

APPENDIX B

POEL29

A BACK CARE FOR EMPLOYEES ENGAGED IN THE MOVING AND HANDLING OF PEOPLE

MOVING AND HANDLING OF PEOPLE

Moving and handling i.e. the lifting, lowering, supporting, carrying, pushing and pulling using bodily force is one of the most common activities in the home and at work. The Social Care and Healthcare sectors are among the highest risk areas for workers particularly those who assist people with mobility and daily living tasks.

Within Lincolnshire County Council staff may be required to carry out moving and handling tasks to assist service users, pupils or injured persons to move. These tasks may include:

- Providing homecare to a service user in their own home e.g. involving bed transfers, assistance with bathing/toileting and personal care
- Family support workers collecting small children/babies and transporting them in cars involving transfers to car seats and push chairs
- Assisting disabled school pupils with mobility during the school day e.g. pushing wheelchairs and assisting with personal care
- Supporting service users with mobility problems in day care or in the community e.g. pushing wheelchairs and assisting with mobility within their home.
- Assisting service users with mobility and personal care tasks in residential/respite accommodation (older persons and children with physical disabilities).

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations require employers to:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling activities, and, where it is not reasonably practicable.

In caring roles moving and handling risk assessments must be carried out as part of the wider care plan for individuals and should include person specific instructions for moving and handling assistance required.

All employees must be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to reduce risks from the moving and handling of people to a minimum.

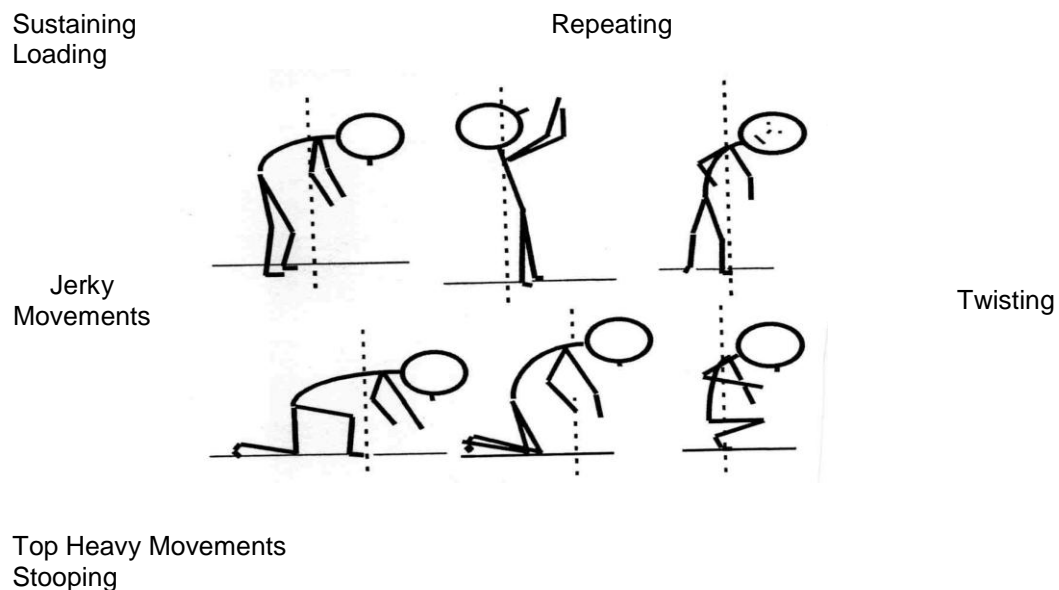
MOVING AND HANDLING ASSESSMENT

To reduce the risk of a manual handling injury the carer or employees individual capability should be taken into account and consideration given to making the activity as safe as possible, by assessing the task, individual capability, load, working environment and other factors e.g. footwear and clothing. This is the basis of an ergonomic risk assessment. The acronym TILEO is used as a reminder of these key factors.

HAZARDOUS MOVING AND HANDLING TECHNIQUES

Habitually moving in a stooped or unbalanced manner results in an inefficient way of moving which leads to muscle tension and a build up of damage known as "cumulative strain". This is thought to be the most common cause of neck and back problems.

Risk of injury increases when these inefficient movements are repeated or sustained for long periods. Twisting, adding a load or jerky movements increase the risks further. Examples of high risk manoeuvres are detailed below.



BACK PAIN – GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR CARERS

Most of us have had back pain at some time in our lives – in fact over half the population of the UK report back pain lasting over 24 hours every year. Carers are more likely to suffer an injury caused by handling at work than occupations such as construction and engineering. This is mainly due to the postures and environments they work in and sometimes the unpredictability of service users.

Back pain rarely occurs in an instant, but usually gradually develops over months or years. This is called cumulative stress.

Carers are more prone to cumulative stress because of the nature of the work they do.

Warning signs of cumulative stress include:

- Repeated bouts of back pain and ache
- Increasing frequency of episodes
- Increasing length of recovery period
- Backache and stiffness in daily activities working in poor postures

TRAINING

It is important that all staff in a caring role receive appropriate instructions regarding moving and handling tasks that will be expected of them. Induction training and refresher training must be provided to inform workers of the principles of safe moving and handling involved in their work.

Each Service is responsible for ensuring that appropriate induction training, risk assessor training and refresher training is available to appropriate staff.

Where a complex case or high risk case develops involving a planned service further advice must be sought from the Corporate Back Care Advisor or the Health and Safety Team.