Health & Safety Bulletin

SUBJECT: Don't Hoist and Hope

RECIPIENTS: All Services – Including Schools

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Local NHS Trust have been fined £1m following the death of a patient in 2012

A Crown Court heard that in April 2012, a male patient, while being treated in hospital, died from internal injuries after falling onto an exposed post on the standing aid hoist that was being used by hospital staff to support him. The kneepad had been incorrectly removed leaving the exposed metal post that caused the injuries after the patient collapsed after standing up.

The Health and safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that the NHS Hospital Trust in question did not have systems in place for training and monitoring how staff used the standing aid hoist and unsafe practices had developed over time.

The NHS Trust, was found guilty of breaching section 3 (1) of the Health and safety at work act 1974, and was fined £1 million and ordered to repay £160,000 in costs.

The Trust was also ordered to pay £3800 to cover the cost of the patients' funeral.

The operations manager for the HSE stated " This was a tragic and preventable death, if staff had received effective training and monitoring in the use of standing aid hoists, this could have been avoided"

On average, 120 incidents per year are reported to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The degree of injury varies, depending on the vulnerability of the hoisted person, the nature and consequences of the fall and what the falling person makes contact with. Falls during hoisting have resulted in severe injuries, from broken bones through to, as in this case, fatality.

For LCC's policy and full guidance for the safe moving and handling of people- see the G12 policy Here

"Getting to grips with hoisting people"- a Health and Safety Executive information sheet, can be found Here

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If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:
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