



Safer Patient Moving and Handling Policy

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1.1	May 2024	Risk Team	A	Formatted to Trust new template. Extension approved within April Clinical Governance Group.
1.2	August 2024	Risk Team	A	Policy extension approved in July 2024 Clinical Governance Group.
1.3	June 2024	Moving and Handling Lead	D	Title change. Responsible director title update. Minor amendments to wording. Update of reference list. Changes to committee/group names and responsible persons titles. Removal of Patient Safety and Nursing Development Manager role from responsible persons.
2.0	November 2024	Risk Team	A	Policy approved in November 2024 Clinical Governance Group.

A= Approved D = Draft

Document Lead = Moving and Handling Lead

Associated Documentation:

To support this policy, there are a number of related documents that underpin the risk management arrangements:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedure
- Risk Management Policy
- Incident and Serious Incident Management Policy
- Investigations and Learning Policy
- Process for Inspection for Improvement (I4I) - SOP
- Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy and Procedure
- YAS Occupation Health User Guide

In addition, there are a number of specific process / guidance documents relating to safe moving and handling:

- Moving and Handling of Loads Policy
- Moving Patients with Complex Needs (including Bariatric Patients) – SOP

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Staff Summary

YAS is committed to ensuring moving and handling incidents are minimised
YAS will implement safe working practices to mitigate moving and handling risks
YAS will risk assess moving and handling risks through an integrated risk assessment process
YAS will raise awareness amongst staff of moving and handling risks
YAS will train staff to identify and mitigate moving and handling risks where possible
YAS will assess and mitigate moving and handling risks for staff, patients and others
YAS will comply with CQC standards regarding moving and handling management
YAS will comply with health and safety legislation relating to moving and handling risks
YAS will monitor processes for moving and handling management to ensure continued effectiveness
YAS will ensure that appropriate roles and committees have responsibility for monitoring

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Yorkshire Ambulance Service Trust (YAS) recognises its responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare of its employees, students, volunteers and patients associated with patient handling activities.
- 1.2 The YAS Safer Patient Moving and Handling policy sets out the Trust's approach and commitment to safer patient handling and recognises the wider regulatory influences arising from health and safety and NHS legislation that puts patient safety at the heart of our moving and handling practice and decisions.
- 1.3 To this end the Trust will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that manual handling risks are eliminated, or reduced to an acceptable level, to help protect the health of staff and its Patients. Relevant legislation and standards are:
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002)
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)
 - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment regulations 1998 (LOLER)
 - Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
 - The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023
 - Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- 1.4 The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), requires employers to take reasonable care of their employees. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations, 1992, (MHOR 1992) give further guidance and require employers to adopt an ergonomic approach to removing, or reducing, the risk of manual handling injuries and to ensure that systems of work and the working environment are safe.
- 1.5 To meet its statutory obligation, with the aim of reducing the likelihood of incidence of injury amongst its employees resulting from manual handling operations, Yorkshire Ambulance Service has prepared the following policy and procedures document which will apply to all its employees.

2.0 Purpose / Scope

- 2.1 The policy is based around 5 key principles
1. Following Health and Safety Guidelines
 2. Risk Assessment

3. Effective training
4. Monitoring of training for staff.
5. Monitoring of Moving and handling incidents

2.2 This policy applies to all patient facing staff working on behalf of the Trust.

2.3 The intention of this policy is to ensure people receive safe care and prevent avoidable harm or risk of harm. The Trust will ensure that staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and training to adequately assess the needs of patients and keep them safe.

2.4 This policy details the organisational mitigations in place to meet the legal requirements to ensure that they;

- Reduce the likelihood of patients/Patients being injured whilst being moved and handled through the practice of using evidence-based practice to maintain their safety and dignity; and:
- Reduce the potential for staff being injured whilst carrying out their duties related to moving and handling in such a manner as to ensure their health and safety and that of others they come into contact with.

3.0 Moving and Handling / Manual Handling (Process)

3.1 To promote effective manual handling and reduce the incidents of injury, the Manual Handling Operations Regulations, 1992, were introduced to ensure that employers took steps to:

- Avoid the need for hazardous manual handling.
- Assess those tasks that cannot be avoided
- Reduce the level of risk associated with manual handling tasks that cannot be avoided to the lowest level reasonably practicable
- Review manual handling policies and procedures on a regular basis

3.2 This Safer Patient Moving and Handling policy aims to eliminate the need for hazardous moving and handling activities that pose a risk to both patients and staff, by providing strategies to reduce the incidence of patient harm and work related musculo-skeletal injury, and occupational ill health, for all its employees as directed by MHOR 1992, (amended 2002).

3.3 The Trust will adopt an ergonomic approach and endeavour to work to a '**Safer handling**' policy. Unavoidable and hazardous manual handling will be kept to an absolute minimum and founded on *suitable and sufficient* risk assessment. Alternative safer methods, based on recognised evidence-based best practice, will be used wherever possible.

4.0 Patient Handling

4.1 The Trust recognises that there will always be the need to assist with the moving and handling of patients. However, where there is a need to lift whole body weight, the trust will utilise techniques and/ specialised equipment in order to minimise risks.

4.2 To avoid hazardous handling any other considerations must take into account duty of care and balanced decision making. The aim of the policy is to avoid hazardous moving and handling of patients in all but exceptional or immediately life-threatening situations.

- 4.3 The patient's moving and handling needs must be person-centred and should reflect their individual circumstances. Informed consent must be obtained prior to any moving and handling procedures being undertaken by staff. When a patient lacks capacity to give consent and an appropriate person is not available (family member, friend, independent mental capacity advocate), then decisions should be made in consideration of the patient's best interests by staff.
- 4.4 There are risks associated with using a number of controversial handling techniques on patients as they could result in a high risk of injury for both patient and staff. (Refer: to National Back Exchange guidelines)
- 4.5 However, there may be exceptional circumstances where one of these techniques has to be used, usually in a **one-off emergency situation**. Should this happen then those involved should complete an incident report under the terms of a "near miss".
- 4.6 For patient moving and handling, where the patient's condition and circumstances allow, clinical staff will be supported by the Trust to encourage patients to assist in their own movement and transfers. This is in line with current best practice and will reduce the likelihood of staff and patients suffering avoidable injury from patient moving and handling.

5.0 Risk Assessments

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Risk assessment is the most important factor in reducing the risks of injury to patients, staff and others. Moving and handling risks like all other risks are identified, managed and integrated into the Trust's proactive risk assessment processes.
- 5.1.2 Risk assessment is a systematic sequence of actions to;
- Identify the hazards and the people affected
 - Estimate the likelihood of harm (risk)
 - Estimate the potential and severity of harm (consequence)
 - Review and monitor the risk including the implementation of any control measures
- 5.1.3 Moving and handling risk assessments use an ergonomic approach and fall into two broad categories. Moving and handling of objects and moving and handling of people. An ergonomic assessment must include aspects of **TILE**:
- **T** - Task - (type of handling being undertaken including frequency, recovery etc. and what is required to complete the movement safely?)
 - **I** - Individual - (consider capability, relevant training and knowledge of the handlers involved, including health, clothing and age, number of staff etc.)
 - **L** - Load - (consider weight, height, possible movement during transit etc, type of load including patient or inanimate object, and additional characteristics of the load including, communication etc.)
 - **E** - Environment - (where the handling is to be undertaken e.g., patient's home, climate, obstacles, equipment etc. consider access and egress routes, temperature, lack of space etc)
- 5.1.4 In accordance with best practice, assessors should also consider:

- **E** - Equipment – what is / may be available to avoid or reduce an identified risk - both manual and power assist (has it been serviced, maintained, fit for purpose, can it be used as intended)
- **O** - Other factors (work organisation, psychosocial etc.)

5.1.5 In accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, the moving and handling of patients within the Trust must be provided in a safe way. The Trust provides *Safe care and Treatment* by;

- assessing the risks to the health and safety of our patients prior to undertaking any moving and handling operations.
- doing all that is reasonably practicable to mitigate any such risks
- ensuring that staff providing care to patients are trained, competent, skilled and experienced to do so safely
- ensuring that the vehicles used by the Trust are safe to use
- ensuring the equipment used by staff within the Trust for aiding in the moving and handling of patients are safe for use and used in a safe way.

5.2 **Dynamic risk assessment (DRA)**

5.2.1 DRA's are ongoing assessments undertaken during work activities that continually assess given situations, consider existing risks, and those developing, and continually consider methods of managing such risks, related to both patients and objects.

5.2.2 *"The continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk, taking action to eliminate or reduce risk, monitoring and reviewing, in the rapidly changing circumstances of an operational incident"*

5.2.3 When undertaking moving and handling tasks, it is the decision of staff, following the use of an appropriate risk assessment, to consider the most appropriate course of action / patient handling.

5.2.4 Staff must do all that is reasonably practicable to mitigate risks. They should follow good practice guidance and must adopt control measures to make sure the risk is as low as is reasonably possible. No operation or deployment of resources will be completely risk free, but risk may be mitigated and reduced with appropriate Dynamic Risk Assessment

5.2.5 The basic moving risk assessment principals should be utilised, **TILE** - *Task, Individual, Load, Environment*. Where necessary, the additional factor of equipment should also be considered.

5.3 **Moving and Handling in Complex Situations.**

5.3.1 It is recognised that in complex situations moving and handling decisions are considered in association with clinical considerations and will be based on a 'risk 'v' benefit' decision process.

5.3.2 During the Dynamic Risk Assessment process staff may consider obtaining additional support in undertaking manual handling. Additional resources could include:

- Additional ambulance crews
- Additional equipment
- A specialist vehicle, such as the ISU vehicle
- Internal resources with training in specialist rescue.
- Other external specialist services

5.4 Assessment of Patients with Complex handling needs

- 5.4.1 For patients with Complex handling and movement needs please refer to the Moving and handling Patients with Complex Mobility Needs including Bariatric Patients - SOP.

5.5 Standard Operating Procedures / Safer Systems of Work

- 5.5.1 Following the assessment of any hazardous moving and handling activities Standard Operating Procedures / Safer Systems of Work must be developed to address the risks identified. These may include:
- 5.5.2 Work systems that use ergonomic handling principles and incorporate a safer patient moving handling approach as per safer handling guidelines.
- 5.5.3 The provision and use of suitable and sufficient moving and handling equipment.
- 5.5.4 Where a moving and handling risk assessment identifies that equipment is required to reduce risks, then equipment should be utilised.

5.6 Ambulance Vehicle Risk Assessments

- Risk assessments of ambulance vehicles include ergonomic consideration at the design stage or, where possible and commercially viable, modified retrospectively to reduce the need for manual handling or make safer any unavoidable manual handling.
- Equipment carried on the ambulance is designed to eliminate or substantially reduce the need for manual handling, such as moving and handling aids and lifting devices.

6.0 Ambulance Vehicles Moving and Handling Resources

- 6.1 The Trust has a range of resources available on Ambulance vehicles to aid with patients with medical conditions that require moving and handling assistance.

6.2 Specialist Operations; Hazardous Area Response Team (HART)

- 6.2.1 The Hazardous Area Response Team have a role in the management of difficult, challenging and high-risk incidents involving patients with severely complex handling issues.

7.0 Training: Staff Moving and Handling training

- 7.1 Loads and patient moving and handling training is mandatory and all patient facing staff must complete statutory mandatory training.
- 7.2 The Trust is committed to providing adequate and suitable training in order to protect staff and Patients from avoidable injuries.
- 7.3 The Trust will ensure that all staff have the appropriate level of training and education to fulfil their duties in respect of moving and handling awareness
- 7.4 Managers must ensure that all new staff receive initial training on the principles of moving and handling, patients and loads, as part of their local induction to support training compliance.

8.0 Continuous Improvement

- 8.1 In order to ensure the continual development of safer moving and handling practices and support mechanisms across the workplace, the Trust has in place a Moving and Handling of Patient's & Loads Group (MHPLG).
- 8.2 The remit of the MHPLG is to examine the issue of moving and handling at YAS and, using several information sources including incidents and staff feedback, recommend areas for improvement in relation to the Trust's management of moving and handling. In addition, all moving and handling incidents are also examined by Trust Health and Safety Groups.
- 8.3 Moving and handling incidents that relate to vehicles and equipment are also examined by the Trust Procurement Group.
- 8.4 By adhering to a robust and up to date policy in combination with best practice training systems and access to appropriate equipment the Trust will be more effective at reducing MSD reporting and sickness absence.

9.0 Implementation Plan

- 9.1 The latest approved version of this Policy will be posted on the Trust Intranet site for all members of staff to view. New members of staff will be signposted to how to find Trust policies and procedures during Trust Induction.

10.0 Monitoring Compliance

- 10.1 Monitoring performance with regards to health and safety in general is detailed in the Trust's Health and Safety Management System. Please see Health and Safety Policy for details.
- 10.2 Monitoring specific to moving and handling is detailed below:

Monitoring subject	Methodology	Frequency	Monitored by
Review of moving and handling incidents	All moving and handling incidents finally approved by Moving and Handling Lead	On-going	Quality and Safety Team
Review of moving and handling incidents	All low and no harm moving and handling incidents reviewed by Health and Safety Manager and Moving and Handling Lead. Areas for discussion brought to Low/No Harm group.	Weekly	Quality and Safety Team / Low/No Harm Group
Review of moving and handling incidents	All moderate and above moving and handling incidents reviewed by Incident Review Group (IRG)	Weekly	Quality and Safety Team
Review of moving and handling incidents – including lessons learned and analysis of themes and trends.	Patient handling incidents reviewed by Moving and Handling Lead	Monthly	Moving and Handling of Patients and Loads Working Group

11.0 References

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, available at:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/section/1>
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/HSG65.htm>
- Standards in Manual Handling (third edition) National Back Exchange.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous amendments) Regulations 2002, available at:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l23.pdf>
- Manual handling-operations-regulations-1992-guidance-on-regulations-hse-l23-2016/file
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l23.htm>
- HOP7 (The guide to handling of people; Person centred care) Published by Backcare 2023.
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, available at:
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/regulations>
- Resuscitation Council (UK). (2001) Guidance for safer handling during resuscitation in hospitals. July 2015, updated June 2020, from
<http://www.resus.org.uk/pages/safehand.pdf>
- UK Core Skills Training Framework, 2021, Skills for Health.
<https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/StatMand-CSTF-Subject-Guide-UK-v1.6.2.pdf>
- Royal College of Nursing. (1999). RCN Code of practice for patient handling. London: RCN
- All Wales NHS Manual Handling Training Passport & Information Scheme

12.0 Appendices

12.1 This Policy includes the following appendices:

Appendix A - Definitions

Appendix B - Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix A – Definitions

Moving and Handling is any activity which involves lifting and lowering, carrying, pushing, pulling or moving by hand or bodily force of any discrete moveable object, including a person, animal or load. The term “moving and handling” and “manual handling” are interchangeable terms for the purpose of this policy.

A Load in this context may include for example a patient receiving medical attention or an inanimate object such as a medical bag that is lifted.

Moving and handling is classed as **“hazardous”** where there is a risk of injury not only to the handler but also to the patient being injured.

‘Safer handling’ policy. The Trust will endeavour to keep hazardous manual handling tasks to an absolute minimum and based on suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Alternative safer methods, based on recognised evidence-based best practice, will be used wherever possible. In the case of unforeseen imminent life-threatening situations, a dynamic assessment approach will be adopted.

Dynamic risk assessments are ongoing assessments undertaken during work activities. They constantly assess given situations, consider existing risks, and those developing, and continually consider methods of managing such risks. This process relates to both patients and objects. A basic example of a dynamic risk assessment is deciding when to cross the road.

Patients with Complex Moving and Handling Needs

Yorkshire Ambulance Service Trust define patients with complex handling and movement needs as situations where:

“The weight, size, shape or ability of the patient, or the circumstance of their environment, requires specialist equipment or resources to convey the patient safely to a definitive centre of care.”

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD’s) are problems affecting muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves or other soft tissues. Symptoms of MSD can arise acutely as a result of an identifiable event (such as lifting a patient) or may present by a gradual onset of symptoms.

T.I.L.E.E.O. initials of the risk factors to be assessed; Task, Individual, Load, Environment, Equipment, Other

Reasonably Practicable: balance of risk against time, effort and resources required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Appendix B – Roles and Responsibilities

Roles & Responsibilities

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for health and safety management. The Trust Board requires that the Chief Executive, the Executive Directors and their staff implement the requirements of this policy within all areas of the organisation covered by their portfolio.

In addition, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 confirms that everyone within the Trust has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of themselves and others whilst conducting their day-to-day activities within the organisation.

In addition, the responsibilities of specific staff with regards to risk assessments are detailed in the Trust's Risk Assessment Procedure.

Specific duties and responsibilities for manual handling are shown below:

Strategic Health & Safety Group

The Strategic Health & Safety Group (H&SG) is the expert level committee for YAS relating to health, safety and security and as such considers policies relating to moving and handling in line with its policy development role.

The H&SG receive reports relating to investigations, consider changes to work procedures and / or the introduction of new technology, carry out and receive the findings from risk assessments, monitor and audit the safety and security of relevant risks and report to the Trust Management Group (TMG).

The H&SG is established in partnership with Staff Side Worker Representatives who have agreed to also represent the interests of non-union affiliated employees within the Trust.

Board Level Director for Moving and Handling

This role will be fulfilled by the Executive Director of Quality and Chief Paramedic who will:

- Oversee the implementation of an effective management system for the reduction of moving and handling risks

Occupational Health Service

Where individuals have particular musculoskeletal health needs, Occupational health will provide support and guidance to the Trust and its managers regarding these cases.

Occupational Health will also provide services to support MSK health amongst staff; both proactive and reactive.

Head of Safety

The Head of Safety is responsible for ensuring the Trust has in place arrangements for safer moving and handling.

The Head of Safety will ensure that all matters relating to moving and handling are dealt with appropriately.

In particular responsibilities will include:

- Driving continuous improvement in relation to the safe moving and handling of patients.
- Ensuring the promotion of moving and handling injury reduction in a pro-active manner.
- Ensuring the involvement of patient representatives in any new patient moving processes.
- Chair of the Trust's Moving and Handling of Patients and Loads Group.

- Ensuring the Trust has access to specialist moving and handling knowledge to support the Trust's aim of reducing the prevalence of MSK disorders amongst YAS staff.

Health & Safety Manager (Nominated Competent Person for Health and Safety)

The Health & Safety Manager is responsible for ensuring the Trust has in place an up to date Moving and Handling of Loads Policy.

The Health & Safety Manager will provide general advice and practical assistance in all matters relating to manual handling within the scope of their health and safety expertise.

In particular responsibilities will include:

- Maintaining suitable recording arrangements for health and safety management purposes.
- Ensuring the promotion of moving and handling injury reduction in a pro-active manner and in particular where new processes and equipment are being considered and introduced.
- Ensuring incidents are reported to the Health and Safety Executive where appropriate.
- Supplying appropriate information in a timely manner.
- Encouraging reporting and monitoring of all incidents and injuries to staff or other affected parties.
- Supporting the completion of manual handling risk assessments within the scope of their health and safety expertise.
- Ensuring the Trust is aware of its duties under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations.

Moving and Handling Lead (Nominated Competent Person for Moving and Handling)

The Moving and Handling Lead is responsible for ensuring the Trust has in place an up-to-date Safer Patient Handling Policy.

The Moving and Handling Lead will provide specific SME advice and practical assistance in all matters relating to moving and handling within the scope of their expertise and in particular for the moving and handling of patients.

In particular responsibilities will include:

- Acting as a source of specialist expertise developing and maintaining a strategic approach to moving and handling for the Trust.
- Ensuring the Trust is aware of its duties and responsibilities under the wider regulatory framework which influences NHS legislation and patient safety.
- Supporting management teams with meeting their responsibilities for the provision of safe and effective care.
- Evolving the Trust's moving and handling policy, systems and practices in line with relevant legal duties, influences, case law and evidence-based best practice.
- Monitor training and development activity and advising the Trust and managers of the appropriate remedial action where necessary and working with the Trust's training and education department, YAS Academy, as a subject matter expert.
- Providing specialist advice to assist with the analysis of Moving and Handling training needs.
- Providing support with the specification, commissioning and quality assurance for any relevant training delivered by third party providers.
- Providing advice and guidance to the Trust on the purchase and use of specialist moving and handling equipment.

- Assisting the Trust with the investigation of moving and handling / equipment related incidents with a view to identifying learning and improvement opportunities and providing support to the Trust's legal department regarding claims.
- Reviewing moving and handling incidents related to specific themes associated to patient handling.
- Promoting staff health, safety and wellbeing and patient safety, comfort and dignity.

Head of Investigations and Learning/ Patient Safety Specialist

- The Head of Investigations and Learning/ Patient Safety Specialist is specifically responsible for providing advice to the Trust regarding patient safety related issues, including patient safety issues related to the moving and handling of patients.

PTS Quality Lead and Patient Safety Specialist

- PTS Quality Lead and Patient Safety Specialist is specifically responsible for providing advice to the Trust regarding PTS patient safety related issues, including patient safety issues related to the moving and handling of patients within PTS.

Health & Safety Representatives

Health & Safety Representatives are recognised by their trade union and accepted by the Trust to carry out health and safety duties in line with the requirements of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations.

The Trust Board via appropriate Executive Directors will ensure that they are:

- Involved in moving and handling risk assessments where appropriate.
- Consulted on changes to moving and handling practices affecting staff.
- Involved with any equipment / vehicle evaluation prior to its introduction to the Trust.

All Employees

Every employee has a personal responsibility for their own health and safety and has a duty to:

- Take reasonable care of his / her own health and safety and has a duty of care toward other persons affected by his / her acts or omissions particularly relating to moving and handling tasks.
- Co-operate with management in reviewing rules and safe working practices regarding moving and handling in his/her department and for making them effective.
- Report all incidents, near misses, hazards, work related illnesses or injuries.
- Correctly use moving and handling equipment provided by the Trust.
- Implement any training or safe working practices relating to moving and handling.