

# Protect your injury hot spots

## Personal Care Attendants



photo: Eileen Lynch,  
Personal Care Attendant

### SOURCES

WorkplaceNL injury prevention database based on eight years of accepted claims. Figures shown refer to the most common injuries by body part and do not represent 100 per cent of injury claims.

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## COMMON INJURIES

# FACTS

## Injury Hotspots Personal Care Attendants



### Prevention Tips

#### ERGONOMICS

- Use mechanical handling aids (e.g. overhead tracking, hoists, mobile hoists, wheeled equipment, and slide sheets) at all times unless clients can lift themselves.
- Ensure workers are trained in all methods of lifting used in the workplace and in the proper use of equipment.
- When moving equipment and supplies, use a trolley or lifting aid to reduce the risk of sprains and strains.
- Ensure building layout/design allows ease of pushing and/or pulling when using trolleys, wheelchairs and other mechanical handling aids (e.g. good path design, suitable floor surfaces).
- Provide equipment that is fit for purpose and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
- Adjust height of patient bed to reduce unnecessary bending and reaching when assisting patient
- Ensure workers are educated about proper working postures and trained in ways to minimize twisting, bending and lifting items from the floor.
- Ensure to develop written Safe Work Practices and Procedures (SWPPs) for the equipment and tasks and ensure that employees are trained in the SWPPs

#### WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- Implement policies and procedures to reduce the risk of workplace violence from patients, clients and the general public. Ensure they are well communicated and are followed by all workers.
- Methods may include warning and duress systems, training, supervision and staff support.
- Ensure buildings and equipment are designed to minimize risk (e.g. shatter-proof glass, no blind spots, access/egress controls, and effective use of barriers).

#### BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND STRESS

- Promote clear policies and procedures that address bullying, harassment and work pressure and enforce an effective reporting and resolution plan.
- Ensure all workers understand what bullying and harassment are, and the procedures for reporting incidents (e.g. explain policies and procedures during the orientation process).
- Provide post-incident care, including counselling and support.

#### SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

- Good housekeeping should be a central priority to the system of work to eliminate all slipping/tripping hazards (e.g. remove liquid, dust or other contaminants on floors).
- Ensure that all floors are level throughout work areas and there are no temporary or permanent obstructions posing any risks.

#### INFECTION CONTROL

- Follow safe work practices and procedures for handling biological fluids.
- Wear personal protective equipment including appropriate gloves, respirators, aprons, etc.
- Dispose of contaminated waste appropriately – use sharps containers when required.
- Wash hands frequently.

#### SHIFT WORK

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle – increase exercise, choose a healthy diet and quit smoking.
- Learn how to make healthy eating choices while working night shift.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep (7-9 hours daily is recommended for adults).
- Take care when driving home after a night shift. Consider alternate transportation where possible.

For additional information please contact:

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