What are the hazards and how might they harm?

Back and muscle strain from manual handling

Bacterial or viral infections from contact with infected patients

Impact injuries from falling loads or collisions

Injuries as a result of violent behaviour by patients

Slip injuries from wet floors

Trip injuries from uneven surfaces or obstructions

What PPE should the individual wear?

Wear appropriate PPE to ensure infection control.

What other precautions should be taken?

Wear appropriate footwear with slip-resistant soles

WS.STC.PS.02.02

Safety Task Card

Portering hospital patients

STCPS 02

Unit Managers – use page overleaf to list any hazards and control measures specific to your site which are not listed below

Safe System of Work

1. You must have completed the portering-specific manual handling training and competency checks to do this task.

2. Each move must be assessed to identify appropriate number of porters to complete the move or whether a mechanical bed mover is required. Refer to STCPS 03 if a mechanical bed puller is being used.

3. Access to the area and actioning of the task is only permitted by trained staff who have not been identified as vulnerable or as a risk to the patient from infection (barrier care).

4. The required PPE, depending on any special conditions, must be worn prior to going to the area where the patient is located and prior to starting the move. The task must be completed by an appropriate number of staff as well as medical staff or family member escort if required.

5. On arrival ask the patient, or if more appropriate, the medical team, to confirm their name and that they are aware of where they are going. Check with medical team that the patient is ready for transport.

6. Check the wheelchair or bed before use to ensure it is in good working order and that any required restraints or guards are present and working. Damaged or defective wheelchairs and beds should be removed from use, labelled as defective and isolated until repaired by a competent person.

7. Check with ward staff whether there are any known risks of violent reaction or unexpected behaviour from the patient before transporting. If necessary, organise a staff or security escort.

8. You must not lift the patient. Any lifting must be completed by medical staff. If you are required to assist medical staff this can only be done under their supervision.

9. Ensure that the patient's head and limbs are contained within the bed or wheelchair and cannot be injured.

Continued on reverse

If you have any concerns, stop and speak with your line manager before proceeding.

List any additional hazards or risks you have identified and control measures required to manage these.

Portering hospital patients continued

Safe System of Work continued

10. Ensure that bedding and covers are tucked in to prevent them from snagging on door handles, becoming tangled in wheels or catching in lift openings.

11. Check with medical staff that any medical or ancillary equipment attached to the patient cannot become entangled, snagged or detached during the journey.

12. Ensure patient's feet rest safely on the footrests of the wheelchair before moving.

13. Make progress carefully and steadily, avoiding obstructions, other pedestrians, sudden changes in direction, or sudden stops, and giving appropriate warnings when necessary.

14. Avoid routes with uneven floor surfaces, changes in level and wet surfaces.

15. Never leave the patient unattended.

16. For the patient's comfort, avoid stopping in poorly lit or draughty areas and keep the patient informed of progress throughout the move, from collection to delivery.

17. After completing the move, remove PPE according to standard doffing (removal) protocols.

18. Carry out decontamination of the wheelchair or bed as per site infection-control protocols.

19. For movement outside of the main building:

    • Routes must be documented in the site floor risk assessment.

    • Check lighting of the route is sufficient for safe transportation.

    • If appropriate, carry an umbrella (2nd porter must escort to hold the umbrella).

    • Where transfer to a car or other vehicle is required, medical staff must support with the transfer and complete any lifting.

    • All requests for movement to personal vehicles or public transport outside of client property must be cleared by the HSE Lead.

If you have any concerns, stop and speak with your line manager before proceeding.