

Carroll Healthcare Center, Inc., Carrollton

Intervention Key Words: High-Low Electric Beds, Transfer Chairs

Industry: Health Care

Risk Factor(s): Awkward Posture-Back, Neck, Shoulder deviations, Repetitive motion, Manual Handling-Lifting/Carrying

Situation:

The ability of nursing home employees to provide quality resident care is dependant upon maintaining a safe work environment for both parties involved. One area where that has become a growing concern is during patient transfers. Throughout the course of a day many residents need assistance in basic activities, including but not limited to: getting out of bed, going to the restroom, taking a bath and returning to bed along with a variety of tasks that take place in the bed itself. In many cases, lack of proper, modern equipment heightens the risks of Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTDs) to the employees. At the Carroll Healthcare Center, these concerns stem from the fact that beds must be kept in a low position to prevent patient injury in case of a fall. Many of the beds at the home will not rise to assist the care giver in their tasks, or the nurse doesn't take the extra time needed to raise them. This leads to awkward positions, bending and strenuous lifts which result in injuries to the back, shoulders and neck.

Solution:

The Carroll Healthcare Center approached the problem by purchasing 100 electrically operated beds. With the automated beds nurses can quickly lower or raise the patient to a height that is suitable for the situation. This allows the nurses to perform their duties without the necessity of bending over. The home also purchased 2 Resident Transfer Chairs in order to reduce the amount of physical lifting the nurses must perform. The chairs are designed to ease the transfer in and out of bed by reclining and rising to bed height. The resident is then "slid" to the chair, and then can be taken wherever necessary. The total cost of the intervention was \$128,078. The Carroll Healthcare Center received \$40,000 in assistance from the Safety Grant\$ program.



Manufacturer pictures of Hi-Low Bed and Transfer Chair.

Results:

- CTD Risk Factor scores, averaged over 4 tasks improved 8.5% following the intervention.
- CTD Incidence Rate (per 200,000 hours worked) decreased from 8.2 to 5.4 in the 24 months following the intervention when compared to the previous year. This equates to a 34% improvement.
- Increases in Lost Days rate, Restricted Days rate and Turnover rate (per 200,000 hours worked) were observed but may not be directly attributed to the intervention.