**Sample Minnesota safe-patient-handling  
program for clinics**

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Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

Occupational Safety and Health Division

**Sample Minnesota safe-patient-handling program for clinics**

**Scope**

Whenever a patient requires assistance in moving at [name of clinic], this policy will be followed.

**Purpose**

This policy has been developed to protect the health and comfort of patients and employees when patients require assistance in moving, through the consistent use of mechanical aids/devices, and to meet regulatory requirements.

**Policy**

[Name of clinic] is committed to providing employees a safe work environment, while providing exceptional care, and to complying with regulatory requirements for worker health and safety. Safe patient-handling (SPH) is a key component to reducing hazards of injury for our employees and our patients. Therefore, it is the policy of [name of clinic] that when patients receiving care require assistance from [name of clinic] employees to move (e.g., assisted transfer, lifting or repositioning), that assistance is provided in a manner that is safe for both the patient and employee. Specifically, mechanical lifting equipment and/or other patient-moving aids should be used in all circumstances when lifting/moving patients except when *absolutely* *necessary*, such as during a medical emergency.

**Program elements**

***Assessment of safe-patient-handling hazards***

[Name of clinic] will actively participate in a clinic-wide patient-handling hazard assessment that considers the patient-handling tasks, type of clinic, staffing, patient populations and the physical environment of patient care areas. Completed written hazard assessments will be maintained with a master copy of the written safe-patient-handling program.

Patients will be assessed for safe-patient-handling needs prior to arrival at our facility and for each relevant activity in the care delivery process. The information from this assessment will be contained in the patient records and the patient records will identify the safe-patient-handling requirements for that individual.

***Acquisition of safe-patient-handling equipment***

[Name of clinic] has acquired an adequate supply of appropriate safe-patient-handling equipment. An adequate supply of equipment means every employee has readily available to them the appropriate type of safe-patient-handling equipment necessary for the procedure being performed.

***Training***

Training of direct patient care workers will be provided to demonstrate proper application and use of available safe-patient-handling equipment. The training will be conducted initially (such as when a new piece of equipment is purchased or new patient care staff is hired) and periodically thereafter, based on observed need or requests for training. Training will demonstrate how equipment can be used, proper methods for use and proper application for use relative to the care activity provided. Training records will be maintained and will include the dates training was conducted, the name and title of the person who conducted the training, the names and job titles of employees who completed the training and a brief summary or outline of the information included in the training session. The training records for safe patient-handling will be maintained with this program.

***Modifications/construction to patient care areas***

When developing architectural plans for constructing or remodeling clinical areas in which patient handling occurs, consideration toward the feasibility of incorporating patient-handling equipment must be considered. Therefore, prior to any modifications and/or major construction to patient/patient care areas, the management of [name of clinic], with input from affected employees, shall determine the modifications meet the goal of minimizing manual lifting of patients outlined in this program. Consideration to appropriate room design and layout to accommodate the use of safe-patient-handling equipment and procedures shall be considered prior to any remodeling or construction.

***Periodic review***The written SPH program at [name of clinic] will be reviewed periodically to remove outdated information, insert new information and update training records. Reviews will also be conducted following modification or construction of patient/patient care areas.

The review will focus on employee compliance with the safe-patient-handling program requirements and the effectiveness of the program toward reducing worker and patient injuries. Injury information and employee feedback will be obtained and reviewed to evaluate the program. The evaluation will identify program strengths and weaknesses, and will determine an action plan to improve each area of weakness in the program. Employees may provide feedback at any time throughout the year.

**Sample safe-patient-handling program training log**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Person providing training | Job title | Date |
|  |  |  |

Description of training:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Training attendees | | |
| *Print name* | *Sign name* | *Job title* |
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**Sample safe-patient-handling program annual review log**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reviewed by  (print name) | Reviewed by  (sign name) | Job title | Date of review |
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For each evaluation, create a report that summarizes the findings of the evaluation and determines action items necessary to improve areas of deficiency.

Develop an action plan that identifies the task, who is assigned responsibility for completion of the task and a proposed date of completion.

**Sample schedule for implementation of the safe-patient-handling program**

* Inventory existing SPH equipment (including all necessary accessory items)
* Begin hazard assessments of patient care areas (can include a general facility assessment based on current patient population and facility design, and patient-specific assessments to determine individual needs)
* Review findings of hazard assessments
* Determine additional SPH equipment needs
* Obtain and review vendor information
* Visit facilities that use SPH equipment to observe actual use of equipment being considered
* Determine what SPH equipment will be obtained, based on the hazard assessments and knowledge of existing SPH equipment
* Establish a budget for SPH equipment and begin pricing and ordering of equipment
* Obtain equipment and begin scheduling training
* Initiate training of the care staff about the proper application and use of acquired (and existing) SPH equipment and techniques of SPH
* Conduct follow-up observations of SPH equipment use and effectiveness
* Initiate additional hazard assessments, as needed, when situations are identified that pose an injury risk
* Review the effectiveness of the SPH program
* Continue to assess SPH equipment needs based on patient and caregiver needs
* Provide additional training, as needed, about SPH equipment use, about new equipment that has been obtained, when observations identify the need for training and upon request
* Review the effectiveness of the program (at least annually)
* Review any proposed facility renovations, additions or new construction that could impact SPH to ensure changes accommodate the use of SPH equipment and techniques

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