

## Guidelines for Safe Bathing with the use of a Shower Trolley

### Definition

- Shower Trolleys are stretchers with sides that are able to get wet. It allows healthcare workers to transport and shower patients in a lying position. Most shower trolleys are height adjustable and have a drain and connecting hose at foot end of the trolley.

### Assessment Considerations (completed by regulated healthcare provider)

- Patient must be assessed for ability and equipment needs. Do not proceed with transfer and contact supervisor if there are changes in patient's ability. The patient may not be appropriate for the use of the shower trolley if:
  - Unable to understand and respond to instructions to maintain a safe position on the shower trolley (i.e. making attempts to climb out of trolley)
  - If behavior interferes with care, alternate procedures and/or equipment may be required
- The chosen methods of bathing and transfer must be documented in the patient's care plan. Options for transfer method to the shower trolley are (refer to the appropriate Safe Work Procedure):
  - Lateral transfer with full length slider sheets. If long handle straps are available, attach to the handles of the top slider. Use hard board to bridge gap if necessary.
  - Total Floor lift.
  - Overhead lift

**Note:** One or more healthcare workers (HCW) are required for bathing; however two may be required to transfer the patient on/off the equipment dependent on the patient's transfer status.

### Considerations for Equipment Use

- The patient's weight should not exceed the safe working limit of the shower trolley
- Visually inspect the shower trolley before each use to ensure it is in good working order
- Position pillow (if available) on head end of the trolley. The drain will be on the foot end of the trolley
- To minimize tipping risk ensure patient is centered on trolley during transfer and bathing.
- Only use the shower trolley on level surfaces
- Ensure trolley is flat and brakes are applied before transferring patient onto shower trolley
- Transfers should never be attempted on slippery surfaces.
- Raise and secure all side rails on trolley and adjust height of trolley to a comfortable working height before transporting to shower area & during showering procedure
- Never leave the patient unattended while using a shower trolley.
- Use good body mechanics when transporting shower trolley.
  - One healthcare worker should push at end of the trolley. Stand with one foot ahead of the other, feet hip width apart and knees bent. Hold onto trolley with elbows close to body. Shift weight forward from back leg to front leg to PUSH trolley forward.
  - Second healthcare worker stand at side of the trolley to help guide trolley to shower area.
- In shower area, connect the trolley hose to the floor or specified drain for water drainage.



- In the shower area apply trolley brakes and connect the hose to the drain.

### **Bathing Considerations**

- Always check water temperature prior to bathing patient.
- Wash any hard to reach areas before or after transferring patient onto the shower trolley.
- Shower the patient using proper body mechanics and/or equipment to avoid over reaching.
- After showering, open shower trolley drain to allow water to drain into hose. Rinse the patient.
- To facilitate water drainage, raise the head of the shower trolley
- Dry patient and trolley
- Close shower trolley drain and disconnect hose before transporting patient back to room.

*Please Note: These are guidelines only and should not replace clinical assessment. Please refer to equipment manual for manufacture safety guidelines specific to your equipment.*