

MANUAL HANDLING RISK ASSESSMENTS



Hazardous Manual Handling is the handling of a load which may place staff at risk of injury.

A Risk Assessment is carried out when hazardous handling activities cannot be avoided.

There are four stages in the manual handling risk assessment process:

- 1 Hazard identification**
Identification of the handling activities which may place staff at risk of injury.
- 2 Risk assessment**
The process of evaluating the level of risk associated with the hazardous handling activities.
- 3 Risk reduction**
Implementation of the controls that will reduce the level of risk to an acceptable level.
- 4 Evaluation**
A review of the control measures to ensure these measures are effective.



Manual handling risk assessments take an ergonomic approach to safer handling which consider the risk factors associated with the Task, Individual, Load and Environment (T.I.L.E.).

- T Task**
Effort required, position of load, posture, frequency, distance.
- L Load**
Shape and size, weight, contents, handles and grips.
- I Individual**
Capability, experience, training, health status.
- E Environment**
Access, space, floor surface and levels.

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PEOPLE HANDLING RISK ASSESSMENTS

A Balanced Risk Assessment considers and balances the needs and rights of the person and the health and safety of the carers.

In health and social care settings, manual and people handling risk assessments are carried out at four levels.

1 Organisational level
Consult the safety statement, manual handling policy, bariatric guidance etc.

2 Unit or department level
Generic assessments which establish if there are hazardous handling activities in this area.

3 Documented manual & people handling assessments
The specific risk assessments carried out when hazardous handling has been identified.

4 Dynamic risk assessment
The 'on the spot' assessment that staff undertake before moving a load or a person.



Some factors to be considered when the load is a 'person' include • mobility level and use of aids • height and weight of the person (BMI) • medical condition • communication and cooperation • balance and history of falls.

HANDLING PLAN

A documented **Handling Plan** is developed for the person following the risk assessment. It outlines how the person will be assisted to move safely, and details:

- Number of carers required
- Handling equipment required
- Technique to be used
- Hoist and sling details

The risk assessment and handling plan should be reviewed regularly, particularly if the condition of the person changes.

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