What are the Facts about Safe Patient Handling and Movement?

**FACT # 1**

**FACT: PATIENTS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS ARE INJURED BY MANUAL LIFTING TASKS**

Safe Patient Handling and Movement: A policy and practice that creates a safe environment for patients and healthcare workers by eliminating hazardous manual lifting tasks. Transferring and repositioning patients is accomplished by using new technologies in mechanical lifts and repositioning devices.

Safe Patient Handling…

- Increases quality of care for patients
- Dramatically reduces injuries to healthcare workers
- Decreases patient and worker injury during transfers and handling

**PUSH for…**

**Quality Patient Care**

For more information, please visit: [www.zeroliftforny.org](http://www.zeroliftforny.org)
FACT # 2

FACT: QUALITY OF CARE FOR PATIENTS IMPROVES FROM SAFE PATIENT HANDLING PROGRAMS

According to leading experts on safe patient handling:

14 months after eliminating pivot transfers:
- 64% decline in patient fractures
- 37% decline in patient skin tears and bruises
- Elimination of lower extremity spiral fractures
- 26% improvement in upper extremity range of motion

Positive impacts on patients:
- Lower levels of depression
- Improved urinary continence
- Higher engagement in activities
- Lower fall risk
- Higher level of daytime alertness

Audrey Nelson
PhD, RN, FAAN
Director, Patient Safety Center of Inquiry

“I would not even attempt to walk without the assistance of the mechanical stand up lift. I never dreamt I’d be able to walk down the hall. I’ve been in a wheelchair for three years and this is wonderful. It’s just a rush for me.”

Resident, Erie Cottage, NYS Veterans’ Home at Batavia

Paula Pless
Director, SPHM Kaleida Health

Negative patient outcomes have been scientifically linked to nursing injury rates, the nursing shortage and less nursing hours at the bedside.

William Charney
Occupational and Environmental Activist

Quality of care improvements:
- Patients feel more secure and less anxious when being transferred
- Reduction in patients being subjected to awkward and forceful handling
- Dignity of patients is better maintained
- Patient autonomy

A. B. de Castro
PhD, MSN, MPH, RN

For more information, please visit:
www.zeroliftforny.org
What are the Facts about Safe Patient Handling and Movement?

FACT #3

FACT: HEALTHCARE WORK IS CONSISTENTLY AMONG THE MOST HAZARDOUS IN THE NATION

- Healthcare workers with patient care duties had **90,790 injuries** in 2005, nearly tied with the leading occupation- Laborers, Freight, Stock and Material Movers.

- The healthcare patient was the source of the injury for **45,630 (50%) of all the recorded injuries**. **53,270 (59%) of these injuries were strains and sprains**. 48% of all these injuries cite overexertion as the event leading to the injury.

- **91.9%** of these injuries were to **women**. 68% of the injured workers had more than one year of service with the employer.

- This is just the tip of the iceberg! According to the CDC (MMWR 1/19/07, 56 (RR01); 1-7) “The national estimates exclude public sector workers...”. “Evidence suggests that injuries are underreported” According to one study, up to **68% of occupational injuries and illnesses were not reported**. (JOEM Vol. 48,4, April 2006)

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**PUSH for...**

**Protection Using Safe Handling**

**Injury Reduction!**

For more information, please visit: www.zeroliftforny.org
Safe Patient Handling Programs in New York State have dramatically decreased injuries:

- **Kaleida Health** two years post implementation has experienced a **77% decrease** in lost workdays.
- **NYS Veterans’ Home at Batavia** three years post implementation, experienced a **93% reduction** in lost workdays.
- **Glens Falls Hospital** five years post implementation has experienced a **56% decrease in injuries** related to patient handling. They have also experienced a **25% decrease in total workers’ compensation costs** and a **16% decrease** in the **amount per workers’ compensation claim**.
- As of November 2007, **Geneva Living Center North** has gone **387 days** and counting **without an injury** after implementing a safe patient-handling program.

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**FACT: HEALTHCARE WORK IS AMONG THE MOST HAZARDOUS OCCUPATIONS IN NEW YORK STATE**
FACT: INVESTING IN SAFE PATIENT HANDLING AND MOVEMENT IS MONEY IN THE BANK!

The costs of patient lifts are far lower than the cost of injuries. In nine NIOSH case studies there were:

- 60 – 95% reduction in injuries
- 95% reduction in workers’ comp. costs
- 92% reduction in medical/indemnity costs
- As much as 100% reduction in lost work days (absence due to injury)
- 98% reduction in absenteeism (absence due to unreported injury)

Two back claims in Western New York dating back to 1992 and 1999 that remain open, have total costs of over $1.1 million. (Kaleida Health)

One back injury to an ICU nurse cost over $1 million. (Tampa General)

The direct cost of an average back injury case is $19,000. Serious cases requiring surgery average $85,000 in direct costs.

Indirect costs to the facility from a back injury averages between 4 and 10 times the direct costs.

Return on Investment: 1 to 3 Years!

PUSH for…
Protection Using Safe Handling

Fiscal Improvement in Healthcare!

For more information, please visit: www.zeroliftforny.org
FACT # 6

**FACT: THE COST OF AN INJURY IS FAR GREATER THAN THE COST OF EQUIPMENT**

**Cost of Equipment:**
(Average)

- Full Mechanical Lifts – $4000 1 per 8 patients of need
- Sit to Stand Assist Lifts – $3100 1 per 8 patients of need
- Ceiling Lifts – $100 per foot installed, lift $3000
- Non-Friction sheets and other positioning devices – $38 - $3,000
- Training or Re-Training- (minimum 3 hour course)

**Costs of an Injury**
(Average cost of injury with one month of lost workdays.)

**Direct Costs:**
- Medical- $7,000
- Indemnity- $11,108
- Allocated Loss of Expenses- $1,411

**Indirect Costs:**
- Replacement Costs- $7,350 ($24.50 per hour of productivity loss)
- (Overtime & Agency Fees)
- Benefit Continuation- $635.48
- Incident Investigation- Salary of six individuals per hour to investigate a claim.
- Internal Financial Management- Salaries of six individuals per hour.

“Kaleida Health Long Term Care began the implementation of a Safe Patient Handling Program in 2004. Over 800 employees received a three-hour training session. Long Term Care management made a commitment to the program and more importantly to our workforce. We worked with Paula Pless, our Director of Safe Patient Handling and Workforce Ergonomic Safety to ensure our success.

In 2003 we incurred over $604,000 lost wages alone due to injuries, by the end of 2006 lost wages due to compensation injuries were $142,588-a savings of almost $1,000,000 over three years. Our program is successful and Paula and her team continue to work to improve our success rate and provide a safer work environment for our employees. SPH programs provide a solid return on investment.“

Maureen Caruana Vice President, Kaleida Health LTC

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**PUSH for…**

Protection Using Safe Handling

An End to Injuries to Healthcare Workers!

For more information, please visit:

www.zeroliftforyn.org
FACT: WE ARE LOSING OUR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

- The national turnover rate for nurses in 2003 was 14.6%. (BLS)

- The national turnover rate for Certified Nurses Aides in 2002 was 71%. (BLS)

- The top reason nurses leave the profession (36%) aside from retirement is to seek a job less physically demanding. (American Nurses Association)

- 55% of nurses noted they were so disheartened with their profession that they would not recommend a nursing career. (American Nurses Association)

- Unless this issue is resolved, it’s predicted that the demand for nursing services will exceed the supply by nearly 30% in 2020. (2005 Journal of Nursing Management – Andrews & Dziegielewski)

Safe Patient Handling is proven to create a safer and more productive work environment and will protect the future of healthcare in New York State. With the aid of Safe Patient Handling equipment, healthcare workers are able to work to retirement age and those previously injured now have the possibility of returning to work.

“If there wasn’t a Zero-Lift Policy, I would not be able to continue to work as a Certified Nurse Aide.”

Virginia Dolph, CNA, NYS Veterans’ Home at Batavia

PUSH for…

Protection Using Safe Handling

Keeping Healthcare Workers on the Job!

For more information, please visit:

www.zeroliftforny.org
What are the Facts about Safe Patient Handling and Movement?

**FACT # 8**

**FACT: TECHNIQUES TAUGHT THROUGH BODY MECHANICS TRAINING HAS NOT REDUCED BACK INJURIES AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS**

Good body mechanics (lifting with your legs, keeping back straight) is not enough to prevent injuries.

Manual lifting techniques were based on stable loads that could be held close to the body.

Manual lifting techniques were based on loads that weigh far less than typical patients.

According to NIOSH, the human body can safely lift 35 pounds.

Manual lifting techniques were based on studies that only included men.

IN 2005, OVER 53,000 HEALTHCARE WORKERS WHO WERE TRAINED IN GOOD BODY MECHANICS WERE INJURED FROM MANUALLY LIFTING PATIENTS!

*Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005*

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**PUSH** for... Mechanical Lifting Equipment!

For more information, please visit: www.zeroliftforny.org
FACT # 9

FACT: THE EXTREME DEMANDS OF MANUAL LIFTING ARE NEEDLESSLY INJURING OUR HEALTHCARE WORKERS!

The average healthcare worker manually lifts 1.8 tons per 8-hour shift. That is equal to lifting one sedan per shift.

In one year, healthcare workers lift the equivalent of an airplane that is 50% loaded.

The number of manual lifting injuries to healthcare workers in one year equals the full capacity of the new Yankee Stadium.

A Safe Patient Handling and Movement Program eliminates injuries associated with manual lifting and reduces the risk and strain on those that care for us!

PUSH for...

Safer Working Standards!

For more information, please visit: www.zeroliftforny.org
The “Hook and Toss Method” of transferring a patient involves hooking the caregiver’s arm under the armpits of a patient and lifting, using the shoulder joint and momentum to toss the patient to the desired transfer surface.

- This method is not evidence based and has been found to be unsafe for the patient and the caregiver.
- It is still widely practiced in the United States; however, it has been banned in 20 countries.
- This method can cause nerve damage, skin tearing and bruising to the patient.

Healthcare workers routinely use the Pivot Transfer to move patients. This transfer is loaded with risk due to the high level of patient function required to execute it well. Patients and healthcare workers are injured during pivot transfers when patients are unable to stand and take steps, leaving the healthcare worker to bear the patient’s full weight.

According to a study done in western New York at a 120-bed long-term care facility:

- 100% of patient cases where pivot transfers were used for over 90 days showed:
  - Exacerbation of joint disease in shoulders, hips or knees
  - Deterioration or loss of weight bearing skills
  - Below the knee spiral fractures sustained by two patients

- 90% of patients showed adverse effects within 30 days!

Implementing Safe Patient Handling and Movement eliminates consequences of dangerous lifting and repositioning techniques to patients and paves the way to recovery!

PUSH for...

Patient Health!

For more information, please visit:
www.zeroliftforny.org
FACT # 11

FACT: NURSING IS COMPARABLE TO THE MOST PHYSICALLY DEMANDING JOBS

Nurses spend 20-30% of their time bent forward or with the trunk twisted during patient care activities.

Cumulative trauma from manual lifting, transferring & repositioning patients can lead to career ending musculoskeletal injuries.

According to the National Institute of Health, nearly 40 million American adults can be classified as obese.

As the size of our patients increase so does the average age of our nurses (50+ years).

Healthcare: the only profession that considers 100 lbs. to be “lightweight”. Healthcare workers lift an average of 1.8 tons per 8-hour shift.

Even with “good techniques”, it is not possible to lift patients manually without exceeding the NIOSH Action Limit (35 lbs.).

PUSH for...

Protection Using Safe Handling

Worker Safety!

For more information, please visit:

www.zeroliftforny.org
What are the Facts about Safe Patient Handling and Movement?

FACT # 12

FACT: DANGEROUS MANUAL LIFTING TECHNIQUES ARE STILL A PART OF MANY HEALTHCARE CURRICULA

OLD PRACTICES...

- EXPECT WORKERS TO ADAPT TO POOR WORK DESIGNS.
- CAN INJURE THE PATIENT.
- DEMAND THAT WORKERS EXCEED THE NATURAL LIFTING LIMITS OF THEIR BODIES.
- ARE TECHNIQUES THAT ARE BASED ON LOADS THAT WEIGH FAR LESS THAN TYPICAL PATIENTS.

EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES...

- ARE DESIGNED TO FIT WORKERS AND MAINTAIN SAFETY.
- APPLY POSITIONING AND MOBILITY TECHNIQUES THAT ARE SAFE FOR PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS.
- SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN ALL HEALTHCARE CURRICULA TO ENSURE THAT HEALTHCARE WORKERS ARE TAUGHT PROPER TECHNIQUES TO SELECT AND UTILIZE SAFE PATIENT HANDLING EQUIPMENT.

PUSH for...

Protection Using Safe Handling

Educating Healthcare Workers for the Future!

For more information, please visit:

www.zeroliftforny.org