



# GottaGo

## Sample Letter of Medical Necessity

Portable Toilet Seat



Every child is unique, and every child must be individually assessed to understand which products are required to meet their specific individual needs. Health care providers make decisions on which products are appropriate for an individual based on their clinical judgement, and the funding applications will take these individual requirements into account. Firefly cannot guarantee the success in obtaining insurance funding.



## Template Letter of Medical Necessity

**\*Please note – for sections highlighted in blue, please replace with details specific to the child’s presentation and clinical need. The text provided is for example purposes only.\***

### **Introduction** *(Your name and relationship with client, with product requested)*

As Jane Doe’s therapist, I am requesting insurance funding for a portable toilet seat which can be used both at home and away, the Firefly GottaGo. This DME has been prescribed by Jane’s physician and is a medical necessity which would not be required in the absence of disability, illness or injury. Toileting is a fundamental activity of daily living (ADL). Acquisition of this basic skill will not just improve Jane’s independence and personal hygiene but will reduce the risk of health complications such as urinary tract infections, constipation, and skin irritation.

### **Explain the Child’s diagnosis and disability**

Janes is a X year old boy/girl who has been diagnosed with XX.

Posture & Mobility: Jane has fluctuating muscle tone with decreased strength in her trunk. She is unable to sit independently without additional postural support. She has some postural control in her cervical and thoracic spine but has very limited active muscle control in her lumbar spine. Jane requires a seating system for postural support at home and at school. She is currently lifted for transfers and uses a stroller to mobilise outdoors.

**Toileting difficulties:** Jane requires postural support from carers to sit on a standard toilet seat. Her reduced muscle control makes it difficult to fully evacuate her bladder and bowel and she requires laxatives daily for chronic constipation. She has a history of urinary tract infections and skin irritation on her bottom from sitting in diapers.

### **Equipment**

- A. *If child already has an adaptive seat at home, begin with this example - Jane has an adaptive toilet seat at home however this is not portable so Jane cannot access toilets at school or in the community and at these times she reverts to wearing diapers. This is detrimental to her physical health and social wellbeing (Sansome 2011).*
- B. *If Jane does not have an adaptive toilet seat at home, begin with this example - Jane has no means to access a toilet and develop toileting skill. Preventing Jane from toileting is detrimental to her physical health and social wellbeing (Sansome, 2011).*



## What are the implications for the child without a GottaGo?

### **Health benefits**

Incontinence and the inability to evacuate the bladder and bowels in a timely and effective manner, are two health conditions linked to higher incidence of urinary tract infections, urge incontinence, diarrhoea, bloating, constipation and faecal impaction. These conditions can progress into more serious illnesses including pain, bleeding and fever, which require expensive medical/pharmaceutical interventions (Barone et al. 2009, Ramachandra & Figueroa 2018). In addition, the continuous use of diapers increases the risk of skin irritation and breakdown.

By contrast, continence is linked with healthy development of the bladder and bowel and healthy development of the associated neuro-physiological system.

The optimal position for a bowel movement is with the hips flexed (closed hip angle), knees above the hips, the feet firmly supported under or behind the knees and the trunk leaning forward (Tashiro et al. 2020, Modi et al. 2019, Takano & Sands 2016). This is known as a squat posture. Chuah & Mahadeva's (2018) research identified a direct correlation between defecation postures and gastrointestinal health. They found that squatting reduced gastrointestinal health disorders, defecation time and constipation. Additionally, Yang et al. (2010) found that squatting during urination is beneficial in reducing residual urine and risk of urinary tract infections.

Jane does not have a supportive toilet seat from which she could develop toileting skills and is forced to use diapers. These exacerbate her constipation and have caused the skin to breakdown over her bottom. The GottaGo will support Jane in the optimum posture to develop toileting skills, reducing constipation, lessening her skin irritation and decreasing the risk of urinary tract infection.

Without this device Jane is at increased risk of a wide range of medical complications which increase lifetime pharmaceutical costs and medical interventions.

### **Social benefits**

Toileting involves hygiene and personal care and is thus a social skill as well as a physical one. Requiring others to help with such an intimate skill can cause anxiety which only increases with increasing age and self-awareness. While it is often assumed that the potential for toileting independence is low in children with a neuro-disability, there is evidence that these skills can be gained for children with complex neuro-disabilities (Millard et al. 2013). Increasing self-awareness with age can add to the anxiety.

Jane currently shows signs of continence at home but requires diapers when outside due to a lack of suitably supportive equipment. This is uncomfortable and upsetting for her. It is impossible for Jane's family to apply a consistent approach to toileting without a portable supportive seat. The lightweight and portable GottaGo will provide Jane with the same support over all toilets and in areas where there are none. This consistency will aid her in mastering this life skill, reducing anxiety and increasing her confidence, dignity and quality of life.



## What are the requirements for a supportive toilet seat and why?

Feature required for toilet seat	Clinical reason for feature
An adaptive toilet seat for young children with complex needs must have back, trunk, hip, leg and foot support	To give adequate postural support for those with low tone or provide and help control fluctuating or high muscle tone and uncontrolled movements.
The device should comfortably support a deep squat posture with knees higher than hips and trunk leaning forward and supported by the forearms. The rounded lower backrest needs contoured support.	In this posture the puborectalis muscle, which hugs the rectum, relaxes. This causes the rectum to straighten allowing faeces to pass easily thus reducing straining and the time to go. It also helps descent of the pelvic floor reducing residual urine in the bladder.
The material contacting the skin minimise sensory regulation difficulties.	A smooth, warm touch material minimises discomfort for children with sensory regulation issues.
The device must be lightweight and portable	This enables a consistent approach to toileting as the same toilet seat can be used at home or in any environment. It is particularly helpful for children with sensory issues, or those on the autism spectrum, who need consistent routines.
The device must adapt to suit all toilets encountered at home, at school or in the community	As well as consistency, this will provide freedom for children to participate in all activities/all environments.

## What are the clinical benefits of the GottaGo toilet seat?

*(Explain how this products features provide a benefit to the client, adapt as necessary)*

**Consistency enabled by portability:** The lightweight and easy to fold and transport design enables a consistent approach to toileting, and toilet training. The same device with the same posture can be used at home, at school or in the community. Consistency is the key to independence.

**Squat posture:** The GottaGo supports a deep squat posture with knees well above hips. This is the optimum position for bladder and bowel health and a natural treatment for constipation. The design ensures pressure is evenly distributed along the thighs and not concentrated on the bottom.

**Frame height adjustment** The GottaGo can cater for 3 toilet height settings: child, standard and disabled toilet. It has a potty insert which enables the GottaGo to be used anywhere, including picnics, camping or vacation.

**Postural support:** The contoured seat with adjustable back provides effective support for children with even complex postural needs. This simple design can replace the complicated mechanical supports (headrest, laterals, harnesses, hip guides) of conventional supportive toilet seats. The contoured backrest supports the natural rounding of the lumbar spine when toileting.

**Comfort:** The inclined seat base provides support along the full length of the thighs. The deep squat posture encourages a forward lean with trunk supported by propping arms on thighs as in typical toileting, rather than through a chest's harness. The bi-lateral ratchet straps are independently adjustable to a variety of body shapes.





**Sensory:** The contoured seat base provides enhanced proprioceptive feedback to improve stability enabling Jane to relax her pelvic floor. The warm touch seat base minimises sensory difficulties.

**Familiarity:** Unlike other products, the GottaGo is solely for toileting helping Jane associate the product and posture with this ADL and preventing confusion with joint functionality, such as experienced with dual purpose toileting and bathing products.

**Growth:** The seat will grow with the child with easily adjustable seat depth and footplate height while maintaining the squat posture.

**Components of the GottaGo** *(Delete components as appropriate)*

I am requesting funding for the GottaGo size X. All accessories including the portable changing bag are included. This product will have approximately X years left of growth.

Item	Description of Medical Necessity
<p><b>Size 1 GottaGo package</b></p> 	<p>The size 1 GottaGo package includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size 1 seat</li> <li>• GottaGo frame</li> <li>• Safety belt</li> <li>• Footstraps</li> <li>• Adjustable footplate</li> <li>• Portable changing bag</li> <li>• Potty insert</li> </ul>
<p><b>Size 2 GottaGo package</b></p> 	<p>The size 2 GottaGo package includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size 2 seat</li> <li>• GottaGo frame</li> <li>• Safety belt</li> <li>• Footstraps</li> <li>• Adjustable footplate</li> <li>• Potty insert</li> <li>• Portable changing bag</li> </ul>
<p><b>Size 2 GottaGo (Seat only)</b></p> 	<p>The same frame is used for both the size 1 and size 2 GottaGo seats, to enable Jane’s continued independence with toileting as she grows.</p>
<p><b>GottaGo Therapy Programme</b></p> 	<p>The GottaGo therapy programme is designed by therapists specifically to support families who are toilet training a child with a disability. It offers a neurological-based approach to developing toileting based on four foundational skills; physical, cognition, social and sensory, with practical strategies to strengthen these skills.</p>



## **What alternatives are not suitable compared to GottaGo?**

No other toilet seat supports a deep squat posture. Other toilet seats attempt a squat by raising the footplate; however, this results in an unstable posture with thighs inadequately supported. This method also increases the pressure on the bottom which hampers relaxation and is uncomfortable. Backrests on alternative seats do not accommodate the rounding of the lumbar spine required for a squat posture.

The only other adaptive toileting system which is indicated as portable is a dual-purpose seat, intended for both toileting and showering. However, this adds confusion to the toilet training process. In addition, this portable option cannot be used as a primary frame and therefore two frames are required for the purposes of toileting.

## **Costs of not having the equipment**

Without this device Jane is at increased risk of health complications such as urinary tract infections, skin irritation and constipation, all of which increase lifetime pharmaceutical costs and interventions.

Constipation, in particular, presents a significant economic burden to the US healthcare system, with an estimated federal government spend of \$3.9 billion per year being spent caring for children with constipation. Compared to other common diseases, such as childhood asthma and migraine, children with constipation demand and need more medical attention, even as much as 7 times higher than asthma and 3 times higher than migraine. Poor toilet training is a well-known cause of constipation in children and the negative effect on quality of life often persists into adulthood.

In addition, continence will eliminate the need for funding of disposable diapers, or for families to incur out-of-pocket expenses for diapers, which are estimated to cost between \$1,440 to \$1,800 annually.

## Conclusion

The GottaGo is essential to Jane's physical health, social development and mental wellbeing. This lightweight (13lbs), sturdy and portable device, together with the toileting programme, will enable a consistent routine to be established. The unique contoured support of the back and seat base, which provides a deep squat posture, will have significant benefits on bladder and bowel health, all while offering optimum postural support. Continence will eliminate the need for disposable diapers, while boosting self-esteem and reducing the lifetime costs of other medical care. Toileting is a fundamental life skill and I strongly recommend funding for this product.

## Show the different variations of the product



## References

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Diaper and Incontinence Product Coverage Through Medicaid and Insurance <https://complexchild.org/articles/2012-articles/january/diaper-coverage/>

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