Moving and Handling for Volunteers working in Care Services and Establishments.

Health and Safety Guidance for Managers.

First Issued: July 2002
Last Revision: October 2010

Issued by Occupational Safety Team

Introduction

This guidance is to provide clarity and consistency where volunteers work in the Councils care services/establishments. This guidance covers the issues of volunteers undertaking manual handling tasks and assisting people. Managers must consider the tasks that volunteers should and should not undertake in their volunteering role. They should be given appropriate information and instructions. Managers must carry out risk assessments where there is a significant risk of injury to the voluntary worker or others. Volunteers may require specific training.

If the volunteers are from a voluntary organisation, managers should liaise with their manager on all aspects of health and safety.

Manual Handling - Objects

The principles of risk assessment should be used to identify the levels of risk involved with volunteers moving and carrying objects.

1. Managers should make sure Volunteers understand the risks and precautions they should take by going through the Basic Principles Of Safe Manual Handling For Volunteers (see Appendix 1). Where a volunteer is involved in frequent moving and handling tasks, it is recommended that they attend a Manual Handling training course.

2. Where voluntary organisations in the community work with Council services it would be good practice to share information on the Councils requirements/standards on manual handling, and the training opportunities available for workers. The Volunteer Organiser should carry out appropriate risk assessments for their voluntary workers.

3. The Basic Principles Of Safe Manual Handling For Volunteers (Appendix 1) should be incorporated into the basic induction for volunteers.
Moving and Handling - Assisting People

The principles of risk assessment should be used to identify the levels of risk involved with volunteers assisting people.

1. Volunteers should not be involved in moving and handling people to help with bathing, toileting, dressing, hoisting, putting to bed, getting out of bed.

2. Specific instructions must be given to volunteers on the circumstances in which they may get involved in moving and handling people.

3. Managers must provide information and specific training to all volunteers on the moving and handling of people in such circumstances (see Appendix 2 for advice).

4. Specific advice and/or appropriate training should be made available for volunteers and carers who push people in wheelchairs. (see Appendix 3 for advice)

The Manual Handling Team in the Occupational Therapy Services can be contacted for help and advice on all aspects of people moving and handling.

Risk Assessment

All clients will have had a risk assessment carried out by the appropriate manager before a service is provided. This will give information on the clients level of independence and mobility – see below for categories - and it will be recorded on the clients handling plan.

Totally Dependent: A client has very little independence and is reliant on carers and family and/or equipment to meet their everyday needs. Any tasks that require moving the client with equipment should not be undertaken by volunteer carers unless they have received specific training with the client and the equipment.

Semi-Dependent: A client is dependent on some intervention from carers and family and/or equipment to meet their everyday needs. Any tasks that require moving the client should not be undertaken by volunteer carers unless they have received specific training with the client and the equipment.

Independent: A client is not dependent on intervention from carers, family or equipment to meet their everyday needs. They are largely independent or would only require minimal intervention.

Clients assessed as independent may need re-assessing if they are requesting help with moving. In such circumstances volunteers should contact the manager so a re-assessment can be arranged. Volunteers must be encouraged not to undertake tasks for which they do not have the skills/training.

The following appendices are produced for managers to photocopy/download and use to instruct/train volunteers where appropriate.
Appendix 1
Basic Principles Of Safe Manual Handling For Volunteers

Each situation is different and should be assessed according to its specific set of circumstances.

1. AVOID handling wherever possible.

2. Know your own capabilities and limitations. If necessary get help or use mechanical assistance.

3. Plan any handling operations to reduce risk of injury – check risk assessments/management plans in place.

4. Make sure there is adequate space available to perform the task.

5. Make sure there are no hindrances to a safe performance of the task, i.e. slippery floors, objects in your path.

6. When performing a handling task, keep the load as close to the body as possible.

7. Make sure the load is gripped securely. Take precautions if the load is hot, cold, has sharp edges etc. Protective clothing, e.g. gloves, tea towels etc, may interfere with your grip on the load so you will also need to bear this in mind.

8. Position feet correctly, i.e. body-width apart, with one foot facing in the direction you wish to move towards, to avoid twisting the trunk.

9. Keep the back straight in its upright position maintaining its natural curves.

10. Bend the knees – use the powerful thigh muscles to aid lifting.

11. Keep head upright, raise the chest.

12. Lift/handle in the direction you are going, avoiding jerky movements.

13. Avoid prolonged holds.

14. Lower the load, again keeping the back upright, head up and utilising the powerful muscles of the thighs.

15. If in any doubt DO NOT MOVE / HANDLE - seek assistance.

16. Inform the Manager / Volunteer Organiser if you have a health problem, injury, or if you are pregnant.

17. Report any workplace hazards / problems to the Manager / Volunteer Organiser immediately.
Appendix 2  Providing Moving & Handling Assistance.

**WALKING - ASSISTED**

The service user should be encouraged to walk independently.

If the service user is using walking aids these should be of an appropriate type/size, and they should have been taught how to use them correctly.

The handler should:-
- position themselves close to, and to the side and behind the service user
- use a palm to palm hold simulating ‘normal’ movement (outside hand)
- support the opposite hip for stability (hand/handling belt) with nearside hand
Procedure 11

**SITTING**

**Using Walking Frame**

If at all possible approach chair from side so patient/client only has 90° to turn through.

Encourage patient/client to:

1) Feel chair behind leg.
2) Let go of walking frame.
3) Feel for chair arms.
4) Lean forward from hips.
5) Lower self to chair.

This procedure is not suitable for use with every patient/client and should only be used following risk assessment.
SITTING TO STANDING - INDEPENDENT

The service user should be encouraged to stand independently.

The service user should:

- position their feet flat on the floor, and in such a way as to provide a stable base of support
- move their buttocks to the front edge of the chair/bed
- place their hands on the chair arms/bed
- push through arms and feet
- stand up by extending knees and hips

If the service user uses walking aids:

- they should be an appropriate type/size for the patient/service user
- they should always stand as above, then place hands on walking frame, that has been positioned appropriately or take hold of sticks/crutches
SITTING TO STANDING – WITH ASSISTANCE x1

The service user should:
- position their feet flat on the floor, and in such a way as to provide a stable base of support
- place their hands on the chair arms/bed

Position the service user by:
- encouraging them to move their buttocks to the front edge of the chair/bed
- manually repositioning the service user’s buttocks

Assist the service user by:
- standing close to the service user, to the side (weaker side) and behind
- bending at the knees, relaxing hips
- having a functional, stable base of support, outside foot forward, to enable movement forward with the service user
- position nearside shoulder behind service user shoulder and off side hand on front of service user same shoulder.
- positioning nearside arm/hand to support service user’s far hip and assist with hip extension on standing

ACTION:
Encourage the service user to:
- push through arms and feet
- stand up by extending knees and hips

on command:
- READY, STEADY, STAND

On standing:
- Establish balance using hand to hip, and palm to palm hold (nearside)
Appendix 3

Wheelchair Guidance

Always apply brakes before:-

- Opening the chair
- Folding the chair
- Getting into the chair
- Getting out of the chair
- Transferring to/from the chair
- Lifting the chair

To close the chair:-

- Put the footrests in the upright position
- Stand behind the chair, grasp the middle of the seat canvas at front and back.
- Lift upwards until the chair is fully closed

To open the chair:-

- Stand behind the chair
- Push the armrests apart as far as possible
- Place the hands on seat canvas
- Fingers pointing to the middle of the seat, push downwards until the chair is completely open.

To leave chair:-

- Apply brakes
- Lift footrests and swing away to the side
- Encourage person to place hands on armrests, slowly push themselves upwards into a standing position
To move footrests:-

- Push lever outwards

To fold the backrest:-

- Stand behind the chair
- Lift the small lever on each push handle upwards
- Pull push handles backwards

Press lever outwards

To remove detachable armrests:-

- Pull back lever at 1 underneath armrest
- Lift armrest upwards
- Some chairs do not have the lever, armrests then just fit into two sockets

To put the chair into a car boot :-

- Apply the brakes, take the footrests off, remove the armrests
- Fold the backrest
- Close the chair
- Pick the chair up by gripping the back and the front
- Balance the chair on the edge of the boot (you may want to protect the car with an old blanket)
- Re-adjust the hold on the chair and place into the boot

To get a chair out of the boot:-

- Reverse the process for getting the chair in the boot
Going down a kerb the attendant should:-

- Take a firm grip of the push handles
- Place a foot on the tipping lever
- Push down on push handles and press foot down on tipping lever
- Ensure front castors are clear of the kerb
- Gently lower chair down the kerb whilst the chair is tilted on the back wheels
- Slowly lower the front castors onto the road so that the chair is in an upright position.

Lifting Equipment into Vehicles

You should make an assessment of the risks involved in the task before beginning, including your own capabilities.

Ensure that you plan the task before executing the lift. Remove obstacles from the environment as much as possible and prepare your vehicle for easy receipt of the chair (i.e. clear boot, remove parcel shelf etc).

Break the wheelchair down into its component parts: remove the cushion and footplates, take off wheels if possible. Fold the seat and back canvases to make a compact “package”.

Adopt an upright posture, bend knees and grasp secure part of the wheelchair framework. Avoid stooping, twisting or over-reaching. Lift the chair into the vehicle, holding the load as close to the body as possible.

Do not attempt to carry out this task if you do not feel able to manage it safely.