

Product Appraisal Form: CAA National Evaluation Committee

Product Name: Headbed

Company: Headbed International

Date: 25 March 2014

The following is a list of criteria that should be addressed upon reviewing the product. Please attach further documents if necessary.

There are 2 primary areas for assessment:

- Technical which includes the product design, fabric or materials.
- Chiropractic Expert opinion.

1. Technical. This is to determine if the product is safe with regard to design and materials (or fabric).

Comment on what tests have been done on this product and state whether you believe adequate testing has been performed for you to make an assessment.

- This product is made from molded silicone rubber item produced from ZY-9130/9150 grade molding resin produced by Dongguan New-Orient Technology Co Ltd in China. Zedcon Scientific Services conducted laboratory testing of Headbed product for chemical resistance.
 - Conclusion: Headbed product has been found to be resistant to a range of the most aggressive chemicals normally encountered in the hairdressing industry. The results confirm that the silicone rubber is a very appropriate material of construction and that the product can be expected to maintain its integrity for many years even when exposed to hair treatment chemicals.
- Surveys and feedback from real clients and professionals using the product in the salon environment indicate that this product is fit-for-purpose and comfortable to use.
- When reviewing the design (including a visit to a nearby salon and fitting the Headbed to their basin), its features appear to be consistent with a safe and appropriate product.
- Therefore, in my opinion, this product appears to be well designed and made.

Have safety tests been conducted? If yes, do these tests comply with Australian or overseas safety standards? For more information on Australian safety standards, please refer to <http://www.productsafety.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/970773>

- Mandatory Safety Standard: N/A
 - Mandatory Information Standard: N/A
 - Use of Voluntary Standard: Unclear regarding the overall acceptance of a voluntary standard with respect to the provision of padding or support at the head/ neck and basin interface. It appears that some salons attempt to provide an interface surface between the neck and the basin while others do not. Another variable is the type of support or padding provided at this interface, and if it does occur, options include the use of a towel, foam, makeshift padding device
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or the hairdresser's free hand. If a Voluntary Standard does exist, then this product appears to fit this category most closely.

- Regulation Impact Statement: N/A

Has this product been TGA tested (if applicable). For more information please refer to <http://www.tga.gov.au/>. Do you have further comments in relation to this area?

- N/A

2. Expert Chiropractic opinion.

As an expert in the area of health and safety, please give your expert opinion on the following:

Has data been given by the manufacturer relating health (e.g. musculoskeletal or spinal) benefits. If so, please give a qualitative assessment of this data.

Abstracts, news articles, survey results, and opinion pieces related to health risks associated with the head and neck position when a client is using the salon basin to wash or colour their hair have been provided. The discussions around the advantages of this product appear to focus on 2 key areas: Comfort and Safety.

This product appears to be designed to:

- Support the head when the client places their head in the salon basin.
 - Based on information provided, a stable/ supported head position appears to result in increased perceived comfort.
 - As a result of the Headbed providing the head support (i.e. instead of the hairdresser supporting the clients head with their free hand), this product allows the hairdresser to adopt a more comfortable posture.
 - Reduce the amount of neck extension when the client places their head in the salon basin.
 - Based on information provided, reducing neck hyperextension (i.e. neck supported in a more neutral position) is likely to reduce the loading on the posterior and anterior structures of the neck and increase perceived comfort.
 - Reducing neck extension should help towards reducing the risk of injury or aggravating an underlying problem (e.g. neuromusculoskeletal problem, vascular incident), esp. if combined with neck rotation when washing the sides of the head.
 - Soften the interface between the client's neck and the wash basin.
 - Based on the information provided, having a softer and contoured interface between the neck and the wash basin is likely to result in increased levels of perceived comfort.
 - Seal the interface between the client's neck and the wash basin, thus preventing water leakage down the back of the neck.
 - Based on the information provided, preventing water from running down the back of the neck and back is likely to result in increased perceived comfort.
 - Reducing any water spillage on the floor should reduce the risk of a trip hazard.
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Is the design/materials or fabric conducive to postural/spinal health? This question includes general comfort.

- Yes, see above.

Please make comment on the impact of short and long term usage.

- This product appears to have been designed with both short and long term usage in mind.
- Without competition, this product appears to have the potential to become an industry standard.

Do you have any further comments in relation to product health (including spinal) benefits?

- No further comments. See above.

Would you refer this product to your patients? Please state why or why not.

- N/A for referring this product to patients.
- Yes to recommending this product.

Are there any suggestions to the manufacturer for improvement?

- None at this stage in terms of design as this product seems to be well designed and tested.
- Marketing material and claims should be revisited to ensure that no implied guarantees on safety or comfort are made. See detailed comments below.

Please outline any further comments you would like to make in relation to this product.

- I would advise that the CAA places conditions on what how this product makes any claims (e.g. on the box, in supporting documentation or marketing material).
 - On the proposal under “Key Benefits Include”, the following is claimed:
 - “Hygienic, soft and durable”
 - This claim seems appropriate.
 - “It will provide your clients with comfort and safety”
 - This wording, and in particular “will”, implies a guarantee of both comfort and safety. It would be reasonable to expect that this product improves perceived comfort compared to placing the neck into hyperextension or straight up against a ceramic basin or a make shift supportive device at the user-basin interface. However, in my opinion, there is no guarantee that this position will be comfortable in its own right (some people may not be comfortable in this position regardless of supportive devices) for all people.
 - With respect to the safety claim, this is more important because there is no guarantee that the client’s safety is ensured. Wording along the line of helps improve client safety seems more appropriate.
 - “Our design supports and protects the neck from injury”
 - Stating that the design supports the neck seems appropriate.
 - Stating that the design protects the neck from injury does not seem appropriate. Similar to the above, the statement should be reworded to improve client safety at the washbasin (compared to a hyperextended posture, no support, or makeshift supportive device)
 - “Assists with hairdressers safety and well being”
 - This statement is too general and vague. This product does appear to assist the hairdresser who would normally have to adopt an uncomfortable posture and hold the clients head while their hair is washed, but not all hairdressers do this. Minor rewording seems appropriate.
 - “Meets Salon Occupational Health and Safety Regulations”
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- This statement in its current form is too vague and is therefore not meaningful.
- It is important to consider that regulations are different between states in Australia and between countries across the globe. Making a sweeping statement such as this implies that this product meets Occupational Health and Safety standards around the globe without exception – a statement I would have a concern about making without a definitive confirmation that this is true.
- The 3 random samples of Hairdressing OSH standards that I checked (Australia NSW, Australia QLD, EU) included a section on ergonomics and posture related to the hairdresser. The most appropriate section that this statement appears to be relating to is the section on the ergonomic environment of the hairdresser. In this case it would appear that this product assists the hairdresser by supporting the clients head and therefore facilitating a better posture and freeing up the hairdressers other hand from prolonged static loading as they hold the clients head.
- Therefore, my opinion is that this statement should be clarified to reflect the above in a conservative manner.
- “It will compliment salon procedures and safe work practices at the wash basin”
 - This statement appears to be appropriate.
- “Ensures comfort and safety whilst applying a range of scalp massage movements, petrissage, and rotary movements”
 - Similar to the above comments, “ensures” implies a guarantee which, in my opinion, is not appropriate for either comfort or safety.
 - See above comments regarding similar issues raised for comfort and safety.
- “Makes colour removal very easy and safer for the hairdressing clients”
 - This statement appears to be appropriate.
 - When claiming “safer”, there should be a comparator (i.e. compared to a makeshift supportive device or no supportive device).

Overall, do you believe CAA should endorse this product? Please provide an explanation for your response.

- Yes.
 - This product appears to be well designed and offers an excellent alternative to what appears to be current practice (i.e. holding the clients head with one hand, using a rolled up towel, using a makeshift supportive device, or allowing the clients head to hyperextend into the wash basin).
 - In addition, this product appears to align with CAA values and appears to be a good fit.
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