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

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Safe Transfers: Partial Mobility

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. **Partial mobility includes patients that can bear some weight and help with transfers.**

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.
- **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:

- **Transfer belt (gait belt):** Transfer belt that helps the caregiver hold and guide the patient safely during transfers.
- **Walker or Cane** (optional)

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:

1) **Prepare the environment:** Clear any obstacles and ensure the patient is wearing non-slip shoes or socks. Make sure both the bed and the chair (or wheelchair) should be locked or stable.
   ***If transferring to a wheelchair, lock the wheels, remove or swing away footrests, and position the chair as close to the patient as possible.**

2) **Position the Patient:** Ensure the patient is sitting at the edge of the bed/chair with feet flat on the floor. Stand close to the patient with your feet apart for balance. One foot can be slightly in front of the other for better leverage.

3) **Apply the Transfer Belt:** Secure the belt around the patient's waist. Ensure it is snug but comfortable. Hold the belt from the back and sides, avoid pulling up, and instead guide the patient with a steady grip.

4) **Instruct the Patient:** Have them lean forward, and on a count of three, assist them to stand while holding the belt, lift using your leg muscles, avoiding any strain on your back. ***If they use a walker, have it placed in front of them for assistance.**

5) **Guide the Transfer:** If walking, guide the patient to the walker or cane. If pivoting, assist the patient in pivoting towards the destination (i.e. chair), ensure their feet stay stable during the pivot and support them as needed.

6) **Help the Patient Sit:** Slowly lower the patient into the chair or wheelchair by bending your knees and keeping your back straight. Support your grip on the transfer belt and using your legs to help control the movement. Once seated, ensure proper position, remove the transfer belt, and place footrests back on wheelchair if used.

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

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

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