

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc



Hazardous Manual Tasks Policy and Procedures

STATEMENT

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc. (PQSA) is committed to delivering the highest quality of support for our clients; we achieve this, in part, by taking appropriate steps to ensure risks associated with manual handling are minimised for clients and Support Workers.

Initial and ongoing training is an essential part of ensuring that all Support Workers can perform their duties in the safest possible manner.

Approved by:



Date: March 2019

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc. (PQSA) is incorporated under the *Association Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* and conducts its business through operating Divisions, namely Lifestyle Support and HomeCare+.

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SCOPE

Compliance with this policy is a condition of appointment for all workers engaged to provide services on behalf of PQSA.

DEFINITIONS

Client – a person who receives services from any division of PQSA

Due diligence – in the context of Work, Health and Safety – means taking every precaution that is reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health, safety and welfare of all workers and others who could be put at risk from work carried out as part of the business or undertaking. It is fostering a safe work culture.

Duty of Care – a worker has an obligation not to be careless and to be mindful of their actions and the actions of others when undertaking a task or activity.

Force – is the amount of muscular effort required to perform a movement or task. Forceful muscular exertions overload muscles, tendons, joints and discs and are associated with most muscular skeletal disorders

Hazard - something with the potential to cause an injury or illness.

Hazardous manual task - as defined in the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations, means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the following:

- repetitive or sustained force
- high or sudden force
- repetitive movement
- sustained or awkward posture
- exposure to vibration.

These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury.

Health – refers to the physical and psychological wellbeing of a worker.

Incident - an event which occurred, or could occur, resulting in injury, ill health or fatality.

Manager – a person who is charged with the management or direction of PQSA and its divisions.

Must – indicates a mandatory action required by law, industrial instrument, or an Association policy or procedure.

Officer – a person holding a position of authority in an organisation.

Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). – for the purpose of this policy, refers to PQSA and its divisions. **Reasonable** – using good judgement; fair and practical.

Reasonably Practicable – in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from a hazard or risk
- what the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about –

a hazard or risk

- ways of eliminating or minimizing a hazard or risk
the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimize the hazard or risk
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Reporting – is an account or statement given either verbally or in writing, with the specific intention of relaying information or recounting certain events in an objective manner.

Risk – a probability or threat of damage, injury, liability, loss, or any other negative occurrence that is caused by external or internal vulnerabilities, that may be avoided through preemptive action.

Should – used to indicate obligation, duty, or correctness.

Transfer – the act of physically moving someone.

Worker – is a person who carries out work in any capacity including work as an employee, contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or sub-contractor, apprentice or trainee, or a student gaining work experience, or a volunteer.

Workplace – is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A PCBU has the primary duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers and other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the business or undertaking.

WHS Regulations include specific obligations for a PCBU to manage the risk of a musculoskeletal disorder associated with a hazardous manual task.

Officer - is a person who: makes decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the business. (Corporations Act 2001)

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to ensure they do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.

Workers must also:

- comply with any reasonable instruction and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health and safety at the workplace
- report to PQSA any hazard that could cause injury to themselves, another worker or client.

POLICY

PQSA values its clients and workers and is committed to providing the opportunities and support required to enable workers to carry out their duties in a manner that is safe, while still providing a high degree of job satisfaction.

PQSA subscribes to a 'No Lift, No Injury' policy and gives workers access to in-house training in the areas of WHS and appropriate Manual Handling principles and techniques. PQSA is responsible for ensuring relevant training and assessment of workers' competency.

Characteristics of Hazardous Manual Handling

Repetitive force - using force repeatedly over a period to move or support an object.

Examples of repetitive force:

- pushing a client in a wheelchair.

Sustained force - occurs when force is applied continually over a period.

Examples of sustained force:

- pushing or pulling
- supporting, positioning or stabilising a client's limb.

High force – may be exerted by the back, arm or leg muscles or by the hands and fingers.

High force occurs in any tasks that:

- a worker describes as very demanding physically
- a worker needs help to do because of the effort it requires.

Examples of high force:

- lifting, lowering or carrying a heavy object
- pushing or pulling an object that is hard to move or stop
- restraining a person or animal.

Sudden force – jerky or unexpected movements while handling an item or load are particularly hazardous because the body must suddenly adapt to the changing force.

Tasks where force is applied suddenly and with speed also generates high force.

Examples of sudden force:

- throwing or catching objects
- handling clients who resist or no longer assist during the manual handling procedure.

Repetitive movement – using the same parts of the body to repeat similar movements over a period.

Examples of repetitive movements;

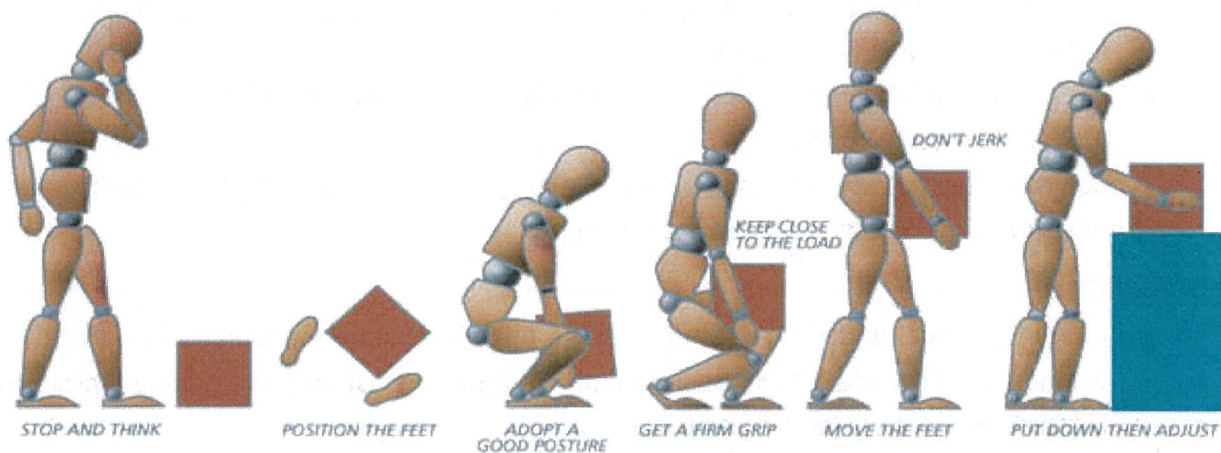
- typing and other keyboard tasks
- vacuuming or mopping floors.

PROCEDURES

Managing the risk of hazardous manual handling tasks:

- avoid lifting and carrying wherever possible; use equipment or approved control measures

- plan the task and the best technique to use as per training and guidelines, e.g. Support Plan
- maintain a wide base of support and work within it
- maintain your spine in natural alignment
- if you feel any discomfort in your back, change your posture
- get close to the load, bend at the hips and knees, not your back



- keep your elbows as close as possible to your waist
- palms preferable facing up or neutral
- turn by moving your feet
- shift and use your whole-body weight to perform task
- use equipment
- communicate with your client and other workers; one worker needs to take the lead



When tasks don't go to plan or pain is experienced, report to your supervisor and document using either an Environmental Hazard Report or Incident/Concern report.

Client manual handling techniques currently approved by PQSA:

- using a slide sheet to reposition a client
- using a stand, hoist or ceiling hoist to transfer a client
- guided transfer of a client using a slide board and moving legs
- any safe client specific technique for which training has been provided by an appropriate health professional and the technique is documented in the client's support plan.

Planning a Hazardous Manual Handling Task:

- prior to the commencement of services and thereafter annually, all Hazardous Manual Handling tasks will be assessed by a sanctioned PQSA worker

- references to be used are the Hazardous Manual Handling Client Transfer or the Manual Handling Domestic Task – Risk Assessment Form
- identified risks must have written control measures/procedures put in place
- written instructions to be in plain English
- the controls implemented must reduce the risk of injury as far as is reasonably practicable
- when the risk to health and safety is in a client's home, the proposed control measures must be negotiated with the client
- risks and controls must be recorded on either an Environmental Hazard Report or Incident/Concern Report form
- controls must be reviewed after an initial testing period, as they may need modification, and then on a regular basis, at least annually.

Training

- all workers must undertake annual theory training in Hazardous Manual Handling
- Support Workers required to assist clients to transfer must undertake annual practical Hazardous Manual Handling training
- all PQSA trainers, Nurses, Client Service Officers and Team Leaders must undertake approved external Hazardous Manual Handling training biennially.

All training will be arranged and monitored by the Human Resources Department.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Work, Health and Safety Act 2012
- Work, Health and Safety Regulations 2012
- Hazardous Manual Task Code of Practice, December 2011 – Safe Work Australia
- How to Manage Work, Health and Safety Risks, December 2011 – Safe Work Australia

SUPPORTING PQSA DOCUMENTATION

- Support Worker Manual Handling Training
- Work, Health and Safety Management System Policy
- Hazardous Manual Handling Practical Training
- Environmental Hazard and Incident/Concern Reports
- Manual Handling Domestic Task Risk Assessment Form
- Hazardous Manual Handling Client Transfer Risk Assessment Form

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

A **breach** of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ignorance of these procedures will not generally be accepted as an excuse for non-compliance. Only in extreme circumstances and where such ignorance can be demonstrated to have occurred through no fault of the individual concerned will PQSA accept such an argument.

DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW

PQSA will ensure all persons engaged to provide services either paid or unpaid will be aware of this policy and will have easy access to it in an appropriate format. All policies are to be reviewed on a periodic basis or when legislation or government policy determines.

