

NURSING SERVICE GUIDELINES INPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Guideline: Mobility aids

Policy Number Superseded: Combined guideline
Merry Walker and Sara Steady – February 2026

Responsibility: All trained inpatient
behavioral health staff

Purpose of Guideline: To provide a method of
safe and independent transfer, standing, and/or
ambulation for patients with balance, lower
extremity, mobility or walking disabilities.



Effective Date:
February 2026

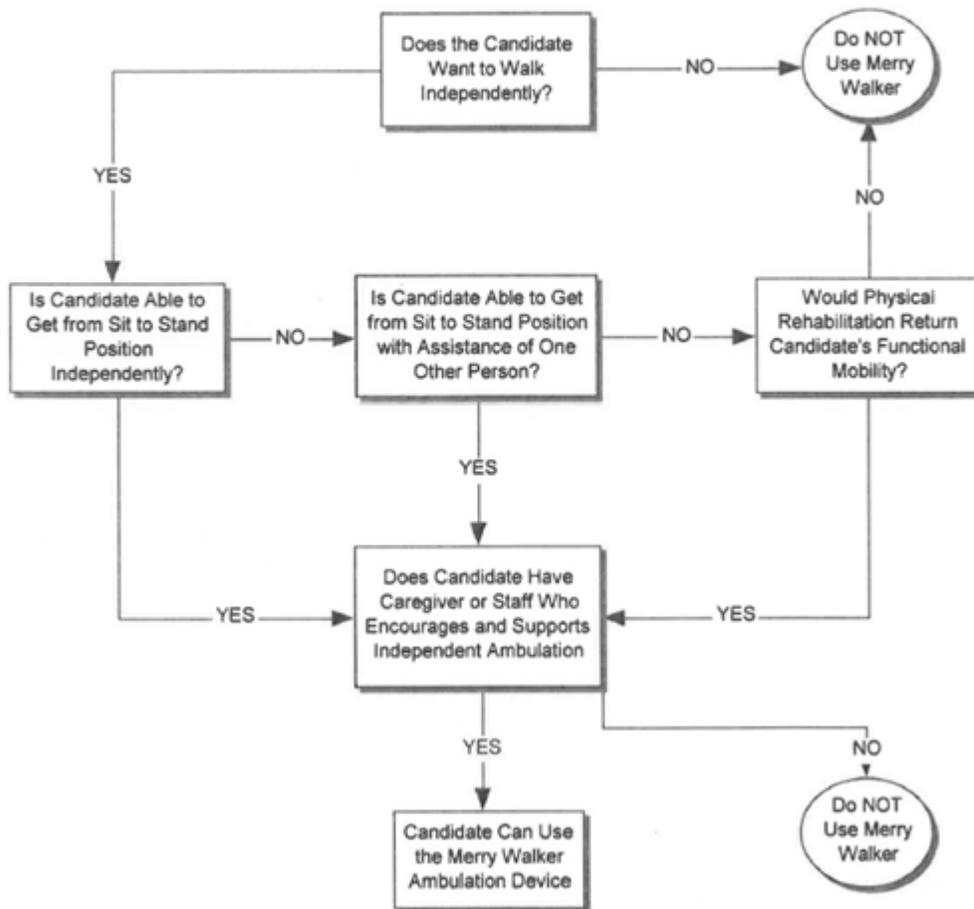
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Procedure:

Merry Walker

- (A) The purpose of the Merry Walker is to give patients the chance to walk safely.
- (B) The Merry Walker is not considered a restraint, as long as the patient is able to get themselves out of the walker.
- (C) The patient must be assessed by utilizing the following flowchart, during every shift and with change of condition.

Who Should Use the Merry Walker Ambulation Device?



- (D) The use of the Merry Walker will be documented by the nurse in the nursing progress notes.
- (E) Medium walker: patient height of 5'3" to 5'7" and 95 to 300 pounds in weight.
- (F) Large walker: patient height of 5'8" to 6' and up to 600 pounds in weight.
- (G) Treatment plan will indicate usage of Merry Walker.
- (H) Have patient sit down in the walker. The front cross bar must be secured; place the safety strap between patient's legs and secure over the top of the front cross bar. Ask the patient to stand up by placing their hands on the side rails. Have the patient place their hands on the front cross bar and start walking.

- (I) If a patient begins to attempt to “climb out” of the walker, discontinue use of the Merry Walker for patient safety.
- (J) A staff member must offer toileting at a minimum of every two hours and after every meal when a patient is utilizing the Merry Walker.
- (K) The Merry Walker is to be sanitized and cleaned between each patient use (purple wipes) per UTMC infection control policy. The fabric on the chair must be laundered after each patient use. After cleaning, the walker will be stored in the clean equipment room.
- (L) The patient cannot be left unattended while in the Merry Walker – patient is a LINE OF SIGHT while in the walker.

Sara Stedy

- (A) Who is it for?

What kind of patient is this device for? If they meet the following criteria, they may be a good candidate.

- (1) Weak legs.
- (2) Low endurance.
- (3) Cannot walk more than a couple of steps.
- (4) Unsteady gait.
- (5) Requires assistance of two people to ambulate.
- (6) Understands directions.
- (7) Partly capable of performing daily activities.
- (8) Can assist with transfers.

- (B) Getting the Sara Stedy into position.

- (1) There are two flaps for the patient to sit down on, called seat wings. Make sure they are pushed up before rolling the Sara Stedy towards the patient. There are four wheels at the bottom. Two of them can lock in place. Make sure the wheels are unlocked so you can roll it towards the patient.
- (2) When the Sara Stedy is in the desired position, lock the two wheels so it does not slip out from under the patient.

- (3) If you are having trouble placing the device underneath the patient, the other two wheels in the back may be able to widen or narrow down by pushing on two-foot pedals. It has this feature so it can be placed as close to the patient as possible. This is especially useful when pushing it underneath a bed or around a chair or toilet.

(C) Placing the patient on the Sara Steady.

- (1) After bringing the Sara Steady as close to them as possible, place their feet onto the platform (called a foot plate) located on the bottom of the device. This will prevent their feet from dragging on the floor when they are moved around.
- (2) There are also knee guards that their knees should rest against. They help secure their legs to make sure they do not slip off the foot plate whenever they sit on the seat wings.
- (3) After you ensure they are in a good position, have them grab onto the rail directly in front of them to help themselves stand up. Tell them to pull their belly up to the rail. Assist them if needed.
- (4) After they are standing as upright as possible, bring the seat wings down and have them slowly sit on them. You can always help them ease down and assure them that there is a seat underneath them.
- (5) Make sure they hold onto the rail during this entire process. Check to make sure their feet are still firmly on the platform and their shins and knees are comfortably against the knee guards.

(D) Bringing the patient to their destination.

- (1) You may now unlock the wheels and use the two handles next to the rail that the patient is holding on to push, pull, and steer them into the spot where they need to be. Again, you can always widen or narrow the two back wheels if needed.
- (2) When their bottom is directly underneath where you want them to sit down, lock the wheels back into place. Have them slowly stand up straight, belly to the rail, all while holding firmly onto the rail in front of them.

(E) Cleaning and storage.

- (1) Clean with purple wipes after each use.
- (2) Return to clean storage room when completed.

Approved by:

*Kurt Kless, MSN, MBA, RN, NE-BC
Chief Nursing Officer*

Initial effective date:

February 2026 (*combined guidelines
Merry Walker and Sara Stedy*)

Review/Revision Completed by:

Psychiatry - Inpatient Administration

Review/Revision Date:

Next review date:

February 2029