ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-4240

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Safe Transfers: Non-Ambulatory

Falls in hospice care are common and can occur due to various factors related to the patients declining condition. Safe transfer techniques can ensure safe and effective transfers that minimize the risk of injury to both the caregiver and the patient, depending on the patient's mobility level. **Non-Ambulatory patients cannot bear weight or assist in the transfer.**

General Tips for Safe Transfers:

- **Clear the Environment:** Remove any obstacles such as rugs, furniture, or cords in the path of the transfer.
- **Use Proper Equipment:** Ensure that all equipment (e.g., transfer belt, sliding board, and mechanical lift) is in good working order and correctly positioned.
    - **Mechanical Lifts require 2 caregivers**
- **Communication is Key:** Always explain each step to the patient before starting, even if they cannot respond verbally.
- **Patience:** Take your time—never rush through a transfer.
- **Caregiver Safety:**
    - **Use a Wide Stance:** Keep your feet shoulder-width apart and one foot slightly in front of the other for stability.
    - **Bend at the Knees, Not the Back:** Always lift with your legs, not your back, to prevent strain or injury.
    - **Avoid Twisting:** Move your entire body when shifting or pivoting the patient, rather than twisting your torso.

Equipment:

- **Mechanical Lift:** Device that lifts and transfers the patient using a sling.
- **Transfer Sling:** A sling placed under the patient to assist with manual transfers.

During Transfer:

- **Check for Pain or Discomfort:** Ask if the patient feels any pain or discomfort during the transfer.

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- **Monitor Breathing and Fatigue:** Ensure the patient is not overly exerted. Rest between movements if needed.

Step-by-Step Process:

Mechanical Lifts require 2 caregivers

1) **Lift & Sling Set Up:** Gently roll the patient to one side, position the sling under them with the half resting against their back slightly rolled, then gently position patient to opposite side, unrolling the sling so the patient is placed in the middle. Secure the sling straps to the lift according to the manufacturer's instructions.

2) **Lifting the Patient:** Ensure the lift raises the patient slowly and smoothly. Keep your hand on the sling or patient to ensure they feel secure. Once raised. Position them over the chair or bed.

3) **Lowering the Patient:** Lower the patient slowly into the new position. Make sure they are seated correctly before removing the sling. Ensure positioning and patient comfort, and remove the mechanical lift and any associated equipment.

Emergency Considerations:

- **In case of a Fall:** If a fall occurs during a transfer, call SFR for guidance and assistance.
- **In case of Pain or Discomfort:** Stop the transfer and reassess the situation if the patient experiences pain or discomfort.

Lift Assist: (321) 633-1737

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

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