DEVELOPING YOUR SAFE PATIENT HANDLING PROGRAM: GETTING STARTED

Step 1: Establish Your Safe Patient Handling Committee
- Recruit participants (50% direct care staff)
- Elect committee chair and co-chair
- Develop meeting schedule and protocols

Step 2: Train the Safe Patient Handling Committee
- Role of the committee
- Hazard assessment techniques
- Selection of equipment
- Organizational change techniques
- Program evaluation methods

Step 3: Write Your Safe Patient Handling Policy
- Administrative practices
- Procedures
- Organizational practices

Step 4: Assess Risks and Needs
- Conduct an analysis of injuries
- Identify and prioritize patient handling risks
- Assess patient mobility needs and capabilities by unit
- Conduct an inventory of patient handling equipment
- Identify environmental and organizational barriers and solutions

Step 5: Development Plan for Determining Equipment Needs
- Who will use the equipment and how will they be trained (e.g., unit-based peer safety leaders)
- Determine equipment locations
- Identify tasks where equipment will be used
- Decide how much of each equipment type is needed

Step 6: Annual Program Evaluation
- Changes in the number of musculoskeletal disorder claims
- Changes in the number of days of lost work due to musculoskeletal disorders from patient handling
- Recommendations to improve the program

Sources:


Representation on Safe Patient Handling Committees:
- Patient Care Staff
- Senior Management
- Safety Representative
- Human Resources
- Employee Health
- Facilities
- Maintenance
- Housekeeping