

Transferring people for toileting and bathing

May 2011

What is the problem?

Manually transferring people between different locations and heights while toileting or bathing.

What are the risks?

Workers may be at risk of musculoskeletal injuries (eg sprains and strains) to the back, neck, shoulders, legs, knees, arms, wrists and hands – from bending, twisting, lifting and awkward postures.

What is a solution to the problem?

Workers should consult with the person being transferred to assess how much they can help with a transfer. Encourage as much participation by the person as possible. If the person is being transferred to or from a wheelchair, workers should ensure the wheelchair brakes are activated before starting a transfer.

The risk of injuries can be eliminated or reduced by the following safety measures.

Person transfers self to toilet or uses aid (eg hoist)

This may require one worker with the assistance of the person.

Workers should follow these steps in order:

1. position a second chair next to the first chair with the near side arms on both chairs removed or lowered
2. if appropriate, place a slideboard or other aid under the person's near side buttock and across the second chair
3. position the person's feet so they are aligned and facing forward
4. instruct the person to grasp the far arm of the second chair
5. encourage the person to lift their buttocks up and across onto the slideboard, and move their body over to the second chair
6. remove the slideboard and reinsert or raise into position the arms of the chairs.

Moving a person from chair to toilet – Electric standing hoist

This may require two workers with the assistance of the person.

Workers should follow these steps in order:

1. encourage/assist the person to lean forward
2. position the sling across the person's lower back and under the person's arms
3. attach the sling to the hoist, which should be positioned above the bed
4. using the hoist mechanics, transfer the person off the chair and lower them into the second chair
5. detach the sling from the hoist and remove the sling by encouraging the person to lean forward.

Moving a person into a bath – Electric hoist with immersible sling and height-adjustable bath

This may require two or more workers without the assistance of the person.

Workers should follow these steps in order:

1. raise the bath to the appropriate height
2. position the sling under the person
3. attach the sling to the hoist
4. using the hoist mechanics, transfer the person into the bath
5. detach the sling from the hoist and remove the hoist. Workers may leave the sling under the person during the bath or remove the sling and reapply when the bath is finished
6. to transfer the person from the bath, reverse the procedure.

(Continued over page)

A Health and Safety Solution

Transferring people for toileting and bathing

Moving a person from bed to shower – Shower trolley, slideboard and slide sheet

This may require three or more workers without the assistance of the person.

Workers should follow these steps in order:

1. position the slideboard and slide sheet under the person by rolling the person once. Position the slide sheet on top of the slideboard with the majority of the sheet in the direction of the move

2. position the trolley next to the bed with the brakes on. Make sure the slideboard is a bridge between the bed and trolley
3. workers close to the bed push the person at hip and shoulder, while the workers close to the trolley pull the slide sheet at the person's hip and shoulder, transferring the person from bed to trolley
4. remove the slideboard and slide sheet by rolling the person once.

The problem



Do not manually lift a person onto the toilet.

The solution



Use an electric standing hoist to transfer a person to the toilet.

Further information

WorkSafe Advisory Service

Toll-free 1800 136 089

Email info@worksafe.vic.gov.au

worksafe.vic.gov.au

Code of Practice – *Manual Handling 2000*

A Handbook for Workplaces – *Transferring People Safely*

Transferring people safely – *Patient transfer summary*

Injury Hotspot – *Health and Aged Care Services*

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