

Introduction

This procedure is designed to assist staff in accurately measuring the weight and height of a person they support. Typically, a person's general practitioner (GP) will weigh and measure them during health appointments, or when undertaking the CHAP and annual health assessment. However, a doctor may ask staff to monitor a person's weight for a certain period of time. During weight monitoring, it is important to record all relevant information in the [NDIS LWB 5591 Weight and Height - Recording Chart](#).

Correctly measuring weight

- Ensure the privacy and dignity of the person is always maintained.
- If possible weigh the person in the same or like clothing each time. Lightweight clothing is best. If safe to do so, remove shoes, helmets and any other mobility supports before weighing, or weigh these items separately and take away (subtract) the weight of the item/s from the total.
- Each time the person is required to be weighed, ensure that you weigh them at the same time of day (first thing in the morning, before breakfast).
- Urge the person to use the toilet before being weighed to empty their bladder and bowels.
- Ensure the scales are of good quality, are in working order and are situated on a flat, hard surface when the person is weighed.
- If a person has experienced a loss of limb between weighting periods, an Appropriately Qualified Health Practitioner (AQHP) (e.g., GP, Nurse or Dietitian) will be able to assist you in adjusting weight according to specific limb loss.

Measuring the weight of a person who is unable to maintain their balance or requires mobility aids to stand

1. Use chair scales to measure the weight of someone who finds it hard to maintain their balance or stand without mobility aids.
2. Ask the person to sit on the scales with their feet on the footrests and record the weight.
3. Where additional clothing, equipment or aids add to the weight, deduct this from the total after weighing the items separately.

Measuring the weight of a person in a wheelchair

If there are no suitable scales available in the person's home for a person in a wheelchair, you can often find appropriate platform scales in large medical centres, hospitals, and community health centres. Contact these services to find out if you can use their scales to weigh the person.

Note: You must be consistent when weighing a wheelchair. If using a previously recorded wheelchair weight, you must make sure the wheelchair is in the same condition each time you weigh the person; for example, was the table tray attached or not?

If a person needs to be weighed while in their wheelchair, the Disability Support Leader¹ (DSL) will make sure the person has a [Transferring, repositioning and Mobility \(TRAM\) Plan](#) in place and all staff are trained in the TRAM plan.

Staff will:

- Follow the person's TRAM plan.
- Look to see if the wheelchair weight is listed on a sticker attached to the wheelchair or in an instruction manual.
- Support the person to dress in light clothing and sit in the wheelchair.
- Make sure the tray table is either removed or remains in place each time the person is weighted. This will make sure the correct weight is taken every time.
- Move the wheelchair onto the scales and engage the brake.
- Record the total weight and deduct the weight of the wheelchair to obtain the person's correct weight.
- If wheelchair weight is not available, you will need to do two (2) measurements:
 - First, weigh the person in the chair.
 - Then weigh the empty chair.
 - To find the correct weight, take away (subtract) the empty chair weight from the total weight.

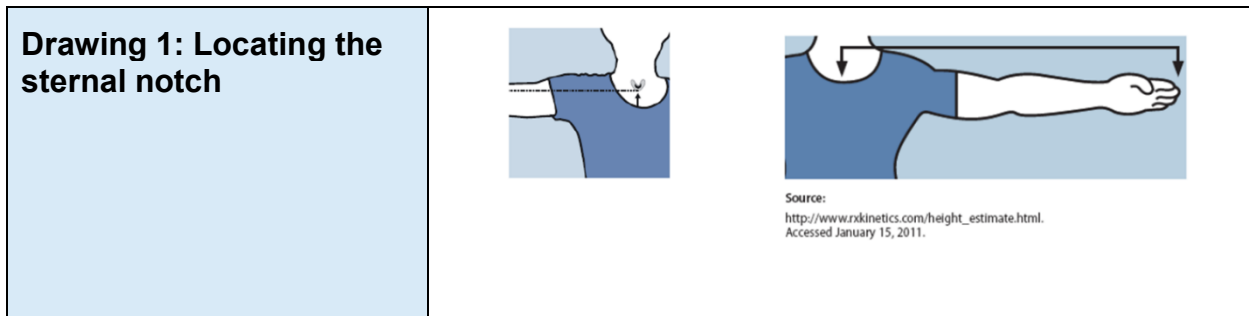
Measuring a person's standing height (stature) for those who can stand independently.

Note: Height can vary throughout the day. A person is usually taller in the morning. To ensure reliability, measure the person's height at the same time of the day.

1. Ask the person to remove their shoes, any headwear and hair accessories.
2. Using a stadiometer steel ruler or measuring tape placed against a solid wall, ask the person to stand against the wall.
3. Ask the person to place their feet together as closely as possible. Face directly ahead, arms hung loosely by the sides of the body. Their heels, buttocks and upper back should be in contact with the wall as closely as possible.
4. Record the height from the floor to the highest point of the head.

¹ All references to Disability Support Leader (DSL), includes all Frontline Leadership roles, such as House Supervisor.

Measuring a person's height who is unable to stand using the half arm-span



Using a tape measure, pen and paper, locate the edge of the collarbone and note the sternal notch (see Drawing 1 above).

Drawing 1: Locating the sternal notch.

1. Support the person to place their non-dominant arm in a straight-out position (e.g., if they are usually right-handed, use their left hand).
2. Ensure the person's arm is straight out and in line with the shoulders.
3. Ensure the arm is flat and the wrist is straight.
4. Using the tape measure, measure the distance between the sternal notch and the tip of the middle finger.
5. Take the reading in centimetres and record it.
6. Calculate the person's height using the formula below:
7. Females: height in cm = $(1.35 \times \text{half arm span [cm]} + 57.8)$
8. Males: height in cm = $(1.40 \times \text{half arm span [cm]} + 57.8)$
9. Record the height in the recording chart.

Growth rates for children

- Growth rates for children and young people aged less than 18 years should be assessed by a GP, paediatrician, early childhood nurse or dietitian every year and not using the Body Mass Index (BMI) for Adults chart.
- Staff must refer to a GP to ensure nutritional requirements for the child's development are met. If this hasn't occurred, a referral for an assessment must be arranged.