

Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Toolkit – Tool 5e

To learn more about using this tool refer to the Section 5 in the Safe Patient Handling and Mobility: A Toolkit for Program Development 2025 at: <https://www.nvha.net/safe-patient-handling-and-mobility-toolkit/>

Safe Patient Handling and Mobility (SPHM) Point-of-Care Pre-Mobility Safety Check

A point-of-care (POC) pre-mobility safety check is an informal process in which the caregiver briefly assesses the situation prior to performing a safe patient handling and mobility (SPHM) task to determine if it's safe to perform the task or care activity.

A POC pre-mobility safety check enables caregivers to determine if a patient's mobility score, physical and cognitive abilities and SPHM needs have changed since the previous assessment. It helps caregivers identify safety risks and plan tasks to control or minimize them.

Caregivers should assess 4 elements a POC pre-mobility safety check. These are the patient, the task, the environment and the caregiver(s).

Before conducting a (POC) pre-mobility safety check, caregivers should review the patient's SPHM care plan to confirm their mobility assessment score or dependency level and associated SPHM equipment, and practices required, and any necessary precautions, such as violence or fall risk alerts.

If there are any changes or concerns regarding the patient's ability to mobilize safely, caregivers should follow established procedures that guide caregivers on the appropriate next steps. This may involve having the patient's nurse or therapist reassess their mobility, or, if that isn't immediately possible, choose a safer more conservative method to mobilize the patient, or postponing the SPHM task based on the situation. The patient's nurse should be notified immediately about any changes in mobility status to ensure that a re-evaluation can take place, be documented in the patient's care plan and communicated to other caregivers (Refer to Section 5).



*Conduct violence risk assessment per facility policy as applicable

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References & Resources

ACC6075 Moving and Handling People Guidelines 2012. Accident Compensation Corporation New Zealand.
<https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/provider/acc6075-moving-and-handling-people-guidelines.pdf>

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<https://library.nshealth.ca/InjuryPrevention>

Smith, J., Simpson, P., & Fray, M.(Eds) (2023). HOP7: The guide to handling of people. Person-centered practice
<https://backcare.org.uk/hop7m/hop-purchase/>

Worksafe BC (May 2021). Patient handling assessing the risk Bulletin WS2010-02.
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/hazard-alerts/patient-handling-assessing-risks?lang=en>

Worksafe BC (2018). Point-of-Care Risk Assessments in Long-Term Care.
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