

## Moving and Handling

### Introduction

- Moving and transferring of service users is an important part of a care worker's job.
- It is essential that care workers understand how to do this safely without risking injury to themselves or the people they care for.
- Objects or people that are lifted are technically known as 'loads'

### The Spine

- Consists of 30 bones or vertebrae held apart by soft pads called Discs.
- Vertebrae have a hole down the middle – this is a channel which nerves travel to and from the brain. Nerves are the spinal cord.
- Spine divided into 4 sections: Cervical; Thoracic; Lumbar; Sacrum.
- Vertebrae and discs held together by muscles – allowing for flex and loads.
- Lumbar region most vulnerable – where loads are highest. Discs in this part of the body exposed to the weight of the upper body and any load being lifted.
- As you bend forwards the centre of gravity moves away from the base of the spine and the load on the spine effectively multiplies. Even the weight for the body can become significant load when you are bending.
- If you add any weight carried in the arms, the loads on the lower part of the spine can be enormous.
- The most common types of injury from lifting loads like these are the shoulder and lower back - if you are pregnant you should be especially cautious as your back is particularly vulnerable to injury.
- To protect your back you should lift with the spine held upright in its natural curves.

### Risk Assessments

#### 5 Steps to a Risk Assessment

1. Identify Hazards
2. Identify who is at Risk
3. Evaluate the Risk
4. Record your Findings
5. Review and Revise Assessments

#### Common Hazards:

Trips, Slips and Falls, Manual Handling, Extreme Temperatures, Slippery Surfaces, Fire Hazards, Falling Objects, Vehicles, Moving Machinery, Poor Lighting, Noise

#### Preventing Hazards:

Elimination, Substitution, Restricted Access, Safer Working Practices, New Safety Rules, Increased Supervision, Training, Warnings, Personal Protective Equipment

▪ <b>Task</b>	<i>Does it need to be done? Should any equipment be used? Why are you doing that particular task? How long will it take you to complete the task? Where are the starting and finishing points?</i>	<i>Which Moving and Handling technique should be used? Who should take the lead and give instructions? Are you holding loads a distance away from the body? Is there demanding pushing or pulling involved?</i>
▪ <b>Load</b>	<i>What is the size of the load - is it bulky, heavy or unwieldy? Is it difficult to hold? Are there any hand holds?</i>	<i>Is it unsteady or likely to move unexpectedly? Is it potentially harmful, e.g. hot or sharp? Is the load stable?</i>
▪ <b>Environment</b>	<i>Is there enough space for you to move and handle? Are there uneven, obstructed or slippery floors? Are there any obstructions? Are there any constraints on posture?</i>	<i>Are there any restrictions on movement from clothes or personal protective equipment (PPE)? Are there any changes in levels? What is the condition of the lighting?</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Individuals Capability</b></li> </ul>	<i>Are you fit enough to do the task? How fresh or fatigued are you? What is your experience and handling skill? - Do you require special training? Computability – height and strength of the patient</i>	<i>Are you familiar with the equipment? Have you had a history of back problems or injury? What clothing are you wearing? Does the task require above average strength or agility? Can you possibly endanger those with health problems, learning/physical disability or pregnant women?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Equipment –</b></li> </ul>	<i>Do you need special training to use the equipment? Can it be manoeuvred in the space you have to work in? Is it in good working order?</i>	<i>Are handling aids and equipment: - Suitable for the job and floor surface? - Well maintained (e.g. do brakes work if they exist, do wheels run smoothly, handle grips in good order etc.)? - Handle heights set between the waist and shoulders?</i>

**Condemned Lifts:**



Australian Carry Lift



Top and Tail Lift



Cradle Lift



Australian Lift

**Back Pain**

Causes:

- Unfit Muscles, Ligaments and Joints
- Cumulative Stress
- Degeneration
- Gynaecological
- Psychological
- Trauma
- Innovation of Nervous Tissue
- Sustained Poor Posture
- Awkward Positions
- Too much Flexion (Bending)
- Working at a speed beyond your capability
- Insufficient rest periods between each task
- Working in a draughty, cold or hot environment

**Using a Hoist and Slings**

Types of Hoists:

- Sling Hoists
- Standing and Raising Hoists
- Bath and Seat Hoists
- Overhead Tracking Hoists

Types of Slings:

- Hammock Slings
- Divided Leg Slings
- Divided Leg Slings (Head Restraint)
- Amputee Sling
- Toileting Sling (Universal)
- Standing Sling
- Walking Harness

Common Complaints in using a Hoist:

- "Too long to use"
- "Cant get into awkward, small spaces"
- "Employer does not have a hoist"

The Answer

- Take note of training Practice
- Don't try to use the hoist if you cant manoeuvre it
- Have you asked your employer for a hoist?

**Summary: Key Learning Points**

Assess the situation, Communication – 'Ready, Steady, Move', Stay close to the patient, Avoid Twisting, Maintain your Balance  
It is important to keep your back safe when moving and handling objects and loads in the home.  
There are 5 elements which need to be considered when moving and handling: the task; individual's capability; load; equipment and environment.  
There are many different scenarios in which you may need to move loads – use the right equipment  
We have shown you examples of the type of equipment available – you need to practice on the type used in your environment.  
Remember to always ask someone experienced if you are not sure how to use it.