APPENDIX 3

Manual Handling Risk Assessment.

Name of Establishment……..

Person making the assessment……..**Date**……

Task ……

Employees involved ……..

Reducing risks from manual handling involves a close look at four key issues: the nature of the task, the characteristics of the load, where the task is being performed and the capability of the person actually moving the load. Please consider these issues by working through the questions below and commenting where problems are raised. Breaking the task down into manageable components helps to show where the major risks are and how they arise. If the answer is "no" to any question, consideration should be given to reducing that risk factor. If simple, practical solutions can be found, they should be implemented immediately.

1. THE TASK

Can the load be held close to the body?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Holding or manipulating a load at a distance from the body such as at arm's length puts a far greater stress on the back and reduces lifting capacity. Balance is also affected if the load is not held near to the body.		
Can the task be carried out without awkward body movement or posture e.g. twisting the trunk or stooping?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Twisting the body when carrying stresses the back. Poor or awkward posture will also affect balance and will increase the risk of falling or loss of control of the load.		
Can the task be carried out without excessive lifting or lowering of the load?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Wherever possible loads should be carried at mid-thigh to waist height. The risk of injury is far greater at either lower or higher levels or when the load has to be lifted or lowered through a large distance.		
Can the load be moved without excessive carrying?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
In general, if a load is carried further than 10 metres, the demands of carrying outweigh those of lifting and lowering and safe capacity will be reduced.		
Can the task be carried out without excessive pushing and pulling	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
The risk from pushing and pulling is increased when the hands		

are much below waist or above shoulder height. The condition of the floor and footwear, i.e. when grip is poor, can significantly increase the risk of injury.		
Are there sufficient rest or recovery periods?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Where physical stresses are prolonged, fatigue will occur and the risk of injury will increase. This does not just apply to heavy loads, smaller loads handled frequently can create as much a risk as more substantial ones. The situation is made worse when the handler has a relatively fixed posture or the task involves hurried, jerky movements, or the pace is dictated by machinery.		

2. THE LOAD

Is the load light enough?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
The weight of the load is only one consideration affecting the rate of injury. Guidance on weight limits refers to symmetrical, two-handed lifts, in front of and close to the body. In practice such lifts are rare and all other factors in the assessment will need to be considered.		
Is the load easy to hold?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
If the load is bulky, unwieldy or difficult to grasp this will make handling less sure and the risk of injury will increase, i.e. due to extra grip required, adoption of awkward posture or greater risk of dropping the load.		
Is the load stable?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
If it is unstable with a risk of sudden movement or with contents likely to shift then the likelihood of injury is increased. Sudden, unpredictable movements stress the body and the risk is worse if the handler's posture is unstable or they are unprepared. These two factors will be of special significance when considering the moving of clients, patients, etc.		
Is the load free from sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging features?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Risk of injury can occur from the external state of the load. Protective clothing may be needed. Not only may there be a risk of direct injury but such factors may also prevent or impair safe handling techniques.		

3. THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Does the working space allow for good posture?	Yes/ No	Comment
Bad posture increases the risk of injury, e.g. stooping because of lack of headroom, twisting or leaning to avoid obstructions.		
Is the floor surface good?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Uneven, slippery or unstable floors will increase the risk of slips, trips, and falls. They will also increase the risk of injury due to the stresses on the body caused by unpredictable movements.		
Are the floors and work surfaces level?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Variations in levels add to the complexity of movement and range of movement and thus the scope for injury.		
Is the environment free from extremes of temperature, humidity or air movement?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
High temperatures and humidity cause rapid fatigue and perspiration may reduce grip, low temperatures can impair dexterity. Outside, wind gusts can be a problem.		
Is the lighting adequate?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Contrast between light and dark can increase hazards and accurate judgement of distances. Poor lighting may encourage poor posture e.g. trying to avoid glare or stooping to see.		

4. INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITY

Can the job be done without any special physical characteristics, e.g. strength, height, etc?	Yes/ No	Comment
Tasks should be able to be performed by most reasonably healthy, fit employees. Special requirements should only apply to heavy, physical jobs.		
Can the job be done without creating a hazard to those who have a health problem or to those who are pregnant?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Allowances should be made for known health problems. Pregnancy has significant implications for risk of injury particularly 3 months before and after delivery.		
Can the job be done without special knowledge or training?	**Yes/ No**	**Comment**
Knowledge and training are often necessary for the safe performance of a task, especially when loads are likely to be unfamiliar. Instruction should include the proper use of handling aids and protective clothing.		

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Hazard concern	Action needed	By when?	Who will act?

Assessment completed by	
Other individuals or agencies involved in carrying out or agreeing this risk	
Date of assessment	
Date for Re-assessment	