



MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Version 1.3

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1. **AIM:** The aim of this policy it to instil an appropriate level of understanding in all staff members when approaching manual handling in the workplace relating to:

- Patients
- Moving objects

2. **INTRODUCTION**

This policy is for employers and employees at the clinic involved in moving and handling, particularly those who assess moving and handling needs and carry out handling activities.

3. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILTIES**

It is the responsibility of the clinic management team to ensure that the policy is read and understood by all members of staff in the clinic whom directly use lifting and handling techniques in their daily practice. Specifically, clinicians and ultrasound assistants. Further the company ensures that all staff undergo annual mandatory training which includes manual handling techniques and practices.

4. **EQUIPMENT**

Equipment available:

- Zimmer frame located in the reception/waiting room to aid patients if required
- Banana board for self or assisted transfer from wheelchair to examination couch
- Bariatric beds with hand rails if required
- Slide sheets for assisted transfer on and off the examination couch
- 'Dog lead' for to enable staff to assist patients in lifting their legs onto couch

5. **HAZARDS and SAFETY**

Poor moving and handling practice can lead to:

- back pain and musculoskeletal disorders, which can lead to inability to work
- moving and handling accidents – which can injure both the person being moved and the employee
- discomfort and a lack of dignity for the person being moved

You must take action to prevent or minimise the risk of injury

6. **PROCEDURE / SYSTEMS**

If risks from moving and handling are to be managed successfully, there must be support from those at the top of the organisation. This can be expressed in a clear statement of policy – Key elements include:

- recognition of the risks
- commitment to introducing precautions to reduce that risk
- a statement of clear roles and responsibilities
- an explanation of what is expected from individual employees
- arrangements for training and providing / maintaining equipment

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- arrangements for monitoring compliance
- a commitment to supporting people who have been injured in connection with their work
- Ensure annual attendance of all staff on manual handling courses
- Training in the use of all manual handling aids available

Employers must reduce the risk of injury to staff and people using care services by:

- avoiding those manual handling tasks that could result in injury, where reasonably practicable
- assessing the risks from moving and handling that cannot be avoided
- putting measures in place to reduce the risk, where reasonably practicable

Employees must:

- follow appropriate systems of work and use the equipment provided
- co-operate with their employer and let them know of any problems
- take reasonable care to ensure that their actions do not put themselves or others at risk

Procedure

The company accepts we should never put patients and employee's at risk of injury in their working practice. Patients may arrive in the clinic who have limited mobility. As a result, assistance may be required to help them to the scan room, and on and off the bed. Lifting someone incorrectly can also damage fragile skin, cause shoulder and neck injuries, increase existing breathing difficulties, or cause bruising or cuts.

You should **NEVER** attempt to lift the full weight of a patient; this policy is for general assistance for patients that have poor mobility but are still mobile enough to walk to the scan room, always use the Zimmer frame if appropriate. Acceptable assistance within the clinic falls into the following areas:

- Assistance walking by a steadying hand.
(Patient holding the top of your hand as you walk to ensure if they fall you do not fall with them – injuring them further and yourself)
- Assistance standing or laying down on the scan bed.

Before attempting to move someone, ask yourself:

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- Do they need help to move?
- Can one of the manual handling aids available be used to assist the patient?
- Do they require help or supervision?
- Have you told them you are moving them?
- How heavy are they?
- Are you healthy and strong enough to move them?
- Is there anyone who could help you?
- How long will it take?
- Is there enough space around you?
- Are there any obstacles in the way?
- Are you wearing suitable clothing and shoes – for example, if you are on a slippery or damp surface?

If you have assessed the situation and have decided to move the person, make sure you

- Never pull the patient by their arms (this is classed as ‘dragging’ technique and is banned)
- Stand firm and allow them to pull against you
- keep any weight close to your body
- keep your back straight and bend your knees
- lift as smoothly as possible
- Support their back with your free hand until they are standing and balanced.

Never swing a patient’s legs off the bed, encourage them to walk them to the edge and slowly lower one at a time.

7 QUALITY CONTROL and AUDIT

This policy is subject to audit and review every 12 months or more often if required.

8. REFERENCES

HSE Website guidance on manual handling

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/moving-handling-do.htm>