

Table 2 – Upper Limb Function

Introduction to Table 2

Table 2 is to be used to assess the functional impact of a diagnosed condition when performing activities requiring the use of upper limbs.

The diagnosis of the condition causing the impairment must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner.

There must be corroborating evidence of the person's impairment.

Self-report of symptoms must be supported by corroborating medical evidence.

Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a report from the person's treating doctor;
- a report from a medical specialist confirming diagnosis of conditions associated with upper limb impairment (such as arthritis or other condition affecting upper limb joints, paralysis or loss of strength or sensation resulting from stroke or other brain or nerve injury, cerebral palsy or other condition affecting upper limb coordination, inflammation or injury of the muscles or tendons of the upper limbs, chronic pain affecting the upper limbs, amputation or absence of whole or part of upper limb, lymphoedema, or peripheral neuropathy);
- a report from an allied health practitioner (such as physiotherapist, occupational therapist or exercise physiologist) confirming the functional impact;
- results of diagnostic tests (such as X-Rays or other imagery); results of physical tests or assessments.

For the purposes of this Table, upper limbs extend from the shoulder to the fingers.

- If a person's dominant upper limb is impaired, consideration should be given to their ability to adapt and use their non-dominant upper limb to perform tasks.

When determining whether a descriptor applies that involves a person performing an activity, the descriptor applies if that person can do the activity when they would be expected to do so and not only once or rarely.

When assessing episodic or fluctuating impairments and conditions (such as chronic pain), a rating must be assigned which reflects the overall functional impact of those impairments, taking into account the severity, duration and frequency of the episodes or fluctuations as appropriate.

The examples used in descriptors are not an exhaustive list and are to be used only as a guide.

Assistance means assistance from another person rather than any aids or equipment the person may use, unless specified otherwise.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is no or minimal functional impact on activities using upper limbs.</i></p> <p>(1) The person can pick up, handle, manipulate and use most objects encountered on a daily basis without difficulty.</p>
5	<p><i>There is a mild functional impact on activities using upper limbs.</i></p> <p>(1) The person can manage most daily activities requiring the use of the upper limbs, but has mild difficulty with at least 3 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) picking up heavier objects; <i>Example: picking up and using large bulky tools such as a leaf blower, or picking up and pouring a full kettle.</i> (b) handling very small objects; <i>Example: picking up coins or picking up and using paper clips or pins.</i> (c) doing up buttons or tying laces; (d) Reaching up above head height or out to pick up objects. <i>Example: reaching overhead to retrieve a kitchen appliance, stocking deep or high shelves, hanging heavy washing overhead or changing a ceiling light bulb.</i>
10	<p><i>There is a moderate functional impact on activities using upper limbs.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has moderate difficulty carrying out at least 4 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) picking up a 1 litre carton full of liquid; (b) picking up a light but bulky object requiring the use of 2 hands together; <i>Example: a cardboard box.</i> (c) holding and using a pen or pencil; (d) doing up buttons, tying shoelaces or doing up a zipper; <i>Example: wearing clothing that goes on over the head to avoid doing up buttons.</i> (e) raising arms to dress or wash hair, or reaching into a cupboard at head height; (f) using a standard computer keyboard, mouse or phone functions; (g) Carrying out a function such as grip and twist or pinch and pull. <i>Example 1: unscrewing the lid on a bottle or jar, or turning a tap.</i> <i>Example 2: opening food packaging</i>

20	<p><i>There is a severe functional impact on activities using upper limbs.</i></p> <p>(1) At least 3 of the following apply to the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the person has limited movement or coordination in both upper limbs, has an amputation or nerve damage rendering an upper limb non-functional;(b) the person has severe difficulty handling, moving or carrying most objects without assistance;(c) the person has severe difficulty using a small object; <i>Example: holding and using a fork or spoon, holding and using a pen or pencil.</i>(d) the person has severe difficulty turning the pages of a book without assistance;(e) the person has severe difficulty undertaking any activity that involves reaching overhead. <i>Example: accessing items above shoulder height, brushing hair.</i>
30	<p><i>There is an extreme functional impact on activities using upper limbs.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has no function in both of their upper limbs or the person has no upper limbs.</p>