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Health Board

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

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This policy has been screened for relevance to equality. No potential negative impact has been identified so a full impact assessment is not required

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SWANSEA BAY UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

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APPENDICES

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following are defined as:

- **Health Board – Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB)**
- **Manual Handling** – transporting a load (e.g. lifting, lowering, pushing, or pulling) or supporting a load in a static posture. The load may be moved or supported by the hands or any other part of the body e.g. shoulder. Also included is the intentional dropping of a load or throwing a load into a container or to another person.
- **Passport** – All Wales NHS Manual Handling Training Passport & Information scheme.
- **Load** - 'moveable object, including any person'
- **Reasonably Practicable** – the balance of the risk against time, effort and resources required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- **Safer Handling** - process by which risks associated with transporting or supporting a load are reduced so far as is reasonably practicable
- **Safe Systems** – defines how manual handling tasks are to be performed, equipment required, information needed for staff etc necessary to control the way the work will be done
- **Therapeutic Handling** - specialised handling that takes place to facilitate and improve patient function and mobility e.g. Physiotherapy work
- **Ergonomics** – (human factors) the "fit" between the user, equipment and their environments.
- **Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)** - injury that affects muscles, joints, bones, tendons, ligaments, nerves or other soft tissues. These include back and neck injuries, and upper and lower limb disorders.
- **Person** – describes the person who is being encouraged, guided, facilitated, assisted or removed
- **Welsh Nursing Care Record (WNCR)** – the new Welsh NHS digital risk assessment pack of risk assessment documents including the Patient Handling Assessment & Safer Handling Plan

SWANSEA BAY UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Health Board has adopted a Manual Handling Policy. This policy recognises that it will not be practicable to eliminate all manual handling activities and associated risks. Where there are risks to staff, patients and others they must be effectively assessed and appropriately controlled.

The key objectives of the Policy are to:

- Achieve compliance with the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and other associated legislation e.g. the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.
- Achieve compliance with best practice and NHS standards including the All Wales NHS Manual Handling Training Passport & Information scheme recognised by the Health and Safety Executive as demonstrating best practice
- Ensure that all employees are aware of, and comply with, the Health Board's arrangements to reduce the risks from handling people and objects.
- Contribute to the organisation's overall approach to the prevention and management of musculoskeletal disorders.
- Recognise that manual handling needs of patients may change along with their condition.
- Support the manual handling framework to manage manual handling risks, to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of employees, and patients.

This Policy does not include the control of risks associated with large equipment i.e. mobile cranes.

2. LINKS TO THE HEALTH BOARD HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This policy forms part of the Health Board's Health and Safety Policy. That policy details general arrangements including roles and responsibilities for the management of health and safety. The Health and Safety Policy permits the development of specific arrangements for the management of risks such as manual handling.

The Manual Handling Policy must be read in conjunction with that policy and any other supporting documents typically relating to arrangement to manage particular risk e.g. patient risk assessment, safe systems of work etc.

3. STRATEGY

The principal actions to be undertaken by the Health Board are:

- Where practicable, avoid manual handling operations that present a risk of injury.
- Where avoidance is not practicable, automate or mechanise the process to remove or reduce the requirement for human force.
- Where elimination or mechanisation of the process is not possible and there is a risk of injury, to make suitable and sufficient assessments of those manual handling operations.
- So far as is reasonably practicable reduce the risk of injury from those operations. This will consider risk factors, including the task, the load, working environment and ability of the individual to undertake the work.
- Introduce safe systems for manual handling operations.
- Provide and maintain equipment and working environments required for safe manual handling.
- Provide staff with appropriate training, information and supervision.
- Monitor and supervise workplaces.
- Continue to deliver manual handling training in line with the minimum standards of the All Wales Manual Handling Passport Scheme national guidelines, revised 2020, and to reduce the duplication of training for staff between participating NHS organisations in Wales.

4. DUTIES TO PATIENTS AND OTHERS

This Policy affects the safety of employees, patients and others. Patient safety may be affected by factors such as the lack of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the individual patient, failure to review the risk assessment, the incorrect choice of equipment or handling aids and failure to select the appropriate safe systems of work.

Therapeutic Handling may involve the taking of assessed risks involving patients. This is appropriate and essential if they are to achieve an effective recovery from their conditions.

In some situations (e.g. Community) where SWUHB staff work with other employers there will be a need to ensure that all employers cooperate and coordinate their manual handling arrangements.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The general health and safety responsibilities of Health Board Executives, Service Groups, . Directors, Managers and staff are outlined in the Health Board Health and Safety Policy. This section amplifies specific responsibilities to comply with this policy.

5.1 Ward/Departmental Managers

All Ward/Departmental Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff have the correct knowledge, skills and information to undertake the range of manual handling activities necessary.
- The skills of new staff are assessed against the manual handling risk present. Where previous training (e.g. Passport) is inadequate or absent to arrange for appropriate training and information to be provided.
- There is regular review (including IPR) of manual handling competencies of staff.
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken on manual handling activities (patient and non-patient as appropriate).
- For patients suitable and sufficient risk assessments are made and recorded that consider their individual manual handling need. The risk assessment must be reviewed and updated as frequently as required (e.g. changes in their condition).
- The findings of the risk assessment must be used to identifying how manual handling risks are to be controlled. This can include providing specific manual handling equipment, particular numbers of staff etc.
- That manual handling equipment available within their work area is suitable and sufficient for the purpose for which it is being used. They must also ensure that it is maintained and kept in safe working order.
- Manual handling incidents are investigated and reported in accordance with Health Board policy.
- That a sufficient ratio of manual handling coaches is maintained in the work area to encourage best practice and assess the manual handling competencies staff.
- Manual handling coaches are allocated sufficient time to fulfil their role.

5.2 Employees

All employees will comply with the provisions of the Health Board Manual Handling policy and associated procedures and must:

- Make themselves aware of risk assessments applicable to the work undertaken (including individual patient handling assessments).
- Attend relevant organisational manual handling training required.
- Use equipment provided, training received and follow safe systems of work necessary for safe manual handling practice.
- Prior to use and in accordance with training received inspect manual handling equipment to ensure it is fit for use and the purpose intended.
- Report defects in equipment, deficiencies in safe systems of work to their line manager.
- Identify and report if there is additional equipment required to fulfil their role safely.
- Report any physical/health conditions that could affect their ability to comply with the requirements of this policy and associated procedures.

- Report all incidents and injuries in accordance with the Health Boards Incident Reporting Policy to allow investigation and remedial action to be implemented.

5.3 Strategic Manual Handling Advisor

The Strategic Manual Handling Advisor will provide professional guidance to the Health Board and will be deemed to be a Competent Person as defined by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The post will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Health Board, its Directors, Managers and Staff receive competent advice on safe manual handling practice.
- Supporting and advising the work of Manual Handling Trainers/Advisor(s).
- Providing specialist advice on the assessment of risk and assisting in the identification of preventative and protective measures in relation to safe manual handling practice.
- Providing appropriate advice and training on the systems required for the effective delivery of training and competencies necessary for safe manual handling practice.
- Designing specific training materials to deliver specialist manual handling knowledge and skills.
- Provide support and advice regarding new builds and refurbishments
- Assisting in the investigation of incidents that have occurred following manual handling operations.
- Provide specialist advice to Health Board Legal team.
- Undertake regular review of manual handling performance in the Health Board advise appropriate management levels and committees.
- Maintain up to date knowledge and skills of manual handling best practice.

5.4 Manual Handling Trainer/Advisor

These posts support the Strategic Manual Handling Adviser. In particular they:

- Deliver Manual Handling training to new staff in line with the All Wales NHS Manual Handling Passport Scheme guidelines, as revised 2020.
- Deliver training to Manual Handling Coaches
- Maintain regular liaison and support the work of Manual Handling Coaches, Ward and Departmental trainers and their managers
- Providing advice on the assessment of risk and the necessary preventative and protective measures required
- Assist in the review and design of training materials
- Undertake record and communicate periodic reviews of manual handling systems at ward and departmental level.
- Maintain up to date knowledge and skills of manual handling best practice.

5.5 Manual Handling Coaches

Manual Handling Coaches support their manager to control manual handling risks in their areas of responsibility. They receive additional training and regular updates to ensure they remain competent to undertake this role. Their key responsibilities are to:

- Assist their manager in the identification of manual handling risks, appropriate control measures and manual handling performance.
- Observe current practice and to conduct regular assessments of the competency of their colleagues taking any action that is appropriate e.g. coaching/instruction to the employee.
- Advising their manager of any risks, concerns arising.
- Act as a role model and promote best practice.
- To maintain local records of those assessments and to communicate them their manager
- To communicate the records of those assessments to the Health & Safety Department so that appropriate records can also be maintained.
- Act as a link between colleagues and the manual handling team.

Some management units utilise their Manual Handling Coaches to provide job and task specific training (including periodic update training) to their staff. This permits greater focus to be given to manual handling risks faced by those staff. In particular they:

- Provide training on the management of specific manual handling risks associated with their workplaces.
- Maintain records of attendance.
- Provide records to the Health and Safety to update records.

5.6 Support for Manual Handling Coaches

The Strategic Manual Handling Adviser and manual handling team will

- Provide general advice and support to assist them to undertake their role
- Review competency records generated by them
- Where they provide specific training courses the content of training given and associated training materials will be agreed in conjunction with the Strategic Manual Handling Advisor.
- Provide regular update training for manual handling coaches

5.7 Estates

Estates will have specific responsibility to ensure that:

- All mechanically operated lifting and handling equipment is inspected and tested appropriately by qualified engineers as often as required by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1999 Provision and Use of Work equipment Regulations (PUWER).

6. ARRANGEMENTS

To ensure the effective implementation of this Policy the following arrangements will be put into place.

6.1 Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will be conducted. They must be suitable and sufficient. They will take the form of:

- Patient specific assessments detailing the handling needs of individual patients, number of staff required, size and type of equipment required etc.
- Utilise the Welsh Nursing Care Record (WNCR) Patient Handling Assessment & Safer Handling Plan.
- Generic risk assessments such as those required for non-patient handling activities e.g. moving objects.
- Risk assessments on non-routine situations that are reasonably predictable

Risk assessments will be subject to review if the risk assessment is believed to be no longer valid due to:

- Changes in the individual patient's condition that affects patient handling e.g. following surgery, changes in medical condition
- Changes in working areas e.g. layout, introduction of new equipment, change in patient type and associated handling needs
- Learning lessons from incidents, claims, concerns raised etc

6.2 Safe Systems of Work

'Safe Systems of Work' may be substituted with the terms procedures, principles, standard operating procedures etc. Safe systems of work are intended to give guidance and instruction as to how particular manual handling tasks are to be undertaken safely. They may form part of instructions for the safe operation of equipment such as use of a hoist or particular instructions for specific patient handling situations.

Risk assessment will assist in the identification of whether a formal safe system of work needs to be adopted. The overall Health and Safety policy and this policy allow for the development of local safe systems of work to manage particular issues; examples include manual handling in Maternity and Domestic departments.

6.3 Training and Competency – New Staff/Staff Changing Workplaces

Risk assessment and training needs analysis will identify the necessary competencies required for work including equipment used, patient handling arrangements etc.

All new staff will be required to be trained as a minimum to the All Wales Manual Handling Passport Scheme. The Health Board will recognise Passports obtained from other Welsh NHS organisations, universities and Colleges of Nursing across Wales.

Previous competencies gained from other employers, university etc will be assessed against the manual handling risks of the particular job, workplace, and tasks etc. e.g. general nurse transferring to Theatre work

6.4 Training and Competency – Risks Not Included in Passport Training

With the range of patient care needs and associated manual handling requirements, equipment used (e.g. community hoists, specialist hoists etc) it is inevitable that centralised (Passport) training cannot cover all the necessary skills required by staff. Where required staff will be given further training and information. This may include specific training and information on particular equipment, safe systems of work etc that may be required to use. This will be the responsibility of their manager to identify the need and to send them to or provide the necessary training and information.

Systems to be used include:

- Departmental specific training e.g. theatre staff, domestic staff that may have particular manual handling risks etc
- Managers providing local induction, associated training and information on particular aspects of manual handling in their area of responsibility e.g. location of manual handling risk assessments.
- Training by the Manual Handling Team
- Training by suppliers of equipment e.g. gantry hoists on installation.

6.5 Maintaining the Skills and Competency of Existing Staff

Managers of wards and departments will use risk assessments and training needs analysis to identify suitable systems to maintain the skills and competencies of their staff. The risk assessment will also be used to identify suitable frequencies. This can include:

- Competency assessments in the workplace. These review the skills of staff to undertake safe manual practice in the area(s) worked. The assessment will consider appropriate local manual handling risks, safe systems of work, equipment used, patient types etc. Appropriate action and advice will be given at the stage of the assessment by the Manual Handling Coach or Manager. Advice and support on the process will be provided by the Manual Handling Advisers/Trainer.

- Face to face training provided by manual handling coaches. This will give focus on the skills needed by staff to work safely in their specific clinical discipline and area.
- For staff that are assessed as low risk e.g. general office workers risk assessment will be used to determine if any update training or assessment is required.

6.6 Maintaining the Skills and Competency of Manual Handling Coaches

Staff undertaking this work must be competent. They will undertake:

- Training on appointment to their posts by attending a Manual Handling Coach training session provided by a Manual Handling Adviser/Trainer
- Manual Handling coach sessions may be supplemented by additional specific training required for the task
- Regular update training sessions provided by the Manual Handling Adviser/Trainer.
- Support will be offered as required by the Manual Handling Trainer/Adviser.
- The Manual Handling Trainer/Adviser will periodically review with them and offer any support required

6.7 Volunteers

Where there is an identified risk of injury volunteers will be provided with training by the Health Board.

6.8 Health Status during Classroom Training

Reasonable steps to reduce the risk of injury or illness to staff during training will be taken. Staff will be required to complete an on-line health questionnaire prior to training and to declare any injuries or medical conditions that could affect them. If any concerns are raised an assessment will be made to identify how these risks will be controlled. Where necessary adjustments may be made (and recorded for the individual training record) in the training content or the trainee requested to leave the training session. Relevant information will be passed to the trainee's line manager regarding where training was not completed but the reason will be kept confidential.

6.9 Agency/Temporary/Bank Staff

Bank staff are trained by the Health Board to the All Wales Passport standard and where required (e.g. not competency assessed in their host ward or department) receive regular training updates.

Many agency staff will receive All Wales Passport (or recognised equivalent) training from their host employer. The all Wales shared services contract for the provision of agency nursing staff requires that the provider trains those agency staff to the standard of the All Wales NHS Manual Handling Passport Scheme.

All Bank / Agency staff arriving to a ward for the first time will have Ward Induction checklist completed which covers necessary training and skills required.

6.10 Bariatric Patients

Bariatric patients may pose complex and different handling risks. There will be the need to provide manual handling equipment that can lift a more complex load and to give staff specific skills to move and handle the patient. The needs will be identified by patient-specific manual handling risk assessment. If required, the manual handling team can provide advice.

6.11 Information on Loads

Where practicable, information will be provided on the weight of the load, distribution of load, special handling needs of individual patients etc. Methods of providing information include recording in the manual handling risk assessment for the patient, labelling of the actual load, within a safe system of work etc.

6.12 Cooperation and Coordination

If a patient is to be treated by a number of departments or agencies manual handling information necessary to control the risk must be communicated between those concerned. This includes between Health Board staff and other agencies.

Where the Health Board works with other organisations appropriate risk assessments, safe systems of work will be jointly developed to control manual handling risks.

6.13 Emergency Situations

Where foreseeable emergencies may occur, e.g. cardiac arrests, a generic assessment will be undertaken to identify systems to reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable. In some emergency situations it may not be practicable to undertake an assessment prior to handling the load.

6.14 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

The regulations require that periodic examinations are made of lifting equipment and that documented, formal records be kept of the maintenance of lifting equipment. This includes mechanical devices (e.g. hoists) and non-mechanical (e.g. slings).

Hoists and slings used to move patients are subject to independent LOLER examination at six-monthly intervals. Hoists and slings used to move objects are subject to LOLER examination annually.

Staff should make a visual safety check on equipment prior to its use. They should confirm the LOLER status of equipment by checking any relevant labels. If any damage is present or the equipment has not received the required examination it should not be used until an assessment or advice is given.

6.15 Incidents, Changes in Manual Handling Arrangements, Emerging Risks, Equipment Change etc

Manual handling Incidents will be recorded and will be investigated and recorded to comply with the Board Incident Reporting Policy

Where there is a change that affects manual handling arrangements a new risk assessment must be undertaken. Changes may occur due to:

- The introduction of new equipment
- Change to the type of patient using a ward e.g. from active mobile patient to the passive dependant patient.
- Changes to the layout of areas where manual handling takes place

Similarly information may be received from accident or incident analysis, Occupational Health assessments etc that previous risk assessments were no longer valid.

A risk assessment will be undertaken to identify the consequences of the risk and necessary systems for control of the risk.

6.16 Monitoring and Review

Managers are responsible to monitor arrangements in their areas of responsibility. To support this process Manual Handling staff will periodically review those arrangements, give appropriate advice and provide relevant reports to the manager, management units and the Health Board.

7. REVIEW OF POLICY

The Manual Handling Policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if required by changes in legislation, risk, lessons learnt from incidents and claims etc

REFERENCES

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- SWUHB Health and Safety Policy 2016
- All Wales Manual Handling Training Passport & Information Scheme (as revised 2020)
- SWUHB Incident Policy and Procedure
- SWUHB Induction Policy
- HOP 7 The Guide to the Handling of Patients, person centred practice (smith et al 2023)