Rules for Moving Mechanical Lifts

When implementing a safe patient/resident handling program, it is critical to consider how employees are going to be handling the mechanical lifts. By using mechanical lifts to assist with transfers, the risk of injury is reduced. But, there still is potential for injury from moving and maneuvering a mechanical lift with a person in the lift.

Below are key steps to keep in mind when maneuvering a mechanical lift:

- Use two people
  - One person by the resident/patient
  - One person at the controls end of the lift

- Use body weight to initiate the movement of the lift.
- When moving a lift, keep the lift close to the body.

- Do one motion at a time.
- If you have to turn, stop forward motion and then initiate turn from the pivot point of the lift.
- The resident should be the pivot point, not the controls end of the lift.
• The person positioned by the resident/patient should use their foot for small changes in position of the wheels or the lift.
• Wheels should face in the direction of travel prior to initiating movement.
• The feet of the lift should be in the "closed position" (parallel with each other) when moving the lift.
• When starting or stopping the motion of the lift, move slowly.
• Keep lift moving, don’t start and stop repeatedly.
• Where possible, move the wheelchair, chair, commode, etc. instead of the lift.
• Try and avoid turning the lift.

Our safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are made solely to assist your organization in reducing hazards and the potential of hazards and accidents. These recommendations were developed from conditions observed and information provided at the time of our visit. They do not attempt to identify every possible loss potential, hazard or risk, nor do they guarantee that workplace accidents will be prevented. These safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are not a substitute for ongoing, well-researched internal safety and risk management programs. This report does not warrant that the property inspected and its operations are compliant with any law, rule or regulation.

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