Patient safety during transfers

Purpose

This document establishes appropriate safety precautions necessary during patient transfers.

Audience

The information in this document is intended for all members of the Rehabilitation Services staff.

Policy

The safety of patients will be assured a all times. All Rehabilitation Services staff will be oriented to and follow safety guidelines.

General Safety Precautions

- Wheels on equipment are locked before moving patient from any piece of equipment.
- Foot rests are lifted and or leg rests are removed before patients are moved in or out of wheelchairs.
- Two or more people may be required to move patients from stretchers or to mats, treatment tables, or tilt tables. The therapist will request extra assistance based on evaluation of the patient's skills.

Wheelchair Transfers

- Always place the wheelchair as close as possible to the surface that the patient is on and lock the brakes.
- Position the wheelchair to allow patient movement toward the uninvolved extremity if possible.
- Place the wheelchair at a 45 degree angle to the bed to transfer from bed to wheelchair. Remove leg rest and armrest between wheelchair and bed or mat.
- Assist patient as needed.
- Use safety belt at all times and request help if necessary.

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Patient safety during transfers, Continued

Hoyer lift Transfers

- Roll patient side-to-side to position vinyl mat under patient.
- Raise frame as high as possible and slide over patient's bed.
- Lower frame to bed level and fasten mat straps to the frame.
- Raise metal frame to lift patient off the bed. Secure patient with safety strap if necessary.
- Transport patient to destination.
- Reverse procedure to remove patient from lift.

Hoyer lift to Wheelchair Transfers

- Use fully reclining wheelchair.
- Fully recline wheelchair.
- Elevate leg rests.
- Lock wheels of wheelchair.
- Place lift directly over wheelchair, and align patient's body to the wheelchair. Assure that patient is positioned to avoid sliding as the wheelchair back is elevated.
- Lower lift to lowest position.
- Check patient's body alignment to wheelchair.
- Initially, all straps may be slightly lowered. Slowly release one lift strap at a time, holding strap to gradually ease patient into wheelchair.
- Once patient is placed in the wheelchair, raise the frame of the lift as high as possible and move it away from the wheelchair.

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Patient safety during transfers, Continued

Hoyer lift to Wheelchair Transfers (continued)

- Seat the patient by raising the back of the wheelchair to a comfortable position. Lower the leg rests if the patient is able to bend knees.
- Reverse the procedure to transfer patient back.