

# Moving and Handling Policy

## Purpose

To ensure that a standardised, practical and knowledge-based approach is taken by workers ('workers' means anyone working for the employer, including employees, agency staff and contractors) on moving and handling in line with current legislation and departmental standards. This will facilitate a safe system of work. This policy has been produced in line with requirements specified in the Manual Handling Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) and The RCN Guide to Handling Patients (current revised 6th edition).

## Scope

All workers ('workers' means anyone working for the employer, including employees, agency staff and contractors).

## Policy

This policy applies to all, inclusive of employees, volunteers, agency workers, students, and relief staff and should be implemented by line managers, both during induction and at regular intervals.

Special consideration should be given to vulnerable workers, i.e. for pregnant staff and any others with an identified medical condition, supported in writing by the organisation's risk assessments.

Induction will include moving and handling instruction, practice and assessment as an essential component before any moving and handling task is undertaken in the workplace, and this will be subject to regular review.

Prospective workers will be made aware that care and consideration must be given to the tasks to be undertaken, and they must be suitable for the chosen place of work.

After completing a written risk assessment the assessor must make relevant workers and other relevant staff aware of its content and any identified remedial actions should be dealt with, e.g. obtaining equipment, identifying additional training, etc. Staff should follow the risk assessment guidance and instructions given; failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Managers and all users must be conversant with safe use of moving and handling equipment and must ensure that maintenance and use of equipment complies with the provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, the manufacturer's instructions, and safety precautions. Selection of equipment must be undertaken in consultation with the most appropriate person.

All equipment used in moving and handling must be stored in a safe manner and must not pose a hazard in itself and be protected against malicious damage.

Accidents to staff during moving and handling must be reported and documented as per the departmental accident reporting and investigation procedure. Those accidents, which cause a worker

to be incapacitated for over 7 days not including the day on which the accident happened, are reported under RIDDOR. Remedial action should be taken to limit a recurrence following investigation by senior managers.

The employer is insured for personal risks undertaken by the worker as described in their job description/analysis.

Safety disclaimers are not legally binding and cannot be upheld by courts.

There are many situations in which staff may be required to move or handle Service users or loads during their working day. During this activity there is potential for injury for both the worker and the Service user.

The Moving and Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) require employers to: -

- Avoid the need for their workers to carry out moving and handling operations whenever possible.
- If moving and handling is unavoidable a SUITABLE AND SUFFICIENT assessment must be undertaken.
- Reduce risk to workers and Service users, as far as is reasonably practicable, to the lowest level.

Assessments must be reviewed as the situation/condition of the Service user changes.

- Initial appraisals of risk and risk assessments will be supported by a training programme for each individual in order to ensure that workplace assessments are undertaken.
- Each department within the organisation is required to nominate an appropriate number of risk assessors, who will be trained to carry out risk assessments within the workplace or a Service user's home environment as part of the Care Plan.
- "The Guide to Handling of Patients", 6th Edition, produced by the National Back Pain Association in collaboration with the Royal College of Nursing, will be integral to the training process and should only be used in conjunction with the approved basic moving and handling training.
- An initial appraisal of risk must be undertaken and reported to the appropriate person.
- A risk assessment must be carried out on any moving and handling task whereby a risk has been identified. This risk must be eliminated, or if that is not possible, reduced to the lowest level as is reasonably practicable.
- The departmental M & H risk assessment form will be the only outcome-accepted evaluation of level of risk.
- Moving and handling of service users must be carried out as part of the care planning process, using the documentation provided by SOS Homecare.
- Where workers may move or handle service users, those workers must have initial training, an annual assessment of their competence conducted by a competent person and, be given remedial training and be reassessed if any assessment indicates that this is required.

## Procedure

It is recognised that managers require a broad understanding and working knowledge of risk assessments and moving and handling principles and they should establish working practices in consultation with the Health & Safety Adviser.

It is the responsibility of the organisation, delegated to the departmental manager, to identify risks and subsequently manage them.

The risk assessment should be a collaborative process between all parties involved in any daily working task. In any moving and handling task - inclusive of people moving - it is recognised that the worker requires adequate training and the Assessors require detailed knowledge of the following:

- The load;
- The task;
- The environment;
- Principles of safe handling;
- Individual capability.

Final decisions on the risk assessment outcome will be made by the respective manager or assessed responsible team member.

The employer may be liable if it can be proved that a risk assessment of the task or the standard and regularity of training has not been upheld, in order for the worker to carry out their duties related to moving and handling of inanimate loads and Service users (i.e. litigation from injured workers).

The worker could also be liable if found to be negligent in the undertaking of their duties. The employer has vicarious liability for actions taken by their workers on their behalf i.e. risk assessments.

It should be remembered that customer care is paramount and the resulting impact of the risk assessment must be sensitively managed by all involved.

Where there are disputes or conflicts between risk assessors, agencies, service users, professionals and any others, the senior manager (in consultation with the HSA) would make a decision in line with the respective current practice and legislation.

The policy will be reviewed, expanded or modified periodically, in accordance with changing conditions or legislation, on an annual basis.

All people involved in M&H tasks as part of their daily work must be appropriately clothed in either uniform (if provided) or clothing which facilitates the principles of safe handling.

The results of the risk assessment must be adhered to, except in instances whereby any of the following emergency situations apply:

- A person is in imminent danger of drowning;
- A person is in danger of a life threatening situation;
- In any other emergency situation time must be taken to assess the situation, plan the manoeuvre and obtain equipment if necessary.

## **Risk Assessments - general**

- A risk assessment format should be used alongside this policy. Users must note that it is the responsibility of the organisation, delegated to the departmental manager, and trained individuals to identify risks and subsequently manage them.
- For general guidance on moving and handling, and charts to assess some generic risks, see the Health and Safety Executive publication available at:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf>

## **Risk Assessments – lifts and hoists**

Where risks associated with lifts and hoists are to be undertaken, recognition of environmental factors is important. The Royal Institute of British Architects publish guidance on room design relevant to safe manual handling. These recommendations are usually incorporated within the lift or hoist manufacturers' safe usage guidelines. The guidelines may preclude some rooms for use with lifts and hoists due to lack of room for safe handling.

## **Other relevant documents:**

- Departmental Health & Safety Policy.
- Manual Handling Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).
- The RCN Guide to Handling Patients (current revised 6th edition).
- Work Equipment Regulations 1992.
- RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.
- LOLER - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.
- PUWER - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.
- Human Rights act 1998.
- Health & Safety at work act 1974.
- DOL - The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards will be part of The Mental Capacity Act 2005 from April 2009.
- Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## Moving and Handling Checklist

Before attempting to move either a person or an object ask yourself the following:

### 1. THE TASK

- Does it involve holding the weight away from your body?
- Does it involve twisting your body
  - a) Stooping?
  - b) Reaching upwards?
- Does it involve excessive movement of the load?
- Does it involve carrying the load for a distance?
- Does it involve excessive pushing or pulling?
- Does it involve excessive raising or lowering distances?
- Does it involve any sudden movement of the load?
- Does it require frequent or prolonged physical effort?
- Does it involve insufficient rest or recovery periods?

### 2. THE LOAD

Is it:

- Heavy?
- Bulky or unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable, or with contents likely to shift?
- Sharp, hot, or otherwise potentially damaging?

### 3. THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Are there:

- Space constraints preventing good posture?
- Uneven, slippery, or unstable floors?
- Variations in the level of floors or work surfaces?
- Extremes of temperatures, humidity or air movement?
- Poor lighting conditions?

### 4. INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITY

Does the job:

- Require unusual strength, height etc.?
- Create a hazard to those who are pregnant or have a health problem?
- Require special knowledge or training for its safe performance?

Before attempting a moving and handling task whereby any of the above questions can be answered 'yes', consult a senior member of staff for further instruction and advice