



MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document No:	CED08-044
Action required:	Compliance is mandatory
Document classification:	Policy
Authorised by:	Chief Executive
Authored by:	Injury Prevention & Management
Applies to:	All ACT Health Staff
Distributed to:	All ACT Health Staff
Review date:	June 2011

POLICY STATEMENT

ACT Health is committed to creating and managing a working environment whereby no injury or illness will result from manual handling activities

PURPOSE

To provide guidance for all managers and staff involved in manual handling so as to ensure that risk management strategies are in place to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

DEFINITIONS

Manual Handling “any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold restrain any people, animals or objects”.

Risk management principles “identification, assessment, control and evaluation of potential hazards”. Controls will be implemented in line with the hierarchy of control-

- Elimination
- Isolation
- Substitution
- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls
- Personal protective equipment

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. Manual handling risks shall be identified and prioritised using the risk management principles according to the likelihood of the occurrence of an injury together with the seriousness of the injury. The implementation of a risk management approach will be consistent with the Occupational Health & Safety component of the ACT Health Risk Management Framework and Policy. This aims to ensure that all manual handling tasks, which involve significant risk to employees, patients, volunteers and students, are identified, assessed and controlled in a timely and cost-effective manner.
2. Facilities shall develop processes and procedures to identify manual handling risks, develop control measures to remove or reduce such risks and ensure compliance with such control measures.
3. Identified risks shall be assessed to determine the influencing factors and the effective control measures. The assessment process must include local area staff and may include the assistance of other appropriately qualified persons if required.
4. Risk management initiatives shall be developed in consultation with stakeholders and shall incorporate mechanisms for evaluating their effectiveness. All relevant information should be reported to managers.
5. Documentation should be completed for all stages of the risk management process.
6. Risk management principles and staff consultation shall be utilised during task design, equipment design, equipment purchases, equipment maintenance and at all stages of planning and redesign of workplaces.
7. Sufficient resources will be allocated, such as facilities, training, and equipment, to enable the achievement of the goals of the policy
8. Injury Prevention & Management must be consulted prior to purchase of equipment and when planning refurbishment or construction.
9. Mandatory orientation training in manual handling will be provided for all new employees.
10. Ongoing manual handling training will be provided for all employees.
11. Regular and ongoing evaluation of the manual handling program will occur.
12. Non-compliance with this policy will be dealt with under the ACT Public Sector Management Act 1994.
13. Managers should ensure that a register of manual handling risks is completed and maintained
14. The responsibilities of all ACT Health employees will be identified.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive

1. Ensure the effective implementation of the policy and to hold supervisors and managers accountable for their specific responsibilities.
2. Allocate adequate resources to support the policy by working towards re-design, modification and maintenance of buildings, equipment, furniture, and/or purchase of equipment, which will be suitable for the application of reduced-risk work practices.
3. Take responsibility for the prevention of manual handling injuries in the workplace using a consultative approach when identifying, assessing and controlling the risks involved with manual handling in the workplace.
4. Ensure that all employees receive manual handling training which is appropriate for their workplace.
5. Establish and monitor key performance indicators measuring the effectiveness of the manual handling program

Managers/Supervisors

1. Implement the policy
2. Ensure staff consultation throughout the application of the risk management process
3. Ensure that actions are taken as soon as possible to rectify any potential or actual hazards
4. Ensure that staff are adequately trained and competent
5. Ensure that compliance monitoring occurs regularly, and initiate appropriate action with staff when non-compliance occurs
6. Ensure that manual handling equipment is regularly maintained according to a maintenance schedule.
7. Ensure that all training, compliance and competency records are maintained
8. Provide information to Injury Prevention & Management Unit about the level of compliance and the percentage of staff who have been deemed competent in manual handling skills
9. In clinical areas, managers will ensure that staff are aware of, and compliant with, the list of unacceptable work practices (see Appendix A)

Employees/Contractors/Volunteers/Students

1. Co-operate and actively contribute to the consultative process relating to the implementation of the policy
2. Participate in training and competency assessments
3. Follow reduced-risk work practices
4. Report potential hazards as soon as they become aware of them
5. Participate in the manual handling risk-control process
6. Seek advice when it does not seem possible to apply any established manual handling technique

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS AND RELATED POLICES

(List any Legislation and Standards relevant to the policy)

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- ACT Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989
<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/1989-18/default.asp>
- ACT Manual Handling Regulations 1997
<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/sl/1997-32/default.asp>
- ACT Public Sector Management Act 1994
<http://www.psm.act.gov.au/legislation/psm-act/PSM-1994-37.pdf>
- National Code of Practice August 2007
[For the Prevention of Musculo-skeletal Disorders from Performing Manual Handling Tasks at Work](#)
- National Standards for Manual Tasks Canberra August 2007
http://www.ascc.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/514BC761-49D7-4127-A4AD-315735101F3D/0/2239DEWRNationalStandards_FINAL.pdf
- WorkCover ACT Manual Handling Code of Practice 1999
http://www.workcover.act.gov.au/pdfs/guides_cop/manual_handling_cop.pdf
- Risk management
[Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4360: 1999 Standards Australia](#)

APPENDIX A

Unacceptable Work Practices for Patient Manual Handling

Unacceptable Work Practice	Alternative Work Practice
Shoulder lift (to move a patient up the bed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide sheets • Sling/hoist lifter • Hovermat
“Top and tail” lift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sling/hoist lifter
Cradle lift (to move or transfer a patient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sling/hoist lifter • Slide sheets • Hovermat • Client self-help with assistive device eg. bed rope, bed stick
Lifting a patient from the floor (without the appropriate equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sling/hoist lifter • Jordan frame <p><i>Emergency Situation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled lift with adequate staff numbers
Neck holding of staff by patient to assist a patient from sitting to standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-up lifter • Bed mechanics +/- sacral prompt
Pivot standing transfer of a patient by staff member with a neck hold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-up lifter • Bed mechanics +/- sacral prompt
Under-arm lift to assist patient from sitting to standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-up lifter • Bed mechanics +/- sacral prompt
Blue handling straps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sling/hoist lifter • Stand-up lifter • Slide sheets
Under arm lift to lift a patient from supine to sitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bed mechanics • Assistive devices eg. bed rope, leg lifter
Use of kylie as a lifting and turning device	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide sheets • Sling/hoist lifter