F02c

## Mobility assistance guidance for care workers

This document is provided to Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales (now referred to as ‘the organisation’) as a Network Partner of Carers Trust.

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# 1.0 SCOPE

1.1 This guidance sets out how care workers will provide mobility assistance[[1]](#footnote-1) to people of all ages with care and support needs. Its aim is to keep both you and them safe from injury or harm when doing so. There is separate guidance (F02d) for volunteers.

# 2.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1 A care planner / assessor will carry out a safe handling risk assessment with each person before you start working with them. Their assessment will consider:

1. the person’s mobility assistance needs
2. their condition, (such as their personal characteristics, state of health, disabilities, communication or behavioural needs) and the effect it may have on their mobility
3. their risk of falling
4. whether any mobility aids or equipment will need to be used
5. how many staff are needed to carry out the task/s safely
6. the environment in which the care and support will be provided.
   1. The care planner / assessor will also assess whether proposed staff:

* are capable / have the necessary capacity to do the work safely
* are at significant risk (for example, have their own health needs, are pregnant, young or new workers)
* have received suitable training, (including how to safely operate any necessary mobility aids or equipment) and been assessed as competent.

2.3 If there is significant risk of harm from a particular mobility assistance task, the care planner / assessor will:

1. decide whether that task needs to be done
2. assess the risk if the task cannot be avoided
3. identify control measures to reduce / manage the risk
4. seek to reduce the risk to as low as is reasonably practicable
5. not agree to the task if the risk cannot be reduced to ‘low’ (see Appendix 2).

# 3.0 PREVENTION OF FALLS

3.1 The care planner / assessor will inform you if a person is at risk of falling and include details of any necessary, specific precautions in their care and support plan.

3.2 In addition, note the following general precautions to prevent a fall and apply as appropriate.

* Clean up spillages quickly and efficiently, including any water left on the floor after the person has bathed, showered or washed.
* Make sure the person’s footwear is securely fastened / tied, or that slip-on shoes are not loose-fitting and likely to fall off.
* Encourage them to wear their glasses as necessary and check they are clean.
* Encourage the person not to get up from a sitting position too quickly.
* Check that any mobility aids, lifting equipment or household adaptations, (such as walker, riser recliner chair, handrails) remain fit for purpose and encourage the person to use them.
* Be aware that a person’s health can vary, and temporary health conditions (such as infections) can affect their mental and physical abilities, increasing the risk of falls.  If you notice someone is less well than normal, encourage them to do things more slowly and to take more rest.
* If a person’s condition deteriorates, for example they begin to struggle with their mobility, are becoming increasingly unsteady on their feet, or experience near-falls incidents, report this to your manager / person on call straight away.
* If you notice any slip, trip or fall hazards, (such as loose mats / rugs, trailing wires or cables, ill-fitting footwear), or any furniture / objects / surfaces you think could cause injury in event of a fall, explain the risks to the person concerned and / or their family and let your line manager know.

3.3 In event of a fall:

* do not try to catch a falling person
* apply your first aid training
* summon an ambulance as necessary by calling 999 or 112
* inform your line manager / person on call and the person’s parent / carer
* record the incident on the person’s day-to-day record.

# 4.0 WORKING WITH BABIES AND SMALL CHILDREN

4.1 When you are looking after a baby or small child, the care planner / assessor will:

* assess whether it is safe for you to lift or carry them
* assess whether you can lift them from the floor on your own, as this is prohibited unless it has been agreed and documented in the care and support plan
* ensure you receive the necessary training to carry out agreed tasks safely.

4.2 If you think you need to lift or carry a baby or small child and it isn’t included in the care and support plan, get in touch with your line manager to discuss.

4.3 The risk assessment will be reviewed regularly and after any significant incidents, and this will include monitoring the baby / small child’s weight as appropriate.

4.4 See Appendix 1 for details of picking up and carrying babies and small children.

# 5.0 MOBILITY AIDS AND LIFTING EQUIPMENT

5.1 Below is a list of the mobility aids / lifting equipment you may be required to use.

* Bath lifts\*
* Handling belts
* Hoist slings and attachments\*
* Lifting cushions\*
* Lifting hoists – mobile, fixed/ceiling, bath\*
* Lifting platforms\*
* Monkey poles
* Power chairs / scooters
* Raised toilet seats
* Riser recliner chairs\*
* Slide sheets
* Stair lifts\*
* Stand and raising aids\*
* Standing transfer aids
* Transfer turntables / boards
* Walkers
* Wheelchairs (manual and electric) The list is not exhaustive.

**5.2 Lifting equipment (marked with \* above)**

5.2.1 Lifting equipment will:

* be inspected by an authorised, competent person at least every six months
* have an inspection label on it, giving date of last inspection / expiry date
* be maintained in line with manufacturer’s recommendations
* display its ‘Safe Working Load’ to ensure it can support the person’s weight.

5.2.2 A care planner / assessor will check to make sure that any lifting equipment used:

* is safe and fit for purpose
* is being properly maintained
* has an up-to-date inspection label on it as necessary.

5.2.3 Do not use lifting equipment that does not have an inspection label on it or if the inspection label is out of date. Report this to your manager / person on call straight away.

5.3 Use mobility aids and lifting equipment as you have been trained and follow manufacturers’ instructions. Inform your manager / person on call immediately if you:

* + need to use a piece of equipment and have not been trained how to do so
  + need a piece of equipment and it is not available.

5.4 **Do not use** any equipment that you think is faulty, unsafe or not fit for purpose. Report it to your line manager / person on call immediately.

5.5 Never try to repair or maintain any work equipment. This can only be done by an authorised, competent person.

# 6.0 RE-ASSESSMENT OF RISKS

6.1 Risk assessments can quickly become out-of-date. If you notice that a person’s risk assessment is no longer accurate (for example, their mobility has deteriorated, they are less able to weight-bear / transfer), report it to your line manager / person on call straight away so that they can review it and update the care and support plan.

6.2 Let your manager know if a person with care needs or their parent / carer asks for a review of the service they receive because they feel things have changed.

# 7.0 WORKING WITH STAFF FROM OTHER AGENCIES

7.1 You may be asked to work alongside staff from another agency. Before this happens, the care planner / assessor will make sure that:

* the staff from the other agency have been properly trained in mobility assistance
* specific risks have been assessed, identified and reduced to an acceptable level
* there is a clear agreement about how tasks will be carried out
* there is a risk management plan in place
* all necessary information is written into the care and support plan.

7.2 When you are working with staff from another agency, let your line manager / person on call know immediately if you feel that tasks are not being carried out safely.

# 8.0 WORKING WITH FAMILY MEMBERS / CARERS OR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

8.1 When two or more people are needed to carry out a mobility assistance task safely, you may be asked to work with a family member, carer or personal assistant.

8.2 A care planner / assessor will assess the tasks involved and the family member / carer or personal assistant will be given the necessary training before working with you.

8.3 When working with a family member / carer or personal assistant, let your manager / person on call know immediately if you feel that tasks are not being carried out safely.

# 9.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CARE WORKERS

9.1 You must co-operate with your line manager to ensure your own health and safety and that of others, including colleagues and the people you are supporting.

**9.1.1 Training**

* Attend mobility assistance training as directed by your line manager.
* Assist the person with their mobility in the way you have been trained and as documented in their risk assessment and care and support plan.

**9.1.2 Risk assessment**

* Make sure you have read and understand each person’s safe handling risk assessment / care and support plan before helping them with their mobility.
* If from your training, knowledge and experience, you think a particular mobility assistance task is unsafe (for either yourself or the person you are supporting), don’t do it. Report it to your line manager / person on call as soon as you can.

**9.1.3 Person receiving care and support**

* + Treat the person with care needs and their parent / carer with respect, involving them in the way mobility assistance tasks are carried out whenever you can.
  + Encourage the person to do as much as they can for themselves to promote their independence. See autonomy and independence policy (D04).
  + Let them help with their own mobility needs and transfers as appropriate, so long as it has been assessed as safe to do so.

**9.1.4 Accidents, incidents and near misses**

* Report all accidents / incidents / near misses to your manager / person on call immediately.
* You will be asked to complete an incident report form (for example DT03).

**9.1.5 Suitable dress and footwear**

* + Wear suitable footwear when helping a person with their mobility. Shoes to be sturdy, have good grip, enclosed toes, flat heels and enclosed back or strap.
  + Make sure you are dressed appropriately, and do not wear unnecessary jewellery or carry scissors / sharp objects that could harm the person with care needs.

# 10.0 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

10.1 You will find general learning and development requirements relevant to this guidance in the learning and development guidance (E13c).

# 11.0 ACCEPTANCE

11.1 You are required to evidence that you have received, read and understood the content of this guidance as directed by line manager.

11.2 If there is anything in the content that you do not understand or have questions about, let your line manager know. You will be given the opportunity to discuss your concerns and provided with additional training as necessary.

11.3 On completion of training, it is your responsibility to comply with this guidance. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary proceedings.

# APPENDIX 1

# PICKING UP BABIES AND SMALL CHILDREN

**The following general principles apply.**

* Make sure you are in a stable body position, back substantially upright.
* Do not twist your trunk.
* Hold the baby / small child against your body and carry them no further than

10 metres without resting.

* Keep your hands at a height that allows for a comfortable and safe posture.
* Grasp the baby / small child with both hands.
* Position the baby / small child centrally, in front of your body.
* Make sure there are no reasonably foreseeable hazards to either you or the baby / small child in your immediate surroundings.
* Make sure any personal protective clothing you are wearing does not restrict your performance of the task.
* Do not lift the baby / small child repeatedly over a significant period of time.

This list is not fully exhaustive.

# APPENDIX 2 - RISK MATRIX

The risk matrix below is **a supplementary tool** **only**, to be used in conjunction with the assessor’s knowledge, experience and/or qualification for the situation/system of work being assessed. They need to judge the risk factor scores using their own discretion.

Only staff who have received necessary information/ instruction/ training in the assessment process and the particular systems of work are competent to use this tool.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Consequence** | **Score** | **RISK MATRIX** | | | | |
| Catastrophic | 5 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 |
| Specified/major injury | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 20 |
| Reportable injury | 3 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 | 15 |
| Lost time injury | 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 |
| Minor injury | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Score** | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Frequency** | | Remote | Unlikely | Occasional | Probable | Frequent |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **FREQUENCY (approx. % probability)** | | | | Level | Descriptor | Description | | 1 | Remote | Very unlikely (1%) | | 2 | Unlikely | Expected in a few circumstances (10%) | | 3 | Occasional | Expected in some circumstances (50%) | | 4 | Probable | Expected in many circumstances (75%) | | 5 | Frequent | Likely in most circumstances (99%) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **CONSEQUENCE** | | | | Level | Descriptor | Description of injury | | 1 | Minor | Cuts, abrasions | | 2 | Lost time | Time off work | | 3 | Reportable | [Reportable to RIDDOR](https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reportable-incidents.htm) | | 4 | Specified / major | [Defined under RIDDOR](https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/specified-injuries.htm) | | 5 | Catastrophic | Death | |

Risk Rating = Frequency x Consequence

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk Rating** | **ACTION REQUIRED** |
| **10-25**  **HIGH RISK** | Existing controls inadequate. Introduce effective risk control measures immediately. Do not provide service until these in place or withdraw service if reviewed rating at this level. |
| **5-9**  **MEDIUM RISK** | Existing controls inadequate. Introduce additional risk control measures. Task can go ahead with additional supervision while effective control measures being planned and introduced. |
| **1-4**  **LOW RISK** | Risk at or being mitigated to level for safe system of work. Existing control measures to be kept under review and efforts made to reduce risks still further where reasonable to do so. |

1. The term ‘mobility assistance’ refers to the moving and handling of people. It does not include the moving and handling of inanimate loads and objects, which is covered in your operational health and safety guidance (F01c). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)