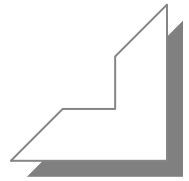




Older Healthcare Workers Conference

Addressing Health and Safety Challenges on the Job

Tuesday September 29th, 2009



Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) — Safe Lifting Program

The safe patient handling program at NMH is currently being evaluated by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in a four year study which will end in 2010.

The objective of this study is to conduct an intervention trial of a "best practices" safe patient handling and movement program in two acute care hospitals (Northwestern Memorial Hospital and University of Pennsylvania Health System, Philadelphia, PA).

The 'best practices' safe patient lifting program consists of the following elements: (1) state-of-the-art patient lifts (ceiling-mounted and portable lifts) and repositioning equipment to assist with patient transfers, (2) a safe-lifting policy or protocol that describes the roles and responsibilities of all affected staff, (3) training on how to use the patient lifting and repositioning equipment, and (4) training to change the culture of patient lifting and promote compliance to the program.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Assess the impact of the patient lifting/transferring program on injury rates in the study hospitals for 3 years before and 3 years after the implementation of the best practices safe patient handling and movement program. Pre- and post-intervention injury rates will be computed for each hospital by age, gender, length of employment, shift, and job classification.
2. Compare the overall reduction in total lost work days, restricted workdays, and injury-related costs for the 3-year pre-intervention period and the 3-year post-intervention period.