilitation center**

The specialized rehabilitation team is responsible for evaluating your needs in connection with your visual deficiency. After this evaluation, the team will:

- help you set up your environment;
- help you use the specialized equipment or regular equipment you already have to its full potential;
- teach you new strategies for increasing your independence;
- recommend supplementary visual aids if necessary.

● **The best visual aid for you**

Starting with the needs identified in your evaluation, the specialized rehabilitation team will recommend the technical aid that is best for you. You will do tests and learn how to use it. If the visual aid allows you to be independent in your everyday life, the team will be able to submit a request to Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec for this aid to be loaned to you free of charge by the state. However approval of this request is subject to certain conditions stipulated in the Regulation respecting insured visual aids and related services.

● **An insured service regardless of your ability to pay**

When a request is authorized, the visual aid is loaned to you free of charge, without regard to your or your family's ability to pay. Repairs and replacement of the visual aid are also at the state's expense. However you must replace it at your expense if the technical aid is:

- stolen;
- lost;
- modified;
- damaged through negligent or improper use;
- broken further to a fire or act of vandalism.

If one of these events occurs and you do not replace it, you will not have access to an aid of this same type for a period of two years. It is therefore recommended that you take out insurance to cover these risks. For more details, see the document entitled *What You Need to Know about the Visual Aids Loaned to You* at www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca/en/publications/aides_visuelles or at your rehabilitation center.

● **An allocation in the form of a loan**

When you are no longer using it, it is your responsibility to return the visual aid to the rehabilitation center where you receive your services. The establishment is responsible for retrieving the aid and repairing or refurbishing it so that it can be loaned out to someone else. Since the program is based on the principle of aids being loaned out and returned, used aids may be available. Therefore the specialized rehabilitation team cannot assign you a new aid if a used aid that meets your needs is available.

● The lowest-cost solution

The specialized rehabilitation team is responsible for determining the visual aid or combination of visual aids that meets the needs that have been identified for you, based on the most economical solution. When there are two solutions that could meet your needs, the most economical will be selected.

Here are a few examples:

- Given two magnifiers that meet your reading needs, the more economical model will be eligible.
- If a simple magnifier meets your reading needs, you will not be offered a closed-circuit television system.
- If you have health problems that require you to monitor your weight on a daily basis and the scale you have can be adapted or read using a simple optic aid, you will not be given a specialized or adapted scale.

● The response to your essential needs

The specialized rehabilitation team is responsible for evaluating your needs in connection with your visual deficiency. The needs covered by the program are those that allow you to accomplish essential activities such as:

- reading;
- writing;
- mobility;
- direction;
- daily and household activities such as eating, bathing and getting ready, taking care of your health, etc.

The program does not consider leisure activities to be essential activities. The program aims to compensate for disabilities related to your visual deficiency rather than meet your wishes and desires that may be related to the deficiency but are not essential needs.

Changes in technology that give rise to higher-performing technical aids are not a valid reason for requesting the replacement of the technical aid you have been loaned. Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec requires the specialized rehabilitation team to distinguish between the functional need arising from your visual deficiency and what may seem desirable to you. In the event the program does not cover your preferred technical aid, you may be able to purchase it through your rehabilitation center.

Here are a few situations:

- If you need a closed-circuit television system and a black and white model that meets your needs is available, you cannot be loaned a color model.
- To compensate for a disability arising from a glare problem, various types of filter lenses qualify under the program. Filter lenses worn over your regular glasses will be loaned to you unless this solution is not clinically appropriate for you. In this case, your optometrist will have to demonstrate that this solution is not appropriate for you.
- Following your evaluation, the specialized rehabilitation team must recommend the most economical visual aid that meets your needs. If you wish to obtain a more esthetic, compact, or recent model offering an array of technological accessories, it cannot be loaned to you under the program if it entails additional cost compared to the model selected by the rehabilitation team.
- You may be eligible for a closed-circuit television system for reading and writing activities necessary to managing your personal property. However it cannot be loaned to you if you need it only for your leisure activities, such as looking at color photographs or knitting. Similarly, a costlier model than what you need will not be loaned to you even if it would be used to meet related leisure needs.

● **A single technical aid of the same type**

The specialized rehabilitation team is responsible for evaluating your needs in connection with your visual deficiency and identifying the best aid for you. The program allows for the loan of a single technical aid to meet an identified need. If one aid that is loaned to you for one need also meets another need, no other aid will be given to you to meet this second need.

For example, a digital player with a recording function cannot be given to you at the same time as a voice note-taking device since both devices can be used to take voice notes. The digital player with a recording function primarily meets a reading need and secondarily meets a voice note-taking need.

● **Insured Visual Aids and Related Services Program limitations**

The specialized rehabilitation team is responsible for evaluating your needs in connection with your visual deficiency. The program doesn't cover needs in connection with any other deficiency or the performance of a duty as such. Any technical aids loaned to you will be those that compensate solely for your visual deficiency.

Here are two examples:

- The program covers a cane that detects obstacles when you are moving around. The cane model that compensates for balance problems or that identifies you as someone with a visual deficiency is not covered by the program nor by any other, unless this type of cane is used in conjunction with a lower limb prosthesis. In this case, the program covering devices which compensate for a motor deficiency will provide access to this aid.
- Under the program, you may be provided with a computer to compensate for your visual deficiency in performing your duties at work. However it will not be loaned to you if your job-related tasks already require the use of a computer. In this case, the computer does not meet a need arising from your visual deficiency but rather one related the nature of the work you perform. It is therefore your employer who must provide the computer needed to perform your duties at work. Similarly if you are self-employed, you will only have access to computer adaptations on your own computer. The computer itself will not be loaned to you under the program owing to the fact that today, computers are essential instruments for all businesses.

● **Compensation for costs arising from visual deficiency**

The Insured Visual Aids and Related Services Program aims to help you avoid incurring additional costs due to your visual deficiency as you carry out your essential activities.

For example, the program does not cover the purchase of large print or talking watches since these are available in stores at an equivalent cost to standard watches, which is not the case for braille watches that are much more expensive.

● Your responsibilities

When you accept a loaned visual aid, you must follow the rules below. You must:

- 1** Use the visual aid properly and for the purposes for which it was loaned to you.
- 2** Maintain the visual aid according to the instructions given to you.
- 3** Keep the aid that was assigned to you and do not give it away, modify it, loan it, sell it, or exchange it with anyone who is not a designated person at your rehabilitation center.
- 4** Follow all the safety rules for you and others when you use the aid that has been loaned to you.
- 5** Accept the technical aid that has been loaned to you in response to your needs, whether new or used.
- 6** Notify the designated person at your rehabilitation center about any breakage.
- 7** Replace the technical aid at your expense in the event of theft, loss, or breakage caused by negligent or improper use, a fire, or an act of vandalism.
- 8** Return the visual aid to your rehabilitation center when you are no longer using it.
- 9** Notify the designated person at your rehabilitation center of any change of address.

● List of establishments and contact information

Bas-Saint-Laurent

Centre de santé et de services sociaux de La Mitis
Centre régional de services en déficience physique L'InterAction
418-775-7261

Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean

Centre de santé et de services sociaux de Jonquière
Centre de réadaptation en déficience physique Le Parcours
418-695-7700

Capitale-Nationale

Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec
418-529-9141

Mauricie–Centre-du-Québec

Centre de réadaptation InterVal
819-378-4083 #5

Estrie

Centre de réadaptation Estrie inc.
819-346-8411

Montréal

Centre de réadaptation MAB-Mackay
514-488-5552
Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille
450-463-1710 or 800-361-7063

Outaouais

Centre régional de réadaptation La RessourSe
819-777-6261

Abitibi –Témiscamingue

Centre de réadaptation La Maison
819-762-6592

Côte-Nord

Centre de protection et de réadaptation de la Côte-Nord
418-589-2038

Nord-du-Québec

Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec
418-529-9141
Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille
450-463-1710 or 800-361-7063

Gaspésie–Iles-de-la-Madeleine

Centre de réadaptation de la Gaspésie
418-763-3325

Chaudière-Appalaches

Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec
418-529-9141

Laval

Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille
450-463-1710 or 800-361-7063
Centre de réadaptation MAB-Mackay
514-488-5552

Lanaudière

Centre de réadaptation en déficience physique Le Bouclier
450-581-3113 or 888-880-8240

Laurentides

Centre de réadaptation en déficience physique Le Bouclier
450-560-9898 or 877-834-9898

Montérégie

Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille
450-463-1710 or 800-361-7063
Centre de réadaptation MAB-Mackay
514-488-5552

Services Québec

Québec City area: 418-644-4545
Montréal area: 514-644-4545
Elsewhere in Québec: 1-877-644-4545 (toll-free)
Deaf or mute individuals (TDD): 1-800-361-9596 (toll-free)



www.msss.gouv.qc.ca