

# YORKSHIRE BACK EXCHANGE

## Moving and Handling of People

## HOISTING GUIDANCE

2023



### INTRODUCTION

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The first version of Yorkshire Back Exchange Hoisting Guidelines 2010 was developed by Yorkshire Back Exchange (YBE), in conjunction with the Health & Safety Executive. These Guidelines were updated in 2023 and are now known as YBE Hoisting Guidance.

The aim of the guidance is to promote safe working practice of hoisting activities in all service areas.

Included within this guidance is:

- A Quick Reference Hoisting Activity Guidance support tool - Appendix 1.
- A Quick Reference Person-Specific on the Spot Risk Assessment – Appendix 2.

These are designed to be used as a training, information, and instruction resource.



The Hoisting Guidance covers the following areas:

Hoists:

- Passive:
  - Mobile (electric and hydraulic). Folding.
  - Overhead: ceiling track systems, gantry systems, transportable.
  - Bathing hoist.
- Active:
  - Standing hoist.

Slings:

- Active hoist slings.
- Passive hoist slings.
- Disposable slings (single use, patient specific).

## **Prerequisites of a Hoisting Activity**

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This guidance assumes the following:

- A suitable and sufficient written risk assessment has been completed in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.
- A handling/hoisting plan has been developed, is up to date and contains the relevant information and instruction. The handling/hoisting plan is accessible to the relevant handler(s) at the point of care provision.
- The handler has received relevant and current moving and handling training and has been assessed as competent.
- The handler is physically fit to undertake the activity.
- All equipment is up to date with the relevant services and checks as per Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, 1998 (PUWER) and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations, 1998 (LOLER):
  - LOLER is applicable if the hoist is being used by a formal carer.
  - A thorough examination of the hoist and accessories (inc. slings) should be conducted every six months.
  - Dates for next service due should be recorded as *Day / Month / Year*. Recording *Month / Year* only may result in seven months between thorough examinations. For example, if the last inspection was at the beginning of the month and the next inspection is at the end of the month.

## Risk Assessment

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A written formal risk assessment should contain the relevant factors which are:

- What** - task
- Who** - individual capabilities (handler)
- Whom** - load (person)
- Where** – environment,  
and **Other Factors**.

A single handler should be considered as a baseline. This is to ensure all moving and handling solutions are available to the person and to avoid prejudicing the outcome of the risk assessment.

The formal risk assessment should be reviewed on a regular basis or when there has been a significant change, such as the person's physical and cognitive ability, the person's weight, the environment, the system of work, the equipment, the handler(s) and/or care provider.

An informal on the spot risk assessment should be conducted by the handler prior to each activity. A Quick Reference Person-Specific on the Spot Risk Assessment support tool is included in Appendix 2. This is designed to be used as a training, information, and instruction resource.

## Handling/Hoisting Plan

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The handling/hoisting plan should include information and instruction on the system of work, associated risks, and person specific preferences, such as:

- Type of hoist.
- Size and type of sling.
- Loop or clip configuration.
- Fitting method i.e., between legs, under legs.
- How to prepare the environment.
- Risk reduction measures i.e., equipment, techniques, number of handlers required etc.
- Person specific factors.

In addition to this pictures and line drawing and floor plans can be used as a visual aid.

## **Communication**

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Communication at all levels is key to safe and successful hoisting activities.

The outcome of the formal risk assessment should be communicated to the handler. This will include developing a handling/hoisting plan. The handler should feedback any changes or concerns identified from the informal 'on the spot' risk assessment.

Communication between the handler and the person is essential to build relationships and trust. Before and during the moving and handling activity the handler should provide prompts, instruction, reassurance, and encouragement in a language and at a pace that the person understands.

After the activity the handler should confirm the person feels comfortable. The handler should listen and watch for feedback from the person. Communication is not just verbal. It includes facial expressions, gestures, eye contact and/or body movements.

## **Local Reporting Procedures**

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If a concern is identified local reporting procedures should be followed.

## THE HOISTING ACTIVITY

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The following describes the essential factors for all hoisting activities.

### **Before the activity:**

- Inform and explain the activity to the person.
- Gain consent from the person.
- Read and follow the handling/hoisting plan.
- Do an 'on the spot' assessment to ensure the person's needs haven't changed.
- Prepare environment for hoisting.
- Do a visual check (see below) of all equipment prior to using it.

### **During the activity:**

- Monitor the person.
- Monitor the equipment.
- Check the person feels safe, secure, and comfortable.
- Instruct and encourage the person to be as independent as possible, such as engaging/participating in leaning, rolling, and/or operating the handset of the hoist.

### **After the activity:**

- Remove sling if applicable.
- Ensure the person is safe, secure, and comfortable.
- Ensure the person is in a functional position.
- Prepare the environment.
- Clean and store equipment.
- Place the hoist on charge (if applicable).

## **VISUAL CHECKS**

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### **Visual Check of Hoist**

#### **Ensure:**

- Safe working load (SWL) of the hoist is clearly displayed, and LOLER checks are in date.
- The hoist is clean and undamaged:
  - The hoist works as intended – the lifting arm moves up and down, legs move in and out, and castors move freely i.e., free from carpet fibres/fluff etc (mobile & standing hoists). All castors are in contact with the floor.
  - The spreader bar rotates freely. There are no signs of wear or sharp edges on the spreader bar and the padding is intact.
  - There are no fluid leaks (hydraulic hoists).
  - The lifting tape is intact and not frayed (applies to ceiling track, certain mobile hoists).
- The hoist is fully charged, and the battery is fitted correctly. Any leads are connected correctly. The emergency stop button is set correctly.

### **Visual Check of Slings**

#### **Ensure:**

- It has been assessed for the person and is fit for purpose.
- The sling is compatible with the person and the hoist.
- All labels are wash-proof, visible, legible and show SWL and unique identifier.
- LOLER checks are in date.
- There are no signs of fraying, tears, and critical stitching is intact.
- The loop/clips, and buckles (if applicable) have no signs of damage etc. Hook and loop (such as Velcro) fastenings (if applicable) work, are clean and free of fibres/ fluff etc.
- The sling is clean and dry prior to use .

### **Prepare the Environment**

#### **Ensure:**

- The environment is prepared for the activity.
- The environment is prepared to ensure privacy and dignity.
- The environment is prepared to facilitate communication.
- The receiving surface (chair, bed etc) is in position.
- A visual check has been undertaken of other equipment to be used (i.e., bed, chair, commode etc).
- There is sufficient space to use the hoist safely.
- The floor is clear of obstacles.
- There is sufficient access around and under furniture.

## GENERAL GUIDANCE - GOOD PRACTICE

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- Familiarise yourself with the hoist's emergency lifting and lowering systems.
- If fitting a sling on an air mattress, set the mattress to a static setting to provide a stable surface.
- Apply the sling first, bring hoist in last (unless otherwise risk assessed).
- Double check the sling prior to lifting – Do the 'tug test': CHECK that all loops/clips are attached as per handling plan. Raise the person to a point of tension then STOP. CHECK the loops/clips again, and ensure the person is symmetrical, secure, and comfortable before continuing.
- Whilst hoisting in/out of a profiling bed, raise the backrest and knee break to provide support, comfort, and ease of positioning (into bed).
- Whilst hoisting in/out of bed consider placing two layers of slide sheets under the person's heels to prevent friction and shear skin damage.
- Whilst hoisting out of a seated surface, ensure any lap belts, harnesses and/or foot straps are unfastened prior to lifting.
- Hoist the person just above both support surfaces to obtain sufficient clearance.
- Never use the hoist as a threat.
- Refit the sling (not applicable to in-situ slings) before each subsequent transfer (i.e., before transfer from chair to commode, and then again before transfer back to chair).
- Follow local policies and procedures with regard to care and cleaning of the hoist.
- Hoists and slings must not be adapted or misused.

### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR MOBILE HOISTS:

- Position the spreader bar in a place that allows ease of sling attachment/detachment.
- Avoid contact between the person's head/face and the spreader bar, particularly when lowering.
- Whilst hoisting in/out of a seated surface, where possible introduce the hoist at oblique or slight angle to avoid contact between the person's legs/feet and the metal framework of the hoist.
- Where possible avoid turning the loaded hoist – introduce the empty seated surface to the loaded hoist and vice versa.
- Brakes should not be applied to the hoist during the hoisting procedure (unless otherwise risk assessed). This allows it to move to accommodate its changing centre of gravity during the lifting and lowering phases.
- Avoid using the hoist to transport over distances, thresholds, and different surfaces (unless otherwise risk assessed).

- Avoid pulling the person into position from the back of the sling whilst lowering the person into a seated position. The handler should stand in front of the person to gently guide them into their seat (apply seat brakes where applicable). This is to ensure a functional position and to maintain eye contact.
- Store in safe place with the boom in its lowest position and brakes on.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CEILING TRACK AND OVERHEAD HOISTING SYSTEMS:**

- Ensure the tracking is clear of obstructions.
- Be familiar with how the motor moves on the tracking, either manual or powered.
- The motor should be directly overhead. Ensure the lifting tape is vertical to the lift to avoid wear and tear and/or malfunction.
- Position the spreader bar in a place that allows ease of sling attachment/detachment.
- Avoid contact between the person's head/face and the spreader bar, particularly when lowering.
- Avoid pulling the person into position from the back of the sling whilst lowering the person into a seated position. The handler should stand in front of the person to gently guide them into their seat (apply seat brakes where applicable). This is to ensure a functional position and to maintain eye contact.
- Return the hoist to its docking station for charging, or replace handset into charging point, after use.
- Elevate the spreader bar to a safe position.
- For transportable overheads, ensure a safe way of transporting and attaching/detaching the lifting pod is developed and followed.
- For free standing gantry, ensure the system is level and that the motor doesn't drift when the person is lifted.
- For pressure fit gantry, ensure the supporting poles are tensioned and the relevant indicators are in the safe zone (refer to individual manufacturer).



### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR STANDING HOISTS:**

- The person must be able to bear weight consistently and reliably through their leg(s) and have sufficient upper body muscle strength.
- The person must be able to physically participate in the hoisting process, follow instructions and be compliant.
- Do not raise the carry bar too high for the person (i.e., consider range of movement, pain, or discomfort).
- Avoid using the hoist to transport over distances, thresholds, and different surfaces (unless otherwise risk assessed).
- Provide the person with clear and concise instructions.
- Consider how long the person is able to stand for in both the formal and on the spot risk assessment.

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SLINGS:**

- Ensure the loop configurations identified in the handling/hoisting plan are used.
- Double check the loops/clips are attached to the spreader bar prior to lifting.
- Ensure the sling is not caught on the seated surface prior to lifting.
- Refit the sling prior to each subsequent transfer, as the sling may have displaced after the first transfer.
- Do not leave a toilet or universal sling in situ (unless otherwise risk assessed).

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR BATH HOISTS\*:**

- Consider additional environmental factors. Using bath oils, bubble bath, lotion, talc etc may make the surfaces slippery and effect the use of the equipment and the person's security.
- Check the temperature of the water.
- Fit the lap strap or harness (if applicable).

\*Where other hoists are used for bathing – see relevant guidance.

## GLOSSARY

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BOOM -	Also known as the LIFTING ARM or JIB.
COMPATABILITY -	Works successfully with.
ENVIRONMENT -	Working area.
FUNCTIONAL POSITION -	A position that facilitates function, such as eating, drinking, interacting, sleeping, respiration, digestion, elimination of bowels or bladder, pressure relief, postural management etc.
HANDLER -	The individual providing support or assistance to the person. Also known as a SUPPORT WORKER, NURSE, FRONT LINE WORKER, FAMILY MEMBER.
LAPSTRAP -	Also known as SAFETY BELT, SEAT BELT, SAFETY HARNESS.
LIFTING TAPE -	A strip of fabric which lowers/raises from the MOTOR to which the SPREADER BAR is attached.
LOCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES -	Organisational specific policies and procedures.
LOLER -	Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.
MHOR -	Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.
MOTOR/UNIT/POD -	Unit that runs along a TRACKING system from which the LIFTING TAPE lowers/raises.
PERSON -	The individual being supported or assisted. Also known as a PATIENT, SERVICE USER, CLIENT, CUSTOMER.
SPREADER BAR -	Part of hoist to which the sling attaches. Also known as the CARRY BAR or JIB.
SWL -	Safe Working Load.
TRACK -	Along which the motor of an overhead track hoist runs.
UNIQUE IDENTIFIER -	A number or code unique to each individual sling.
WEIGHT BEARING -	the ability to place weight through the leg(s) to maintain a standing position with/without assistance.

## **APPENDICES**

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The following appendices contain support tools designed to be used as a training, information, and instruction resource.

Their aim is to provide a reminder to handlers of points to consider before, during and after the hoisting activity.

The lists are not exhaustive.

### **Appendix 1 – Quick Reference Hoisting Activity Guidance**

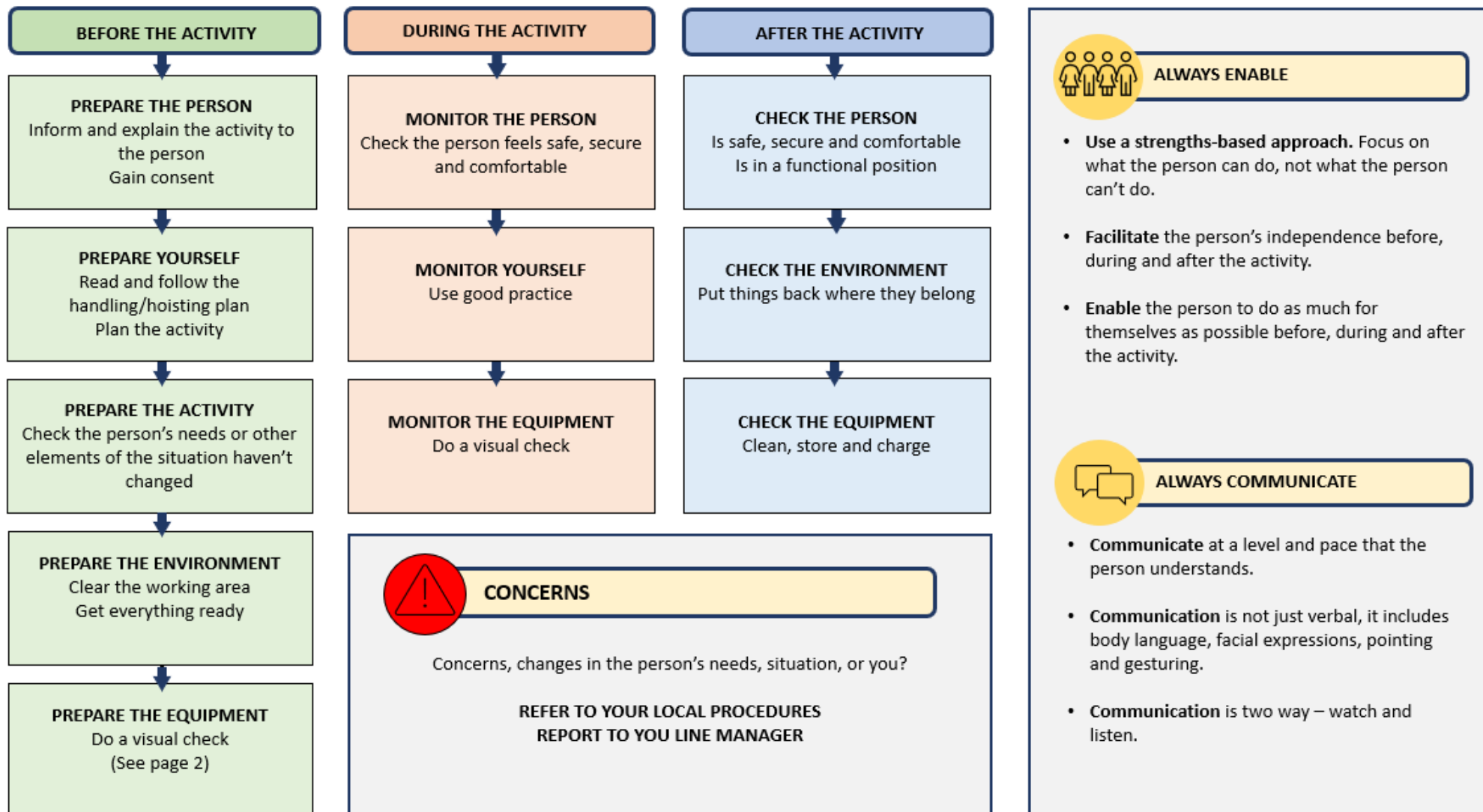
This document summarises the Guidance into a two-page reference tool.

### **Appendix 2 – Quick Reference Person-Specific on the Spot Risk Assessment (POSRA)**

This document contains a list of questions relating to on-the-spot risk assessment of an individual activity. Some of the questions are generic but the focus is on hoisting activities.



## YBE Quick Reference Hoisting Activity Guidance – Page 1





## YBE Quick Reference Hoisting Activity Guidance – Page 2

### GENERAL GUIDANCE - GOOD PRACTICE

- Familiarise yourself with the hoist's emergency lifting and lowering systems.
- If fitting a sling on an air mattress, set the mattress to a static setting to provide a stable surface.
- Apply the sling first, bring hoist in last (unless otherwise risk assessed).
- Double check the sling prior to lifting – Do the 'tug test': CHECK that all loops/clips are attached as per handling plan. Raise the person to a point of tension then STOP. CHECK the loops/clips again, and ensure the person is symmetrical, secure, and comfortable before continuing.
- Whilst hoisting in/out of a profiling bed, raise the backrest and knee break to provide support, comfort, and ease of positioning (into bed).
- Whilst hoisting in/out of bed consider placing two layers of slide sheets under the person's heels to prevent friction and shear skin damage.
- Whilst hoisting out of a seated surface, ensure any lap belts, harnesses and/or foot straps are unfastened prior to lifting.
- Hoist the person just above both support surfaces to obtain sufficient clearance.
- Never use the hoist as a threat.
- Refit the sling (not applicable to in-situ slings) before each subsequent transfer (i.e., before transfer from chair to commode, and then again before transfer back to chair).
- Follow local policies and procedures regarding care and cleaning of the hoist.
- Hoists and slings must not be adapted or misused.

### VISUAL CHECK OF SLINGS

#### Ensure:

- It has been assessed for the person and is fit for purpose.
- The sling is compatible with the person and the hoist.
- All labels are wash-proof, visible, legible and show SWL and unique identifier.
- LOLER checks are in date.
- There are no signs of fraying, tears, and critical stitching is intact.
- The loop/clips, and buckles (if applicable) have no signs of damage etc. Hook and loop (such as Velcro) fastenings (if applicable) work, are clean and free of fibres/ fluff etc.
- The sling is clean and dry prior to use.

### VISUAL CHECK OF HOIST

#### Ensure:

- Safe working load (SWL) of the hoist is clearly displayed, and LOLER checks are in date.
- The hoist is clean and undamaged:
- The hoist works as intended – the lifting arm moves up and down, legs move in and out, and castors move freely i.e., free from carpet fibres/fluff etc (where applicable). All castors are in contact with the floor.
- The spreader bar rotates freely. There are no signs of wear or sharp edges on the spreader bar and the padding is intact.
- There are no fluid leaks (hydraulic hoists).
- The lifting tape is intact and not frayed (where applicable).
- The hoist is fully charged, and the battery is fitted correctly. Any leads are connected correctly. The emergency stop button is set correctly.



### ENVIRONMENT

#### Ensure:

- The environment is prepared for the activity.
- The environment is prepared to ensure privacy and dignity.
- The environment is prepared to facilitate communication.
- The receiving surface (chair, bed etc) is in position.
- There is sufficient space to use the hoist safely.
- The floor is clear of obstacles.
- There is sufficient access around and under furniture.



## Quick Reference Person-Specific on the Spot Risk Assessment (POSRA) – Page 1

This support tool is designed to be used as a training, information, and instruction resource. Although some of the items are generic, the focus is on hoisting activities. The items contained in the table are by no means exhaustive.

<p><b>WHAT/WHY?</b></p> <p><b>Task</b></p>	<p>Do I know how I should be assisting the person? Have I read the handling/hoisting plan?          Can I avoid excessive bending, stooping, twisting, overreaching, and lifting heavy things?          Can I adjust my position? Can I kneel or sit down to stop me bending over and make the task more comfortable?          Am I making good use of the equipment available? Can I adjust the height of the working surface to make me more comfortable?          Am I following the 'biomechanical principles of manual handling'? Am I using weight transference?</p>
<p><b>BY WHOM?</b></p> <p><b>Individual Capabilities</b></p>	<p>Am I able to perform the required tasks today (<i>am I feeling tired or ill, have I sustained an injury, or am I pregnant</i>)?          Do I have sufficient time to do the task (<i>am I feeling rushed, stressed, impatient or been delayed</i>)?          Am I confident about doing the task? Have I been trained to do the task and use the equipment?          Am I dressed appropriately? Am I wearing low heeled, supportive, fully covered footwear?          Am I aware of my organisation's policies and procedures? Am I aware of how to report concerns?</p>
<p><b>WHO?</b></p> <p><b>Load</b></p>	<p>Is the person's ability 'typical' today (<i>are they feeling unwell or tired, have they deteriorated or improved</i>)? Does the handling plan still meet their needs? Have I reported the changes?          Am I enabling the person to do as much for themselves as possible? Am I giving the person sufficient time to help themselves?          Am I using 'Normal Movement Patterns' to facilitate their independence?          Are my instructions correct, clear, step by step, and in a language and at a pace the person understands?          Does person understand me? Am I watching and listening to the person? Do I understand the person and their needs?</p>



Quick Reference Person-Specific on the Spot Risk Assessment (POSRA) - Page 2

<p><b>WHERE?</b></p> <p><b>Environment (inc. Equipment)</b></p>	<p>Have I prepared the environment? Does the environment facilitate the person’s privacy and dignity?          Is my working space free from clutter? Do I have sufficient room to work safely? Is the floor free from hazards: trailing wires, rugs, pets etc?          Am I free from distractions (<i>TV is too loud, other people are chatting to me when I’m trying to work</i>)?          Am I trained to use this equipment? Am I familiar with the emergency stop, lift/lower procedures (where applicable)?</p> <p>Have I done a visual check of the equipment:          Is the safe working load (SWL) clearly displayed? Are sling labels visible, legible and show unique identifier? Are LOLER checks in date?          Is the equipment clean and undamaged?          Does the hoist work as intended - the lifting arm moves up and down, legs move in and out, and castors (where applicable) move freely? Does the spreader bar rotate freely? Is free of wear or sharp edges, is the padding is intact?          Is the lifting tape intact and not frayed (applies to ceiling track, certain mobile hoists).          Is the sling clean and dry? Is it compatible with the person and the hoist? Is it free of fraying or tears, is the critical stitching intact? Are any loops, clips, or buckles free of damage? Do any hook and loop (such as Velcro) fastenings work, are they clean and free of fibres/ fluff etc?          Are all castors (on hoists and other mobile devices) in contact with the floor?          Are powered devices fully charged? Is the battery is fitted correctly? Are any leads are connected correctly?          Are any seated surfaces (i.e., chairs, commodes, wheelchairs) or laying surfaces (i.e., beds, changing tables) and accessories free from damage and work as intended? Do brakes (where applicable) work?          Are any bed side rails fitted securely, and in the correct place? Are they free of damage - bends, distortions, or loose fittings?          Are they still suitable for the person, with no risk of entrapment?</p>
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