Entity: Fairview Health Services  
Manual: Policy and Procedures

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| **Purpose:** | To promote a safe health care environment establishing the expectation that staff will use the safest equipment and techniques to accomplish patient lifting and repositioning.  
To ensure that staff will use the proper safe patient handling equipment and techniques for all patient handling and movement tasks for the protection of both patients and employees.  
To provide for the safety, comfort and dignity of the patients requiring movement and handling.  
To reduce the lifting demands when moving and handling patients to 35 lbs. or less. |
| **Rationale:** | Fairview Health Services is committed to providing safe systems and safe environments to give and receive exceptional care. Safe Patient Handling is a key component to reducing hazards of injury for both employees and our patients. Fairview’s infrastructure includes safe patient handling and movement equipment, employee training and a “Culture of Safety” approach to safety in the work environment. The safest patient handling approach prioritizes the use of assistive equipment and discourages performing manual patient handling and movement. |
| **Policy:** | Patient care providers will assess all patient lifting/handling requirements in advance to determine the safest way to accomplish them for both the patient and the employee. Mechanical lift equipment and/or approved safe patient handling devices will be used in the lifting and handling of patients whenever possible. Patient care providers will be expected to use safe lifting guidelines with manual lifting of patients if mechanical means of lifting or transfer is not possible or feasible such as in a medical emergency. |
| Definitions: | Manual Lifting: Lifting, transferring, repositioning, and moving patients and/or equipment using a caregiver’s strength without the use of lifting equipment or devices.  

Mechanical Patient Lifting Equipment: Equipment used to lift, transfer, reposition, and move patients. Examples include: portable base and ceiling track mounted full body sling lifts, sit-to-stand assist lifts and mechanical lateral transfer aids (air inflation mattress transfer device), motorized carts, beds and wheelchairs.  

Patient Handling Devices: Equipment used to assist in the lift or transfer process. Examples include transfer belts, sliding boards, surface friction-reducing devices, draw sheets, stand/walking assist aids (i.e. cane, walkers). Stand assist aids – pivot disk  

Patient Handling Tasks: Patient handling tasks are those that involve movement or handling of patients and place the patient care provider at potential risk of harm or place patients receiving care at risk of injury such as falls, skin shearing or strains. Examples include, but are not limited to, transferring tasks, lifting tasks, repositioning tasks, bathing patients in bed, making an occupied bed, dressing patients, turning patients, holding a patient extremity, and providing assistance with activities of daily living.  

Medical Emergency: Medical or life-threatening situations, cardio-pulmonary arrest, and evacuation of the unit.  

Culture of Safety: describes the collective attitude of employees taking shared responsibility in a work environment and by doing so, providing a safe environment of care for themselves as well as patients. |
| Procedure: | I. Patient handling and Movement requirements:  
A. Patient care providers will be expected to assess patient transfer needs prior to lifting, obtain appropriate mechanical lifting devices and other approved patient handling devices for patient handling and movement tasks.  
B. Use mechanical lifting devices and other approved patient handling aids (in accordance with manufacturer instructions and training) for all patient handling and movement tasks except in a medical emergency.  

II. Training  
A. Staff will complete Safe Patient Handling training initially and periodically thereafter; as needed, to reinforce the |
appropriate use of the Safe Patient Handling equipment.
B. Training will be provided when there is new equipment or when additional learning needs are identified.

III. Mechanical lifting devices and other equipment aids
Mechanical lifting devices and other equipment aids will be:
A. Accessible to staff
B. Stored safely
C. Regularly maintained and kept in proper working order

IV. Compliance
A. Patient care providers will be expected to use the appropriate safe patient handling equipment for all patient handling and movement tasks except in a medical emergency. Non-compliance will indicate a need for investigation and assessment of competence and/or possible corrective action by manager.

V. Delegation of Authority and Responsibility:
A. Administration will:
   1. Support a culture of safety and the implementation of this policy
   2. Provide authority and resources to implement a Safe Patient Handling and Movement Policy
   3. Provide a forum, resources and authority to address needs that expand across care systems

   Resources to include:
   a. Adequate supply of appropriate assistive equipment and accessible storage of lifting equipment/aids in each patient care area.
   b. Ensure safe patient handling equipment is regularly maintained and in proper working order.

B. Business Unit Entity will:
   1. Promote safe patient handling and movement by establishing entity based policies/procedures under the guidance of a system policy.
   2. Give authority to safe patient handling teams or other groups to assess, plan, implement and evaluate safe
patient handling strategies. This includes ensuring the use of appropriate safe patient handling equipment or devices.

3. Provide authority and resources to implement a safe patient handling and movement policy.

4. Provide the necessary training in the use of Safe Patient Handling equipment/techniques to ensure the safe and confident use of equipment for compliance with appropriate Safe Patient Handling and Movement.

5. Maintain mechanical lifting devices and other equipment aids in proper working order and perform preventative maintenance per manufacturer recommendations. Process may differ at Fairview Facilities.

6. Clean equipment and all components of the equipment including slings and airmats as per manufacturer’s recommendations and return to departments to ensure availability for patient use.

7. Comply with the Fairview system policy, AWAIR A Work Place Accident and Injury Reduction policy, S: EC-2016.

C. Managers will:

1. Promote Safe Patient Handling and Movement by example and by consistent enforcement of this policy.

2. Ensure patient handling tasks are assessed and completed safely, using mechanical lifting devices and other approved patient handling aids and appropriate techniques and guidelines.

3. Analyze incidents/injuries/near misses in conjunction with Employee Occupational Health Services (EOHS) using a Just Culture/non-blaming approach and accident investigation to prevent reoccurrence.

4. Ensure mechanical lifting devices and other equipment aids are available, regularly maintained, in proper working order, and stored safely.

5. Ensure that new staff participates in orientation upon employment in which they are trained in the proper use of safe patient handling procedures and equipment.

6. Require that staff demonstrate competence in use of appropriate Safe Patient Handling equipment initially
and periodically thereafter as needed to ensure compliance with safe patient handling and movement techniques. Training will be updated when new equipment or procedures are introduced.

D. Employees will:

1. Consistently use Safe Patient Handling equipment/techniques during the performance of patient handling and movement tasks for patients weighing 35 lbs or more and comply with all elements of this policy including safe lifting guidelines.

2. Notify manager of any incidents/injuries/near misses sustained while performing patient handling tasks.

3. Notify manager of need for retraining in the use of Safe Patient Handling equipment/techniques for patient lifting and movement tasks.

4. Notify manager of Safe Patient Handling equipment in need of repair or missing.

| | 3. ANA “Handle With Care”, www.NursingWorld.org/handlewithcare |
| | 4. MN Statute 182.6551 (Safe Patient Handling Act) |

| Internal Ref: | Fairview System Policies: |
| | • **AWAIR: A Work Place Accident and Injury Reduction policy, S: EC-2016** |
| | • **Safe Patient Handling Equipment Care and Tracking, S:PC-2021** |

| Source: | Fairview Employee Occupational Health Services |
| Approved by: | System Environment of Care Committee May 2007, Care Services Leadership May 2007 |