



MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Manual Handling Policy and Procedure

Contents

1. Policy statement
2. Applicable legislation
3. Definitions
4. Policy arrangements/guidance notes
5. Performance standards and record keeping

1. Policy Statement

Manual handling is the term used to describe the transporting or supporting of a load by hand or bodily force. This includes lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling or putting down a load.

Accidents involving manual handling activities are a major cause of lost time injuries at work and can result in considerable pain and suffering for the individuals concerned. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations seek to prevent injury from the manual handling of loads.

NHS 24 will endeavour to ensure that hazardous manual handling activities are avoided as far as reasonably practicable. Where potentially hazardous manual handling activities cannot be avoided, NHS 24 will ensure that suitable and sufficient assessments are undertaken and adequate control measures are subsequently introduced in order to reduce the risks as far as reasonably practicable.

NHS 24 will ensure that colleagues are provided with such information, instruction and training as may be necessary for them to appreciate the risks presented by manual handling activities and to ensure that they know how to apply any control measures that have been introduced.

2. Applicable Legislation

- Manual Handling Operations Regulations
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
- Health and Safety at Work Act

3. Definitions

“Competent Person” means someone with a thorough practical understanding of the type of manual handling tasks to be performed, the loads to be handled and the working environment in which the tasks will be carried out. The “competent person” must also have received suitable training to enable them to carry out manual handling assessments.

“Manual Handling” includes both transporting a load and supporting a load in a static posture.

“Manual Handling Operation” means manual handling of loads i.e. by human effort as opposed to mechanical handling by crane, lift trucks etc.

4 Policy Arrangements and Guidance

4.1. Employers Responsibilities

NHS 24 must ensure that where moving and handling tasks are identified in the workplace that a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks and the control measures required is carried out. A Generic Risk Assessment is available as Appendix 1. Should this risk assessment not adequately cover the risk then a risk assessment should be carried out using the template at Appendix 2.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 set out a clear hierarchy of control measures where there are identified risks:

- **Avoid** the need for hazardous moving and handling – so far as is reasonably practicable

Where this cannot be avoided

- **Assess** the risk of injury from any moving and handling task
and
- **Reduce** the risk of injury from moving and handling tasks to the lowest level possible

4.2. Employees Responsibilities

All staff should:

- Familiarise themselves with the HSE's publication "Getting to Grips with Manual Handling" and the risk assessment
- Inform a Manager if they identify any hazardous moving and handling task that may cause an injury
- Be familiar with the recommended actions from risk assessments
- Make use of ways of carrying out certain tasks identified as "safe working systems"
- Make proper use of any equipment provided for handling safely
- Take care to ensure that their activities do not put themselves or others at risk
- Not cut corners or take unnecessary risks
- Attend Moving and Handling Awareness Training where this is provided
- Inform a Manager if they injure themselves

4.3. The Tasks

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 also advise that the scope of the regulations is not only lifting but any moving and handling task which may include:

- Lifting
- Lowering
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Carrying

There are 2 categories of moving and handling:

- Inanimate – moving and handling any object such as boxes, furniture, changing the water cooler, pushing a trolley or putting an object in the boot of the car.
- Animate – moving and handling of a person or animal – e.g. as carried out by Nurses and paramedics or Farmers and Vets

4.4 Risk Assessment

When carrying out a risk assessment for any moving and handling task 4 areas should be considered (TILE):

- **The Task-** How will the task be performed and does it include potential high risk manoeuvres such as twisting, bending from the waist, stretching above shoulder height, carrying long distances, strenuous pushing or pulling etc
- **The Individual-** Could the task endanger anyone in the team? (Also give special consideration to pregnant women or those with a disability or injury)
Do individuals require training or specific instruction?
- **The Load-** Is it heavy, bulky or awkward, is it slippery or unstable etc
- **The Environment-** Assess the area you are moving the object to and from, is the lighting poor, are there obstacles in the way etc

4.5. Control Measures

Often there are simple control measures that can be implemented to reduce the risk of injury and they include:

- Consider if the task has to be carried out
- Can it be moved by mechanical means?
- Decide how many people will be required to perform the task safely
- Can you lighten the load or make it less bulky?
- Remove obstructions before carrying out a handling tasks
- Take care in narrow passageways and doorways
- Take care when using steps or ladders
- Remove handling operations that include stooping, twisting and over reaching if you can
- Try to reduce carrying distances
- Try to avoid repetitive handling
- Try to avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height
- Try to provide opportunities for rest- i.e. a 2 or 3 stage manoeuvre
- Provision of Moving and Handling instruction and/or training for staff

4.6. Looking after your back

If you have any musculoskeletal pain:

- Tell your Manager or Health & Safety Lead Coordinator as soon as possible in order that your work tasks, DSE equipment and furniture and work environment can be looked at
- Ask colleagues for help moving loads, equipment or furniture
- Seek advice from your GP
- Self refer to Occupational Health

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- 006 A (Generic Manual Handling Risk Assessment) and
- 006 B (Blank template for Manual Handling Risk Assessment)