

**Spiral Sussex**

**Safe use of Slings and Hoists  
Policy and Procedure**

**November 2018**

## Spiral Sussex

### Safe use of Slings and Hoists

#### Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure has been approved by the Executive Committee of Spiral Sussex which are responsible for its review.

The original signed copy of this policy and procedure is kept at Spiral Sussex's office.

Signed: Mark Shanahan Date: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Name: Mr Mark Shanahan

Chair of Trustees

Signed Marc Blackwell Date: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Name: Mr Marc Blackwell

Trustee

Record of adoption and review of this policy and procedure:-

- Adopted:
- To be reviewed: (+1 years from the adopted date)

## **Spiral Sussex**

### **Safe use of Slings and Hoists**

#### **Policy and Procedure**

This policy and procedure lay out Spiral Sussex's approach to using slings and hoists and to instruct staff members on their usage in a safe way.

For some service users, special assistance may be required when moving. Assistance may require using slings or hoists, as considered appropriate by the responsible staff member at the time.

#### **1. Definitions**

The following terms in this policy and procedure are understood as:

“staff and staff members”

means all Spiral Sussex employees including part-time, full-time, consultants, volunteers and interns.

“slings”

Slings are used to support the body weight of the service user. Slings are often made from heavy-duty material and can be generic or customised. The sling passes underneath the service user and is attached to the hoist and positioned by a series of loops.

“hoists”

Hoists are used to take the weight of a service user. Once a sling is attached to a service user, this is attached to a hoist which is manoeuvred by a mechanism that lifts the hoist to lift the service user from one area to another. Hoists that may be used include mobile hoists or fixed hoists; in specific schools, accessible swimming pool or changing areas or respite homes, ceiling hoists may be available.

## **Policy and procedure**

All hoists and equipment whether owned by Spiral Sussex or not, are the responsible of Spiral Sussex to inspect before use. It is the responsibility of the project manager to ensure that all relevant documents in relation to hoists, including equipment checks, are obtained.

Slings and hoists should only be used by staff members when absolutely necessary, for example, in supporting service users with personal care or in accessing a swimming pool.

Any Spiral Sussex staff using slings or hoists are only permitted to do so in the following instances:

- after they have received training from appropriate persons such as a qualified physiotherapist. Training must be refreshed every 3 years.
- they have been supervised 3 situations of hoisting by a trained and qualified person (observations must be refreshed every 3 years or if staff have not hoisted for 6 months)

Spiral Sussex can nominate internal Hoist Assessors who must undergo training by a qualified person, and be supervised by such person a minimum of 3 times.

Up-to-date records on sling and hoist training must be kept including the observations and dates.

## **Individual care plans & risk assessments**

It is the responsibility of all staff to read and implement individual care plans, risk assessments, moving and handling plans for each service user, and the responsibility of project managers to ensure these are provided to relevant activity staff.

Prior to each hoist, a number of checks need to be completed by staff. The following must be checked:

- the space is appropriate for hoisting: it is uncluttered and there is appropriate room
- the hoist to be used is fully charged and in good working order – no cracks or breaks
- the sling loops are correctly attached

- all other equipment is in good condition and in the correct position
- staff maintain good posture to mitigate injury, throughout the hoist
- signs of weakness on the sling or visible defects before each use such tears, fraying and loose threads in the material, stitching, seams and straps of the sling

The following action must be taken in the case that service users are already positioned on their personal sling in their wheelchair:

- examine the areas of the sling that are visible to ensure good condition
- check the location where the service user will be moved is the same height as the wheelchair
- hoist the service user to the necessary height to ensure the sling is not damaged before transferring. In the case that the sling is damaged the service user must be lower backed into their wheelchair and do not continue with the hoist
- in the case that the sling is in good condition continue hoisting and check if additional support is needed
- the sling should be thoroughly examined ready for the next hoist

Any defects must be reported to the manager immediately. The sling or hoist in question should not be used until any issues with it are resolved.

Currently Spiral does not have any Slings or hoists, nor do Spiral staff use them at any other facility.

A Sling Maintenance Checklist will be completed by staff regularly for each Spiral Sussex sling.