



MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

This policy has been devised using the current legislation and guidelines relating to Manual Handling.

Introduction

The greatest risk of back injury or pain at work comes from heavy lifting. In order to reduce the risk of these injuries occurring and to protect the health and safety of our clients and staff Healthcare Direct has adopted a:

No-Lift Policy

In line with this policy:

- Clients must never be lifted manually
- Clients should always be encouraged to be as independent as possible and to assist in their own transfers
- Appropriate equipment will be provided to reduce the risk of injury

In stating that clients are never to be lifted manually, the policy refers to the whole or a large part of the weight of a client. The policy does not prevent a carer from giving the client some assistance, or using pushing, pulling, upward or downward forces. But this is only acceptable if forces are as low as is reasonably practicable, taking into account alternative methods and equipment.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be carried out for all handling tasks to ensure that any risk is reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable, as stated in the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

Staff Training

All staff employed by Healthcare Direct will receive training in Manual Handling from an approved Instructor as part of their Induction Programme; this will be followed by yearly updates.

Equipment

All mechanical lifting aids will be thoroughly examined before use and will be subject to a maintenance contract. They will be serviced at regular intervals as laid down by current regulations (Loler 1998) and as recommended by the manufacturers.

Failure to comply

Failure to adopt this policy or to practice safe handling techniques could result in any or all of the following:

- Disciplinary action
- Prosecution under the Health & Safety at Work Act 197
- Qualified staff could face disciplinary action by the U.K.C.C.

The U.K.C.C. document Practitioner-client relationships and the prevention of abuse – September 1998, Point 13 states “Physical abuse is any physical contact which harms clients or is likely to cause them unnecessary and avoidable pain and distress. Examples include handling the client in a rough manner, giving medication inappropriately, Poor application of manual handling techniques or unreasonable physical restraint”.