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SAFE USE OF HOISTS

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SAFE USE OF HOISTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To describe the arrangements in place at Nursing Direct for the safe, effective, and compliant maintenance and management of lifting and handling equipment, where required.
- 1.2 This policy should be read and implemented alongside the Moving and Handling Policy and Procedure.
- 1.3 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Nursing Direct is registered to provide:
 - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
 - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
 - The Care Act 2014
 - The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 - The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2002
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
 - The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002)

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:
 - Registered Manager
 - Staff including Agency Workers
- 2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:
 - Service Users
- 2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:
 - Commissioners
 - Local Authority
 - NHS/ICB

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To outline the arrangements implemented at Nursing Direct to ensure that the hoisting equipment used in the delivery of its services is fit for purpose and specifically designed to meet the needs of the Service User.
- 3.2 To describe how Nursing Direct complies with relevant legislation and the applicable British Standards in relation to the use of hoisting equipment.
- 3.3 To outline the arrangements in place at Nursing Direct to ensure that all staff including Agency Workers have the skills, experience, and competence to work with hoists to protect and support Service Users safely.
- 3.4 To describe the framework in place at Nursing Direct to detail all staff including Agency Workers duties and responsibilities when working with hoists.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 Nursing Direct uses all hoisting equipment in accordance with applicable legislation and ensures that the risks associated with its use are assessed and controlled.
- 4.2 Nursing Direct ensures that all staff including Agency Workers are fully trained and competent in the use and operation of hoisting equipment, as well as being made aware of their individual legal duty to comply with all health and safety policies and procedures.
- 4.3 Various types of hoists may be used by agency workers at Nursing Direct, and these may include fixed and mobile hoists. All share a common feature in that, if they are not properly maintained and subjected to a thorough inspection by a competent person, failure of the hoist may result in serious injury and even death. It is our policy to:
 - Ensure that hoists are suitable for their intended use
 - Ensure that all hoists, including slings and fastenings, are regularly inspected before each use, if maintenance is required, this will be escalated to the relevant authority
 - Ensure that all staff including Agency Workers have received training in manual handling and specifically, how to use hoists
 - Ensure that risk assessments are in place that determine the number of staff including Agency Workers required to support a Service User being hoisted

- Nursing Direct is not responsible for the purchase or provision of any hoists, but we will work in partnership with the provider to ensure that the safety and maintenance of the hoist is upheld
- 4.4 We understand that the blanket use of two staff including Agency Workers to use a mobile hoist is not a ruling from any specific professional body, nor an instruction from the manufacturers. However, historically it has been considered good practice. Our decision, therefore, on the number of staff including Agency Workers required to use a mobile hoist will be dictated by local policy and risk assessments, which consider the multiple factors and the involvement of the Service User.

Nursing Direct will work with other health professionals, when required, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff including Agency Workers and Service Users. Any use of hoists with single staff including Agency Worker, in particular mobile hoists, must be risk assessed on an individual basis and the assessment must show that the use of only one staff including Agency Worker does not increase the risk involved.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Responsibilities

Nursing Direct will ensure to escalate to the relevant authorities when that maintenance contracts and statutory insurance inspections are required to be scheduled for each Service User who has a hoist in situ.

The Registered Manager will ensure training for all staff including Agency Workers who may use the equipment and carry out ensure that visual in-house checks are performed before hoists are used is arranged.

All staff including Agency Workers are responsible for visual observation of the equipment and for the checking of safety features, e.g. alarms, interlocks, brakes, slings. They will report any defects immediately, cease using the equipment and report to Nursing Direct via the incident reporting systems.

Staff including Agency Workers will refer to the Infection Control Policy and Procedure for guidance on the cleaning and maintenance of equipment.

Staff including Agency Workers will monitor and review the effectiveness of equipment used at Nursing Direct. If it is felt that it is no longer fit for purpose, this will be discussed with Nursing Direct and such equipment will not be used without the expressed consent of the Registered Manager.

5.2 Moving and Handling Risk Assessment and Care Plan

Any use of hoists must be as specified by the Service User's Moving and Handling Risk Assessment and Care Plan. The Care Plan will include:

- Identification of the Service User's height and weight
- The extent to which the Service User can support his or her own weight
- Relevant factors such as condition, disability, spasm, fatigue, tendency to fall and apprehension (anxiety associated with being handled)
- Comprehension problems and cooperative behaviour
- Recommended methods of movement for sitting, toileting, bathing, transfers, and movement in bed as well as details of equipment needed
- The minimum number of staff including Agency Workers required
- Other relevant risk factors

The assessment must consider the choice, dignity, and needs of the Service User.

5.3 Inspection, Servicing and Quality Assurance

The original certificates of conformity that come with the equipment when it is new, and the subsequent records of sling and hoist examination shall be reviewed by all staff including Agency Workers before the equipment is used. Nursing Direct will ensure that, as they are not responsible for the purchase or provision of the equipment, they have access to the test certificates, subsequent records or visually check the service date labels on each piece of equipment.

All staff including agency workers will not use any equipment which has not been examined within the required six-month period until such a time as it can be serviced and ready for use.

Where equipment such as a hoist is on hire, there must be a current LOLER certificate provided prior to collection of the equipment.

- 5.4 Nursing Direct will check to ensure that labels applied by the maintenance contractor confirming that the hoist has been tested will state:

- The examination and maintenance carried out is a thorough examination and has been completed in compliance with LOLER 1998
- The date of the service
- The next examination date
- The initials of the representative of the company carrying out the test

Certificates provided post inspection will include the date of the last examination and confirm that it is in compliance with Schedule 1 of the LOLER regulations and Regulation 9 (3) (a) (i).

5.5 Reporting

All staff including Agency Workers will report any defects in equipment to Nursing Direct via the accident/incident reporting system. They will then immediately stop using the equipment and ensure that it is clearly marked 'do not use' until the problem has been rectified.

In line with MHRA reporting, any incident involving a medical device will be reported via <https://www.gov.uk/report-problem-medicine-medical-device> if:

- Someone is injured (or almost injured) by a medical device, either because its labelling or instructions are not clear
- It is broken or has been misused
- A Service User's Care is interrupted because of a faulty device

5.6 Training and Education

Staff including Agency Workers will have access to the equipment manufacturers' instructions and, where possible, these will be stored near the equipment so that they can be easily accessed. Where this is not possible, Nursing Direct will ensure that a link to online instructions is sent to all staff including Agency Workers.

In addition to health and safety and accident/incident reporting, training will cover:

- Moving and handling risk factors and how injuries can occur
- How to carry out safe moving and handling, including good handling techniques (see 'Good Handling Technique for Lifting' and 'Good Handling Technique for Pushing and Pulling')
- Appropriate systems of work for the individual's tasks and environment
- Use of mechanical aids
- Practical work to allow the trainer to identify and put right anything the trainee is not doing safely when required.

Training can be delivered using a blended approach, from formal teaching to the testing of knowledge in staff including Agency Workers meetings and supervisions.

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 Hoist

A hoist is any work equipment for lifting and lowering loads and includes any accessories used in doing so (such as attachments to support, fix or anchor the equipment)

6.2 LOLER

- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 cover lifting equipment used in a social care setting such as hoists and slings, whether electrically powered or manually operated
- All equipment that is covered by LOLER must have a thorough examination by a trained professional every 6 months (if used to lift people) - this is generally done by your insurance company

6.3 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

- These regulations, often abbreviated to PUWER, place duties on people and companies who own, operate, or have control over work equipment. PUWER also places responsibilities on businesses and organisations whose staff including Agency Workers use work equipment, whether owned by them or not. PUWER requires that equipment provided for use at work is:
 - Suitable for the intended use
 - Safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not subsequently deteriorate
 - Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training accompanied by suitable health and safety measures, such as protective devices and controls. These will normally include emergency stop devices, adequate means of isolation from sources of energy, clearly visible markings, and warning devices
 - Used in accordance with specific requirements for mobile work equipment and power presses

OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

To be 'outstanding' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited has a clear audit trail and planned programme in place for the servicing of hoists in use at Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited
- Staff including Agency Workers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the use of equipment at Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited and have received training in the safe use and maintenance of handling equipment
- Handling equipment is observed to be clean, well maintained and there is clear evidence of servicing in place
- There is a culture of learning in the service. Where incidents have occurred, these are investigated and shared with staff including Agency Workers to ascertain how working practices can be improved
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App

COMPLETED DATE:	18.02.2026
SIGN OFF DATE:	18.02.2026
REVIEW DATE:	18.02.2027
SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director