

# User Instructions

## The Patient Handler

### F23392

#### General Safety Warning

**Please ensure these instructions are fully read and understood before use. Retain these instructions in a safe place for future reference.**

#### Intended Use

The Patient Handler is a versatile but simple item of equipment for handling a patient. It is specifically designed to extend the carer's reach thereby reducing the amount of bending required and enabling the carer to remain more upright and avoid twisting.

Please note the Patient Handler is not intended to be used to lift people bodily, or to move a patient who would otherwise be too heavy.

#### The Patient Handler

The original idea for "The Handler" came from the need to encourage nurses to lift and move patients more safely and with less effort. It was conceived and designed by Dr. J D G Troup, Dsc (Med), MRCS, LRCP, FERG, a clinical scientist of international standing for his work on the causes and prevention of back pain.

- The Patient Handler first appeared as the "patient-handling sling". After preliminary trials, it rapidly became popular amongst nurses.
- It is a simple item of handling equipment and is easily cleaned. It avoids the need for nurses to stretch out at arms length when moving patients.
- It provides an easier hold than the conventional wrist and handgrips between nurses.
- The strain and stress of patient handling on back and shoulders is reduced.
- Patients are more comfortable.



The New Patient Handler, also designed by Dr. Troup, is the product of several small but significant improvements. It has been cited as a standard item of patient handling equipment with many applications <sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

- Moving patients up the bed using a wide choice of techniques.
- Transferring patients between beds, chairs, commodes, wheelchairs, etc.
- Moving a patient back in the chair.
- Standing a weight bearing patient up.

Thus the Patient Handler is a versatile but simple item of equipment for handling patients in hospitals, nursing homes, residences for the elderly and disabled people or patients who are cared for at home. But please take note that the Patient Handler should never be used to lift people bodily.

Since 1992, regulations and guidelines have been introduced for the safety of those exposed to manual handling and lifting <sup>5, 6, 7</sup>. All managers, nurses and carers should be aware of them. Employers must now have a patient Handling policy or lifting code which covers risk-assessment, training, supervision of patient handling standards and choice of equipment.

## Assessment of Risk

The practical effect of MHOR925 is a requirement that the handling risk for the individual patient or physically disabled client should be assessed and noted in the individual's care plan. It should include the patient's weight, their levels of dependency and any handling constraints; together with notes on the equipment needed and on the choice of handling technique.

## Training in Patient Handling

All nurses and carers should be trained, starting with senior management; made aware of the risk of unskilled lifting and handling; taught how to assess risk; given practical instruction to ensure that they are skilled in assessing the patient handling needs in safety. The training must include guidance on planning the handling environment and the use of the handling equipment, whether hoists, or the simple equipment such as the Patient Handler or Sliding Sheets. Supervision of handling standards used in practice is an essential follow-up to training.

## Do's and Don'ts for Handling

Do handle with the load close to your body and over the area between your feet.

DO learn how to handle the patients with skill and confidence. If uncertain, be sure to ask for more practical instruction.

Do ask for guidance when a particular patient presents a handling problem or if there is a change in the patient's condition.

Do, when medical conditions allow, encourage the patients/clients/disabled persons to do as much as they can to assist themselves.

Do use the principles of kinetic energy by gently rocking the patient to give enough momentum for the transfer and so to minimise the need for lifting vertically.

Do not use with patients with sensitive, sticky or fragile skin.

Avoid all vertical lifting. Instead go for a hoist. Don't let patients lock their hands behind your neck.

Don't use "The Patient Handler" to enable you to lift. It was not designed for that, but to make transfers easier.

## Cleaning, Care and Maintenance

Clean regularly wiping with a soft cloth, moistened with a disinfectant solution.

Do not use an abrasive detergent, cleaner or cloth.

Do not subject to temperatures exceeding 80°C

Regular inspection of the Handler is recommended for signs of damage, discolouration or brittleness.

## Product information

The Patient Handler can be used in conjunction with other moving and handling devices to assist in moving a patient. Nottingham Rehab Supplies have a range of over 3000 daily living aids. To view the full range, visit; [www.nrs-uk.co.uk](http://www.nrs-uk.co.uk) or request a catalogue.

## References:

1. **"The Guide to the Handling of Patients: Third Edition"**: Published by the National Back Pain association in collaboration with the Royal college of Nursing in 1992
2. **"Moving and Lifting for Carers"**: by Hutchinson & Rodgers, Published by Woodhead-Faulkener Ltd. In 1991
3. **"Safer Lifting for Patient care"**: by Margaret Hollis, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition published by Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, 1991
4. **"Handling people: Equipment, Advice and Information"**: Published in 1994 by the Disabled Living Foundation.
5. **"Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992"**: Published by HMSO for the Health and Safety Executive (MHOR92).
6. **"Manual Handling in the Health Service"**: Published by HSE Books for the Health and Safety Commission, 1998.
7. **"Manual Handling Assessments in Hospitals and the Community: an RCN Guide"**: Published in 1996 by the Royal College of Nursing.

## NOTTINGHAM REHAB SUPPLIES

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