

# Manual Handling (Incorporating Patient Handling) Case Study

<b>Case Study Title</b>
Moving and Handling in a Complex Theatre Environment
<b>Healthcare Establishment Name and Address</b>
Tallaght Hospital, Tallaght, Dublin 24.
<b>Details of the Healthcare Establishment</b>
Tallaght Hospital is a busy acute hospital. Approximately 300,000 patients a year are treated in the adult and paediatric services. The hospital provides both tertiary and secondary services to a population of 1.4 million persons and is a provider of local, regional, supra regional and national specialities. The hospital has a national urology centre, a national paediatric endocrinology centre, a regional dialysis centre and a regional orthopaedic trauma centre. There are 12 operating theatres in the hospital.
<b>The Challenge / Scale of the Problem.</b>
Staff in the Theatre Department raised concerns about moving and handling activity in the Department, especially with regard to complex situations such as moving and handling of sedated patients for spinal anaesthesia, lithotomy positioning etc. Staff also felt that the patient handling training did not meet their needs (January 2008).
<b>The Solution</b> (The plan, steps or methods that were devised to address the challenge).
An audit of moving and handling activities was carried out in the Department in February 2008 with the assistance of a contract manual handling training provider. This identified a number of procedures which were causing concern and a sample of these were observed in practice. Four recommendations were made: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Further postural analysis of moving and handling activities be carried out.</li><li>2. Establish a steering group to review and problem solve the moving and handling issues raised. Representatives from nursing, portering, anaesthetics and moving and handling will be required.</li><li>3. A moving and handling training programme should be devised which would be specific to the needs of theatre staff.</li><li>4. Links have been re-established with the Dublin Hospitals Minimal Handling Advisory Group (sub-group of the Dublin Hospitals Group Risk Management Forum). This group hopes to address "theatre handling" in the future as these handling issues are common to all theatre environments within the Dublin hospitals.</li></ol>
<b>Practical Examples</b> (How the solution was implemented on a practical level, the most important points of the case study, the improvements and challenges encountered and management and employee participation).
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Further postural analysis of moving and handling activities in theatre was carried out to assist in identifying the types of moving and handling scenarios.</li><li>2. A steering group was established to review and problem solve the moving and handling issues raised. Representatives from nursing, portering, anaesthetics and moving and handling were all involved.</li><li>3. A specific refresher moving and handling training programme was devised and implemented which included complex moving and handling scenarios in both theatre and ICU. A Clinical Nurse Manager was also appointed as a manual handling instructor for that area so that regular</li></ol>

training sessions could be provided for staff.

4. Tallaght Hospital will continue to link with the Dublin Hospital Advisory Group re the development of moving and handling guidance for theatre settings.

A follow up review was also conducted in March 2009 where additional recommendations were made and actioned:

- Sliding sheets (in particular disposable sheets) introduced to assist with certain transfers
- Second manual handling instructor appointed for the Department

This is a challenging environment as the moving and handling tasks are complex and a variety of staff are required to assist (porters, nurses, healthcare attendants, anaesthetists etc.). Having two members of staff trained in the area provides additional support for staff with concerns and promotes good practice. The moving and handling techniques have improved significantly and sliding sheets are now in use in the Department.