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### **Mobility Matters in Western North Carolina**

*Drastically reduced wait times now available for those in need of mobile seating*

Asheville: Imagine needing a wheelchair to get anywhere, even inside your own home. Once you've established the need, now imagine that you must wait 12 months until you can be mobile! It may sound like a scenario out of a horror movie. In fact, it's a very real situation facing many with mobility challenges in Western North Carolina.

Dr. Amy Siegler, an Asheville-based occupational therapist, is changing that dynamic through her newly formed company called LimbTech ([limbtechnc.com](http://limbtechnc.com)). She provides the vital service required by Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance companies: having an occupational or physical therapist evaluate and make recommendations for all seating systems, including manual and powered wheelchairs, standers and pediatric strollers.

**Dr. Siegler's one of only a handful providing this life-changing service in WNC.** The need for LimbTech grew when HCA Healthcare, Inc., the new Mission Hospital owners, suddenly closed CarePartners' seating and positioning clinic that served thousands of patients each year.

"With such a demand for wheelchairs in Western North Carolina, why would any company announce the closing of their seating and positioning clinic?" asks Dr. Siegler. "It's unconscionable."

The current situation in Western NC is dire, driven by the influx of individuals who require wheelchair assessments. They've had difficulties dealing with insurance companies, while the turnaround times have stretched past nine months. Just as frustrating as the wait times is the rate at which insurance companies are still denying individuals who physically need a wheelchair for mobility. The reason? They can't get sufficient evaluations done in WNC, which CarePartners clinic used to provide.

It's not just about mobility. Some need access to wheelchairs to increase their respiration, maintain their blood pressure, decrease edema and improve visual attention. The proper mobility seating allows them to participate in work, school and the everyday activities many take for granted. This vulnerable population has experienced rising rates of depression, anxiety and physical wounds. With mobility, people increase their overall independence, self-worth, psychological wellness and overall health.

LimbTech is currently a mobile operation. They do all the evaluations, follow-ups and wheelchair fittings in the comfort of individuals' homes. After an evaluation is complete, the therapist works with an interdisciplinary team to supply the wheelchair for proper fit and function and to compile enough documentation to submit for insurance authorization.

**Please help Dr. Siegler get the word out** to those in need of a wheelchair assessment. Anyone who's having difficulties performing everyday tasks — such as getting from one room to another, performing basic daily tasks like dressing and bathing, or even staying safe within their home — may benefit from a wheelchair. Without one, basic necessities remain out of reach.



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