

Virtual O&M Activities Overview

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Project Independence: Georgia Vision Program for Adults Age 55 and Over

Sighted Guide

- Review sighted/ human guide skills with your family.
- Teach a new person how to guide you properly via video call.
- Practice your skills around your home, yard or neighbourhood with family/ close friends; as we transition to increased social interaction, use skills in the community to continue practice.
- Use sighted guide for exercise

Protective Techniques/Lost Items

- Review the correct hand position for the upper hand and lower hand protective techniques.
- Practice using the techniques while moving around your home, yard.
- Practice while bending over to locate lost items.
- Have a family member drop items and practice finding them with sound and search patterns.

Mental Mapping

- Introduce mental mapping concept. Have client mentally map room they are in
- Review skills in various rooms of the home, yard, shopping areas, schools, etc.
- Introduce concepts of landmarks/ clues
- Practice using landmarks and clues to describe routes in your home or yard
- Review common routes you would take in school, work, community and discuss landmarks and sensory clues in these environments
- Practice compass directions; apply to rooms in home, house, yard, neighbourhood; build mental maps of area with compass directions.
- Consider route patterns/ planning (I, L, U, O, Z)
- Utilize familiarization strategies. Learn spaces in the home, practice moving from one area to another, using trailing and protective techniques.
- Make maps of various rooms, homes, or community spaces.
- Have instructor describe their area/ home to give client practice asking questions about new environment.
- Practice “calling” for information prior to travelling to new area
- Develop and practice typical orientation scenarios; how to plan and execute a route, problem solving and soliciting assistance

Emergency Preparedness

- Identify all exits in the home. Are they clear of debris/ objects/ clutter?
- Practice leaving from all exits and moving away from the house and locating a safe family meeting spot. (Note, if this activity includes travel in any areas for which independence skills have not yet been mastered, use a human guide to lead you.)
- Create a "Family Emergency Plan" to include:
 - Check fire, smoke, and CO2 alarms. Call Fire Station if you need help testing these devices.
 - Check and try all exits.
 - Learn route from the house to the family meeting location. (Note, use mastered skills only., or practice with a human guide.)
 - Develop an emergency bag (see the lesson for needed items).
 - Decide on a safe, central location to leave your cane, bag, and flashlight in case you have to leave in a hurry.

Fall Prevention

- Practice leg and balance exercises daily.
- Complete the falls checklist with your instructor.
- Do a home-check for fall hazards and make a plan to correct/ repair issues.
- Check mobility equipment frequently for damage.
- Check shoes frequently for wear and tear that could cause a fall.
- With support provider/ family member, practice sliding off couch/ chair onto floor; practice strategies for getting up off the floor.

Cane Skills (Note SOME of these activities are suggested for maintaining skills already learned, not intended for completely new instruction.)

New skills practice:

- Learn/review basic cane parts, grip and swing, while standing in home.
- Practice swings daily in the home to build muscle strength and memory.
- Practice technique indoors in home (with sighted help if needed) or on the driveway.
- Discuss & practice locking cane to items; clearing to go around objects
- Discuss & practice skills for approaching and navigating doorways
- Discuss using cane with human/ sighted guide
- Discuss how to navigate restrooms with cane (practice ONLY with trusted guide if needed while outside of the home)

Advanced skills review: (only if client has had training and been cleared to do these skills prior to Covid-19 restrictions:

- Review and practice strategies for steps.
- Discuss questions for advanced cane skills with an instructor over the phone.
- Review various cane skills/ techniques and how they differ. Practice various swing types in home or driveway; discuss when to use one technique over the other (problem solving)
- Discuss cane techniques for unique environments/ situations

Street Crossing Skills (Note these activities are only suggested for maintaining skills already developed and should be practiced with assistance of a human guide to insure safety at all times.)

- Verbally review steps to approaching an intersection and practice the following (with sighted assistance):
 - Find curb, clear with a cane, stop, look, and listen.

- Analyze intersection shape/traffic control. Are there multiple lanes/danger zones? Is there a pedestrian button/head (walk/don't walk signal)?
- Practice listening for traffic (ID parallel, perpendicular).
- Practice crossing with a sighted guide, adult, or helper.

Transportation

- Determine your transportation budget.
- Identify various transportation options in your area. Create a list of pros and cons for each option (frequency, cost, area-covered, etc.).
- Create a list of potential volunteers or paid drivers.
- Develop a list of typical places you need to travel and decide which transportation option would work best for each type of trip (family to go to doctor/groceries? Uber/Lyft to go to see friends/ movies at night).
- Download Uber/Lyft apps and learn with an instructor or family member over the phone or with a virtual instructional tool (Zoom, FB messenger, etc.).
- Complete applications with an instructor for any community-based transportation services.
- Make a list of key points you care about in a volunteer/paid driver.
- Create an ad for volunteer/paid drivers in your church/neighborhood. Decide how/where to advertise (senior/community center, apartment mailboxes, NextDoor app, etc.).
- Develop interview questions and role-play with an instructor or family.
- Research and plan routes from your home to various community areas.
- Practice!

Problem-Solving

- Discuss typical scenarios that arise while traveling as someone with vision loss. Problem solve "What would I do?"
- Develop a safety plan.
- Install "Find My Phone" on your loved one's phone.
- Develop an emergency plan for shopping/going out (where to meet if you get separated).
- Review who you can ask for help.

Technology & OM:

- Learn to use Uber/Lyft apps.
- Explore and learn Be My Eyes, Aira, and BlindSquare.
- Explore the Around Me app.
- Join a technology chat group to see how others use this technology.

- Listen to technology-related podcasts to learn more information.
- Take an online course from Hadley.

O&M for Work and Leisure:

- Think about the specific safety or travel concerns you have for your ideal school, job, or internship.
- Problem-solve solutions with family, instructor, and others with vision loss.
- Explore additional leisure activities that can be done with vision loss (see lesson).
 - www.usaba.org/
 - georgiablindsports.net/
 - www.campabilities.org/other-camps.html