

Safe Work Procedure (SWP) for Home Care Staff

Name of Task: SCH Move Client in Wheelchair

Description of Task: Push a client in a wheelchair from one area to another.

Position/Job: HSW, HCA, ISW, RA

Department/Unit: WRHA Home Care

Equipment and/or Tools required:

Appropriate footwear for client
Wheelchair with footrests

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Required:

Appropriate footwear and clothing for staff

Potential Hazards: Forceful movements, awkward/sustained positions, forceful movements, infection transmission, violent and/or aggressive behavior

Signs and symptoms of a musculoskeletal injury (MSI) can include pain, burning, swelling, stiffness, numbness/tingling, and/or loss of movement or strength in a body part. Report these to your supervisor.

Considerations:

- Client must be able to maintain sitting in wheelchair.
- Client's feet should be raised off floor while being pushed in wheelchair.
- PULL wheelchair backwards if there is a bump/gap present whenever possible (e.g., through a doorway or elevator).
- Ensure there is adequate space available before entering elevator to minimize need to move sideways or turn.
- Do not lift wheelchair to maneuver in tight spaces.

Steps to be taken to complete task safely:

1 **Set-up:**

- Ask client to place feet on wheelchair footrests and hands on wheelchair armrests or lap.
- Where applicable, use the elevator button or door stopper to hold the door open.

2 **Moving wheelchair forward:**

- Stand in a wide base of support, with one foot ahead of the other and back straight. Hold onto wheelchair handles with elbows bent close to body.
- Shift weight forward from back leg to front leg in a smooth motion to push wheelchair forward.
- If pushing forward over a gap, start movement of wheelchair a slight distance away so wheels are straight when moving over gap.

Note: If front wheels are turned and it is difficult to start wheelchair movement forward, pull the wheelchair back slightly and then push forward OR push wheelchair from the side to straighten front wheels and then move behind wheelchair to push forward.



3 **Moving wheelchair backward:**

- Stand in a wide base of support with one foot ahead of the other and back straight. Hold onto wheelchair handles with elbows bent close to body.
- Shift weight back from front leg to back leg in a smooth motion to pull the wheelchair toward you and walk backwards.
- When moving DOWN a ramp, walk backwards.



4 **Turning wheelchair:**

- Stand in a wide base of support and back straight. Hold onto wheelchair handles with elbows close to body.
- Take wider turns whenever possible.
- If moving wheelchair in a small space, pull the wheelchair back on a slight angle and then push forward at a slight angle in the desired direction. Shift weight in opposite direction of turn (e.g., shift weight onto right leg to turn wheelchair left). Repeat small push-pull movements until wheelchair is facing the desired direction.



Responsibilities
<p><u>Managers/Supervisors:</u> Monitor to ensure all duties are performed in accordance to training, established health and safety regulations/guidelines, policies and procedures (e.g. following safe work procedures).</p> <p><u>Staff performing task:</u> Follow safe work procedure as written and trained in classroom setting. Inform Supervisor of all occurrences, injuries, illnesses or safety and health concerns which are likely to harm themselves, co-workers, or any others who enter the premises.</p>
Completion and Review
<p>This safe work procedure will be reviewed any time the task, equipment or materials change and at a minimum of every three years from the last revision date</p>
<p>Approved by: Pending approval by PWHSWG and PHRLC</p>
<p>Created by: Home Care Safe Client Handling Committee</p>
<p>Date: February 2019</p>