

Checklist

Manual handling

This is an extract from the Health Services Advisory Committee publication Getting to Grips with Manual Handling. For full details about the publication go to www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/information.htm

Posture or movement

Does work involve:

- ✓ frequent or prolonged stooping?

- ✓ stretching or reaching above shoulder height?

- ✓ are loads securely packed, so contents will not shift or spill?

- ✓ do loads contain dangerous substances?

Lifting people

When the load is a person:

- ✓ are lifting and handling needs included in patient/client care plans?

- ✓ are staff warned about particular handling problems relating to the client's needs?

- ✓ are patients/clients giving training so they can assist as much as possible?

- ✓ are staff expected to lift people alone?

- ✓ is there an agreed procedure in case of patient/client falls?

Working environment

- ✓ Does lack of space/poor layout cause problems?

- ✓ Is there enough space to move freely and change posture?

- ✓ Is there sufficient space to use mechanical equipment when needed?

Individual capability

- ✓ Does the job require unusual strength or height?

- ✓ Does the job create a hazard for those who are pregnant or have a health problem?

Furniture and equipment

- ✓ Are workstations and equipment adjustable to suit the user?

- ✓ Are staff trained and encouraged to adjust furniture and equipment before use?

- ✓ Are furniture and equipment checked and maintained regularly?

- ✓ Are faulty equipment and furniture taken out of service and replaced?

- ✓ Are staff trained and encouraged to use mechanical equipment to reduce physical strain?

Methods of work

- ✓ Can work be changed to make it safer?

- ✓ Can mechanical equipment be used – for example, trolleys, hoists or lifts?

- ✓ sideways twisting of the body?

- ✓ unbalanced or uneven carrying of loads (for example, one-handed carrying)?

- ✓ sitting in uncomfortable position with back unsupported?

Loads

When the load is inanimate:

- ✓ is the weight of loads clearly marked?

- ✓ can loads be made smaller and lighter?

- ✓ Are there sufficient rest breaks to allow staff to recover from physically demanding work?

- ✓ Are there enough trained and experienced staff to cope at all times including absence cover, night and weekend working?

- ✓ Can work routines be changed to spread physically demanding work more evenly between staff and shifts?

- ✓ Are floors clean, even, slip-resistant and free from obstructions?

- ✓ Is the workplace temperature too hot or cold?

- ✓ Is lighting adequate (not too dim or glaring)?

- ✓ Could hoists, lifts or ramps be installed?

- ✓ Are heavy items stored at a convenient height (to avoid stooping or reaching)?

- ✓ Are work surfaces at a comfortable height or adjustable?

- ✓ Do work surfaces allow a convenient arrangement of equipment on them (to avoid twisting or stretching)?

Training

- ✓ Are staff, supervisors and managers trained in prevention of back pain?

- ✓ Does training include use of mechanical and adjustable equipment and furniture?

- ✓ Are staff retrained when new equipment or work methods are introduced?

- ✓ Is the training relevant to the needs of the occupational group to whom it is being provided?

- ✓ Are training courses monitored for effectiveness?

Clothing and equipment

- ✓ Do uniforms, protective equipment and other clothing provided allow easy movement?

- ✓ Is appropriate non-slip footwear provided where needed?

Accident reporting

- ✓ Is there a system for reporting and monitoring accidents, near misses, injuries and ill health?

- ✓ Are incidents investigated and action taken to prevent them happening again?
