

# Medicare Reimbursement Guide for Power Wheelchair Drive Control Systems

## Drive Control System Terminology

The term **interface** in the code narrative and definitions describes the mechanism for controlling the movement of a power wheelchair. Examples of interfaces include, but are not limited to, joystick, sip and puff, chin control, head control, etc.

A **proportional interface** is one in which the direction and amount of movement by the patient controls the direction and speed of the wheelchair. One example of a proportional interface is a standard joystick.

A **non-proportional interface** is one, which involves a number of switches. Selecting a particular switch determines the direction of the wheelchair, but the speed is pre-programmed. One example of a non-proportional interface is a sip-and-puff mechanism.

The term **controller** describes the electronics that connect the interface to the motor and gears in the power wheelchair base.

A **switch** is an electronic device, which turns power to a particular function either "on" or "off". The external component of a switch may be either mechanical or non-mechanical. Mechanical switches involve physical contact in order to be activated. Examples of the external components of mechanical switches include, but are not limited to, toggle, button, ribbon, etc. Examples of the external components of non-mechanical switches include, but are not limited to, proximity, infrared, etc. Some of the codes include multiple switches. In those situations, each functional switch may have its own external component or multiple functional switches may be integrated into a single external switch component or multiple functional switches may be integrated into the wheelchair control interface without having a distinct external switch component.

A **stop switch** allows for an emergency stop when a wheelchair with a non-proportional interface is operating in the latched mode. (Latched mode is when the wheelchair continues to move without the patient having to continually activate the interface.) This switch is sometimes referred to as a kill switch.

A **direction change switch** allows the patient to change the direction that is controlled by another separate switch or by a mechanical proportional head control interface. For example, it allows a switch to initiate forward movement one time and backward movement another time.

A **function selection switch** allows the patient to determine what operation is being controlled by the interface at any particular time. Operations may include, but are not limited to, drive forward, drive backward, tilt forward, recline backward, etc.

## HCPSC Coding for Drive Control Systems

**E1028** Wheelchair accessory, manual swing away, retractable or removable mounting hardware for joystick, other control interface or positioning accessory (**\$175.56 to 206.28**)

### Coding Guideline (E1028)

Code E1028 is used for hardware that allows a cushioned headrest (E0955), lateral trunk or hip supports (E0956, E1025-E1027), or a medial thigh support (E0957) to swing away manually or to be removed. Code E1028 is also used for swing away hardware used with interfaces described by codes E2320 and E2321, swing away or flip-down hardware for head control interfaces E2327-E2330, and swing away hardware for an indicator display box that is related to the multi-motor electronic connection codes E2310 or E2311. Code E1028 is not to be used for swing away hardware used with a sip and puff interface (E2325) because swing away hardware is included in the allowance for that code.

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The interfaces described below by codes E2320-E2322, E2325, and E2327-E2330 must have programmable control parameters for speed adjustment, tremor dampening, acceleration control, and braking.

**E2320** Power wheelchair accessory, hand or chin control interface, remote joystick or touch pad, proportional, including all related electronics, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$848 to \$999)**

**E2321** Power wheelchair accessory, hand control interface, remote joystick, non-proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical stop switch, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$1302 to \$1533)**

**Coding Guideline (E2320 and E2321)**

A remote joystick (E2320, E2321) is one in which the joystick itself is separate from the controller box (i.e., the box containing the electronics that connects the interface to the motor and gears). These codes include remote joysticks that are used for hand control as well as joysticks that are used for chin control. Code E2320 includes either a standard proportional remote joystick stick or a proportional remote joystick in which small movements of the joystick are sufficient to control the wheelchair. The latter type of joystick is sometimes referred to as mini-proportional, compact, or short throw joysticks.

Code E2320 also describes a touch pad, which is an interface similar to the pad-type mouse found on portable computers.

**E2322** Power wheelchair accessory, hand control interface, multiple mechanical switches, non-proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical stop switch, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$1198 to \$1411)**

**Coding Guideline (E2322)**

Code E2322 describes a system of 3-5 mechanical switches, which are activated by the patient touching the switch. The switch that is selected determines the direction of the wheelchair. A mechanical stop switch and a mechanical direction change switch, if provided, are included in the allowance for the code.

**E2323** Power wheelchair accessory, specialty joystick handle for hand control interface, prefabricated **(\$54 to \$65)**

**Coding Guideline (E2323)**

Code E2323 includes prefabricated joystick handles that have shapes other than a straight stick - e.g., U shape or T shape - or that have some other nonstandard feature - e.g., flexible shaft.

**E2324** Power wheelchair accessory, chin cup for chin control interface **(\$37 to \$45)**

**Coding Guideline (E2324)**

When code E2320 or E2321 is used for a chin control interface, the chin cup is billed separately with code E2324.

**E2325** Power wheelchair accessory, sip and puff interface, non-proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical stop switch, and manual swing away mounting hardware **(\$1144 to \$1347)**

**E2326** Power wheelchair accessory, breath tube kit for sip and puff interface **(\$271 to \$320)**

**Coding Guideline (E2325 and E2326)**

A sip and puff interface (E2325) is a non-proportional interface in which the patient holds a tube in their mouth and controls the wheelchair by either sucking in (sip) or blowing out (puff). A mechanical stop switch is included in the allowance for the code. E2325 does not include the breath tube kit described by code E2326.

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- E2327** Power wheelchair accessory, head control interface, mechanical, proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical direction change switch, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$1960 to \$2307)**
- Coding Guideline (E2327)**  
A proportional, mechanical head control interface (E2327) is one in which a headrest is attached to a joystick-like device. The direction and amount of movement of the patient's head pressing on the headrest control the direction and speed of the wheelchair. A mechanical direction control switch is included in the code.
- E2328** Power wheelchair accessory, head control or extremity control interface, electronic, proportional, including all related electronics and fixed mounting hardware **(\$3295 to \$3878)**
- Coding Guideline (E2328)**  
A proportional, electronic head control interface (E2328) is one in which a patient's head movements are sensed by a box placed behind the patient's head. The direction and amount of movement of the patient's head (which does not come in contact with the box) control the direction and speed of the wheelchair. A proportional, electronic extremity control interface (E2328) is one in which the direction and amount of movement of the patient's arm or leg control the direction and speed of the wheelchair.
- E2329** Power wheelchair accessory, head control interface, contact switch mechanism, non-proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical stop switch, mechanical direction change switch, head array, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$1470 to \$1731)**
- Coding Guideline (E2329)**  
A non-proportional, contact switch head control interface (E2329) is one in which a patient activates one of three mechanical switches placed around the back and sides of their head. These switches are activated by pressure of the head against the switch. The switch that is selected determines the direction of the wheelchair. A mechanical stop switch and a mechanical direction change switch are included in the allowance for the code.
- E2330** Power wheelchair accessory, head control interface, proximity switch mechanism, non-proportional, including all related electronics, mechanical stop switch, mechanical direction change switch, head array, and fixed mounting hardware **(\$2833 to \$3334)**
- Coding Guideline (E2330)**  
A non-proportional, proximity switch head control interface (E2330) is one in which a patient activates one of three switches placed around the back and sides of their head. Movement of the head toward the switch activates the switch, though the head does not touch the switch. The switch that is selected determines the direction of the wheelchair. A mechanical stop switch and a mechanical direction change switch is included in the allowance for the code
- E2331** Power wheelchair accessory, attendant control, proportional, including all related electronics and fixed mounting hardware **(Non-covered by Medicare)**
- Coding Guideline (E2331)**  
An attendant control (E2331) is one, which allows a caregiver to drive the wheelchair instead of the patient. The attendant control is usually mounted on one of the rear canes of the wheelchair. This code is limited to proportional control devices, usually a joystick.
- E2399** Power wheelchair accessory, not otherwise classified interface, including all related electronics and any type mounting hardware **(Individual Consideration)**

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