

## SCI Wellness Group

Pat Niewoehner, OTR/L, CDRS  
(314) 650-1874, ext. 6-4510  
OT/Driver Rehab Specialist

Driver Rehabilitation at the VA:  
48 Driver Rehab Clinics in the VA system  
Established in 1974 for disabled vet's to drive independently

Can evaluate driver & passenger safety

VA will not pay for any auto equipment as a driver unless Veteran has an approved 4502 Auto Grant from Regional Office (Service Connected for loss/loss of use of a limb)  
Auto Grant - 1 time grant for \$18,000 plus lifetime reimbursement of all auto equipment medically indicated

Otherwise Veteran self pay for any auto equipment as a driver.  
We can evaluate if Veteran appropriate for equipment & provide the training.  
Vendors will not install any auto equipment as a driver unless Veteran trained and training documented. No training will begin until Veteran has identified funds to pay for the equipment and has appropriate vehicle to drive.

Hand controls the most typical type of equipment. After initial evaluation requires approximately 5 training sessions. Cost \$1000 - \$15,000 for hand controls. Once equipment installed must pass DMV road test and a restriction will be placed on your driver's license.

Types of auto equipment for driver:  
Hand controls, left foot gas, hi-tech driving equipment (Quadriplegia), lifts/ramps

If you are a member of St. Louis PVA you can apply for re-imburement of hand controls

If no Auto Grant - VA will only pay for passenger equipment (Lift/ramp)

Must have valid drivers license/permit to be seen  
Seizure free for 1 year  
Must be cognitively intact in order to drive with auto equipment  
Evaluation takes 2 hours, we check vision, memory and thinking, strength, movement, sensation, driving history. If these test are ok will receive road test in either sedan or minivan.

Getting in & out of vehicle safely and independently without assistance just as important as driving safety  
Must be able to stow wheelchair  
Vehicle selection important (SUV vs. mini van)

Not everyone is safe to drive but you can still be independent even if you don't drive.  
Part of being independent is recognizing when you are not safe to perform an activity.  
We can discuss transportation options