



Manual Handling Training Guidelines Issue 2

revised at the request of the National Executive of National Back Exchange

1 Introduction

The need for training standards in manual handling has long been recognised. Members of the National Executive of National Back Exchange often receive enquiries from Service Providers, NHS Trusts and Back Care Advisers themselves as to the existence of national standards. This document has been revised to enable those responsible for training to achieve an acknowledged and consistent standard. The legal requirements for training have been identified and guidance taken from other authoritative sources, such as:

- The Health Services Advisory Committee
- The Royal College of Nursing (including the 2002 Draft Competencies for manual handling)
- The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (including the 2002 Guidance on manual handling for Chartered Physiotherapists)
- The College of Occupational Therapists
- Any client specific guidelines, such as those from the Royal College of Midwives
- Interprofessional guidance from Essential Back Up and the Interprofessional Curriculum/Curriculum Framework for Back Care Advisers.

2 Need for standards

- To ensure compliance with the law
- To reduce the risks to carers and clients from poor practices
- To provide protection for employers
- To meet best practice requirements
- To meet the trainer's own Professional requirements
- To promote national consistency
- To help obtain national recognition for the role of the Back Care Adviser.

3 The legal and professional requirements for training:

3.1 Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (Part1, Section2-(2)c requires employers to provide:

- 1 Information
- 2 Instruction
- 3 Training
- 4 Supervision.

3.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Regulation 13 (2) and (3)) requires employers to provide health and safety training:

- 1 On recruitment
- 2 When risks change
- 3 To be repeated periodically as appropriate
- 4 To be adapted to take account of any changes as required
- 5 To take place during working hours.



3.3 Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (Regulation 4 (1) (b) (i) (ii) (iii), Regulation 5) do not specify training but this is implicit in some of its requirements. Employees should be given information on:

- 1 Task, load, environment and individual capability
- 2 Recognition of risk
- 3 Safe working systems
- 4 Use of equipment.

3.4 The Interprofessional Curriculum Framework for Back Care Advisers aims to promote best practice in load handling in health and social care organisations. It identifies the need for standards of competence for Back Care Advisers, including previous qualifications. These have been addressed in the National Back Exchange Standards for Trainers. (issue 2, revised August 2002).

3.5 Guidance from the Royal College of Nursing, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and the Health and Safety Commission recommend that update training is required at least on an annual basis.

The above authoritative sources give the legal requirements and guidance on training in manual handling, and these have been condensed into the following.

4 Pre-training requisites

- There must be a training needs analysis to identify what is required. This may be informed by a health and safety audit process
- Adequate policies must be in place to promote best practice and staff fitness
- There must be management commitment and support for the training strategy and service delivery
- There must be allocation of sufficient resources by management to implement, develop and deliver the service.

5 Training – planning and recording

- Training must be specific to group needs, and be job specific according to level required
- Length of training must be sufficient to encourage and develop a change in knowledge, attitude and skills. Demonstrations alone are not sufficient, but staff must have sufficient time to practise and develop practical skills under close supervision
- Feedback must be provided to management on attendance and ability of delegates to participate and any ongoing training needs
- A strategy for recall and update training on an annual basis must be in place
- Full records of all training must be kept, including:
 - 1 Names/signatures of trainer/trainee
 - 2 Date/place of training
 - 3 Duration
 - 4 Content
 - 5 Handouts
 - 6 Full/partial participation
 - 7 Refusal/inability to attend
 - 8 Equipment/aids used.



6 Training delivery

- It should start with management and must include staff at all levels
- It must include risk management as appropriate
- Manual handling risk assessors must be trained to carry out and record suitable assessments for all appropriate clients/inanimate objects
- All staff must be able to recognise and report hazardous situations
- All staff must understand their own responsibility to report any physical problems eg pregnancy, musculo-skeletal problems (past or current) which may affect their ability to participate
- Practical training must be safe and sufficiently supervised
- Management should be informed of staff not able to achieve a reasonable level of competence during the training
- A suitable, equipped venue should be used
- An ergonomic approach to safer handling must be used
- Following these sessions, more informal training may occur as problem solving is required in the workplace.

7 The Standard Elements of Training should include:

- Spinal mechanics and function
- Importance of back care and posture, risk factors of back pain
- Current relevant legislation and professional guidelines where relevant
- Assessment of risks
 - 1 of tasks (including unexpected)
 - 2 loads (both inanimate and human)
 - 3 environment and the importance of good housekeeping,
 - 4 the limits of individual capability (their own and that of others).
- Local policies
- Importance of ergonomic approach
- Principles of normal human movement and promotion of client independence
- Safe management of inanimate loads
- Handling strategies for clients with impaired mobility
- Dealing with unpredictable occurrences
- Use of equipment
- Problem solving.

7.2 Sufficient follow up by management must ensure safe supervision and monitoring of handling practice. This may be supported by link workers who are competent practitioners and able to support staff who have received training.