

Belmont County-Park Health Center, St. Clairsville

Intervention Key Words: Automation, Lifting, Motorized Lift, Transfer, Electrical Bed, Motorized Beds, Resident Bed

Industry: Health Care

Risk Factor(s): Awkward postures- Back deviations, Neck and shoulder deviations, 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 Park Health 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.



Bed at proper level to prevent injury in case of a fall

Solution:

Park Health Center approached the problem by purchasing 50 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. It also enables other staff members, such as housekeepers, to accomplish their tasks with fewer CTD risks. The total cost of purchasing 50 electrically operated beds was \$60,862. Park Health Center received \$40,000 in assistance from the SafetyGrant\$ program



Results:

- Turnover rate (per 200,000 hours worked) was at 85.3 the year prior to the intervention and decreased 25% to 64.4 over the 2 years following implementation.
- CTD Risk Factor scores, averaged over 5 tasks, decreased 36% following the intervention.
- Increases in CTD, Restricted Days and Lost Days rates were observed.