

Home Health Line Tool

Discharge Function: Quick Guide to GG0170 (Mobility) Part 2

CMS has noted it plans to add the OASIS-based Discharge Function Score to the Home Health Quality of Patient Care Star Rating in the near future, according to the 2027 Home Health Prospective Payment System Proposed Rule. This is part of a series of one-page tools sharing expert tips and CMS instructions to address challenges clinicians face with accurate scoring for the Discharge Function measures.

- _____ **GG0170I (Walk 10 feet):** Once standing, the ability to walk at least 10 feet in a room, corridor or similar space.
- _____ **GG0170J (Walk 50 feet with two turns):** Once standing, the ability to walk 50 feet and make two turns.
- _____ **GG0170R (Wheel 50 feet with two turns):** Once seated in wheelchair/scooter, the ability to wheel at least 50 feet and make two turns.

Scoring

Code the patient's usual performance for each activity using the six-point scale. If the activity wasn't attempted, code the reason.

Remember: Activities may be completed with assistive devices.

6. **Independent** – Patient completes the activity by themselves with no assistance from a helper.
5. **Setup or clean-up assistance** – Helper sets up or cleans up; patient completes activity. Helper assists only prior to or following the activity.
4. **Supervision or touching assistance** – Helper provides verbal cues, touching/steadying and/or contact guard assistance as patient completes activity. Assistance may be provided throughout the activity or intermittently.
3. **Partial/moderate assistance** – Helper does LESS THAN HALF the effort. Helper lifts, holds or supports trunk or limbs, but provides less than half the effort.

2. **Substantial/maximal assistance** – Helper does MORE THAN HALF the effort. Helper lifts or holds trunk or limbs and provides more than half the effort.

1. **Dependent** – Helper does ALL of the effort. Patient does none of the effort to complete the activity. Or, the assistance of two or more helpers is required for the patient to complete the activity.

If activity was not attempted, code reason:

7. **Patient refused**
9. **Not applicable** – Not attempted and the patient did not perform this activity prior to the current illness, exacerbation or injury.
10. **Not attempted due to environmental limitations (e.g., lack of equipment, weather constraints)**
88. **Not attempted due to medical condition or safety concerns**

Important notes

Accurately assessed mobility data at the beginning of a quality episode promotes development of a patient-specific care plan, facilitating mobility safety, bathroom access, pressure relief measures and medication access.

Working toward patient safety and independence with ambulation and stairs prevents falls and improves access to bathing, meal preparation, laundry and all tasks that promote patient independence and ability to remain in their homes.

For GG0170I&J, you should consider:

- Can the patient walk? If so, how far?
- Can the patient navigate two turns?
- Is the patient safe walking on uneven or sloping surfaces?

The assessment of these items takes place from when the patient is in a standing position to when they complete the task required in the GG item.

If the patient needs to sit and rest during a GG walking activity, they should be marked as being unable to perform the task. Note, however, that the patient is allowed to take a brief standing break during the activity and this does not affect the scoring of the task.

Using an assistive device does not make the patient more dependent.

Consider this scenario

The patient is admitted to home health after a hospitalization for a COPD exacerbation. The patient is noted to have shortness of breath at rest. The patient is able to walk 15 feet with continuous human supervision and then she has to sit down and rest. Patient takes about five minutes to recover. Once recovered, she is able to walk again for a few more steps. She is on oxygen continuously at 3 LPM. She is unable to take her oxygen off due to her O2 sats dropping in the low 80s if removed. The patient is unable to maneuver over the different surfaces in her home safely due to having to drag her oxygen behind her and having severe shortness of breath with ambulation. Her husband moved all her necessary belongings to the living room area, since this area has hardwood floors and is easier for the patient to pull her oxygen tank. She has a sunken living room and half-bath and she is unable to climb the one or two steps to access the other parts of the home. Prior to her hospital stay she was able to go to each area of her home safely on her own.

How would you score this patient for GG0170I & J? The correct scoring for GG0170I is “3 — Partial-moderate assistance” and the correct scoring for GG0170J is “1 — Dependent.”

Editor's note: The scenario was provided by Celeste Miller, executive director of quality assurance for Aegis Healthcare.