MANUAL HANDLING at ELHAP

The Health and Safety Officer(s) and/or the Manager will assess the manual handling risks to ELHAP's employees, users and visitors and devising and applying measures to reduce the risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The Health and Safety Officer(s) will undertake manual handling assessments through the completion of Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC).

In addition, ELHAP undertakes occupational health screening to identify any employee who has or may have any pre-existing back or neck injuries. Such details enables ELHAP to better support and advise employees on safe manual handling.

ELHAP employees should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, employees may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle service users. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

- Staff will be given training in how to lift appropriately, and they should not attempt to lift if they haven't received this training. All members of staff should be familiar with the following ELHAP lifting procedures:
- If you have to lift someone, ensure that you have adequate support from other staff (either physical or other). In most situations this should involve two workers.
- Do not lift someone who you know is too heavy for you to lift.
- Ensure the person wants/needs to be lifted. Involve them in what you are doing and communicate with them about the best way to do it (they may know the best way themselves, so consult with them, where possible). Continue communicating throughout the "exercise".
- Act appropriately when lifting (N.B. In a situation where this is not possible, think sensibly - either do not lift or get support from a worker, whatever their gender).
- Report to an ELHAP first aider any injury or discomfort suffered as a result of lifting.
- If your physical condition at any time prevents you from lifting, inform an ELHAP senior staff member.
- Part of your job is to be an enabler, but in enabling others, be sure not to injure yourself.
- Enabling an individual does not mean that you have to carry out all lifting tasks requested of you - there may be other ways in which the person you are working with might achieve greater independence.

IMPORTANT

- ALWAYS use the APPROPRIATE LIFTING EQUIPMENT, if it is available.
- PREPARE the lifting area and watch for all hazards and potential hazards.
- Know your own LIFTING CAPACITY and that of your lifting partners.
- Do not TWIST your trunk when lifting. Relax your knees and raise your head as you lift, to maintain a natural erect spine.
- Use RHYTHM AND TIMING when lifting and don't jerk. Always use clear instructions. Check with your lifting partner before moving.
- DO NOT lift or handle at arms length.

- Bend your KNEES, not your back.
- Let your LEGS power your lifting, not your back.
- Adapt the principles of SAFER HANDLING to your home life as well as work.
- USE COMMON SENSE. Don't overdo it. Get help with loads that are too heavy or awkward for you to move comfortably.

The most likely occurrences of manual handling for ELHAP employees are:

- moving, supporting or helping service users;
- employing restraint techniques in challenging circumstances;
- the receipt and storage of stationary orders;
- moving paper records into archive storage;
- rearranging the office furniture and equipment;
- moving play equipment;
- handling loads at outside events organised by ELHAP employees.

All employees should use aids which are available to reduce the risk of injury, e.g. hoists.

Employees should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees should always be sought for moving or for lifting heavy service users and/or awkward loads/equipment. When lifting in a team take instructions from one person only.

Any employee feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident on the ELHAP Accident Report Form. To continue may result in more serious injury.