

# Loss Control Updates

Provided by the Loss Control Department of IRMS/ICT

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## Anderson Hospital – Safe Patient Handling Program

Patient Handling work-related injuries for ICT/IRMS hospitals have been the leading cost driver for the program over the last three years.

OSHA reported that in 2013, 34 percent of recorded hospital worker injuries nationwide that resulted in days away were a result of patient handling related work accidents. In the same year they recorded over 50% of injuries involving nursing assistants were related to patient handling. As a result of this data, OSHA's 2015 inspection guidance document directed to OSHA safety officers included musculoskeletal disorders related to patient handling as a primary focus for them during OSHA inspections.

OSHA has provided resources for long term and acute care facilities to remove and control the hazards associated with manual lifting and repositioning of patients:

[https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hospitals/patient\\_handling.html](https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hospitals/patient_handling.html)

ICT/IRMS would like to highlight an example of a hospital that has developed a successful Safe Patient Handling Program utilizing the principles outlined in these resources. Anderson Hospital's Safe Patient Handling program began in 2014 when their Safe Patient Handling Committee recognized the need to develop a system wide interdisciplinary program to remove and control hazards related to patient lifting and mobilization. Anderson Hospital management provided resources that allowed them to partner with an outside Safe Patient Handling consultant company to assist them with the effort.

Through this partnership, the hospital analyzed past accident data and obtained employee feedback regarding the hazards of safe patient handling identified in all of the hospital departments. Patient handling related equipment was selected and purchased with management approval based upon this needs analysis. This equipment included ceiling lifts, portable lifts, sit to stand aids, friction reducing transfer and repositioning aids, as well as bariatric equipment such as bariatric commodes and adjustable shower chairs. They redesigned four patient rooms as designated bariatric rooms with ceiling lifts in each of them.

Standardized evidence based processes were developed in the assessment of the patient's function level. The function level assessment in combination with the Safe Patient Handling Algorithms directed staff to select the appropriate patient handling equipment to use for the patient handling activity.

Education and hands on return demonstration training was initially conducted by the consulting company for all existing employees and new hires. In addition Transfer Mobility Coaches (TMC's) were selected and trained in each unit to act as patient handling equipment experts. The TMC's were responsible for training staff amongst different departments on how to use the patient handling equipment and ensure staff's proficiency on the use of the equipment. The hospital conducts a focused "Skills Day" annually based upon staff's feedback on identified patient handling related challenges. Educational resources are made available on the units via the hospital intranet.

Communication boards were put in place to notify staff, patients, and family regarding the availability and expectation that Safe Patient Handling equipment will be used to safely transfer and reposition patients as needed.

The hospital conducts an annual assessment of their Safe Patient Handling program that includes consideration of the purchase of additional equipment.

According to Anderson Hospital's Safe Patient Handling Coordinators, they have seen a 75% decrease in the number of patient handling related work accidents since implementation of the program.

Anderson Hospital also recently received an award as a "Centers of Excellence" from their Safe Patient Handling Consultant Company, Arjo Diligent. Anderson Hospital is one of only six "Centers of Excellence" in the US.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Mike Benedeck at 630.276.5646 or Deidre Harris at 630.276.5414.