

Reap Benefits from Establishing Safe Patient Handling In Your Facility!

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With the pending legislative bill to create a New York State Safe Patient Handling Task Force, it is important to think about what establishing a comprehensive Safe Patient Handling (SPH) program could mean for your facility.

Healthcare facilities can greatly benefit from SPH. Increasing the quality of care for clients is an obvious and major benefit, but what about for your own workers? SPH can dramatically reduce injuries to employees too. This can alleviate many administrative nightmares by reducing lost work days, staff shortages, overtime, and workers' compensation claims. The reduced injuries to patients also mean less negative publicity and lawsuits for your facility – not to mention a higher standard of recruitment and retention of your employees.

These are all things that are great for the facility as a whole, but what does it mean for the administrator at a facility? It means much less wasted time on needless paperwork, red flags, constant scheduling issues, damage control, and headaches in general. And let's face it, we can all use a little extra quality time on our hands instead of wasted time!

What is SPH exactly? Using the latest technology to assist clients with movement, you can alleviate the skin tears, bruising, fear, anxiety, discomfort, slips, and drops that are often associated with the "old" method of manual lifting. Overall benefits include:

For Clients:

- Increased dignity
- Improved urinary continence
- Reduced anxiety and fear
- More ambulatory clients
- More independent clients/residents
- Reduced risk of skin tears, bruising, falls, and drops
- Improved comfort and safety
- Greater satisfaction of care

For Employees:

- A decrease in muscle fatigue and pain
- Reduced injuries
- Less lost work days

- Decreased overtime
- Increased morale and job satisfaction

Recent SPH programs have proven to work in New York State. After 5 years of implementation, Glens Falls Hospital had a 56% decrease in patient handling related injuries. They also discovered a 25% decrease in total workers' compensation costs and a 16% decrease in the amount per workers' comp claim. Two years after initiating their program, Kaleida Health had a 77% decrease in lost work days. Three years after NYS Veteran's Home of Batavia implemented, they had an amazing 93% reduction in lost work days!

Think your facility can benefit from establishing a SPH program? Start the process today to ensure a safer, happier, and more comfortable environment for both your employees and residents. For more information, you can contact the Health & Safety Department at 518-785-1900 Ext. 254, or email Kathy at kdarminio@pef.org.