

1. Infection Control and Hygiene Precautions

Standard precautions are required work practices for a basic level of infection control. They are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms.

Standard precautions include the following:

- Washing hands before and after all care of the Customers.
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, aprons, face shields.
- Maintain aseptic or 'clean' techniques as appropriate.
- Appropriate reprocessing of instruments and equipment.
- Safe handling and disposal of potentially infected materials.
- Apply appropriate environment controls where applicable.
- Gloves should be worn if there is any chance of contact with body fluids (such as urine, blood, saliva, wound discharge, faeces).
- If you have a cut or abrasion on your hand, use gloves for both your own and the Customer's protection.
- Always wash your hands after removing gloves.

1.1. Hand Washing

Hands are easily contaminated, so thorough hand washing is crucial. Hand washing should occur after each of the following instances:

- Before and after direct or indirect contact with Customers;
- Before and after handling food and food utensils;
- After using the toilet; and
- After handling toilet facilities.

Handwashing should take at least 15-20 seconds using soap and water.

- Have water at comfortable warmth and wet hands; dispense small amount soap into palms.
- Using as much friction as needed, thoroughly clean all surfaces of the hands including between fingers and thumbs.
- Pay attention to nails and nail beds; rub nails of one hand across palm of other to clean underneath nails.
- Rinse hands under running water while holding hands in a downward position.
- Use paper towels or warm air to dry thoroughly.
- Use same paper towel to turn off tap.

REMEMBER TO:

- Cover any broken skin with a sealed dressing;
- Keep fingernails short and clean; and
- Remove your rings before washing your hands.

2. Lifting, Manual Handling and Transfers

There are aids to assist in lifting Customers, and these are provided in the Customer's home. Lifestyle Attendants are required to have current accreditation in safe manual handling practices.

Lifting and manual handling requires a degree of physical effort and skill. Training regarding manual handling techniques for specific Customers will be provided if required on the job when training with the Customers.

Lifestyle Attendants are not expected to transfer a Customer if the Customer is too heavy for them to handle. If this situation occurs, the Lifestyle Attendant should contact the Service Delivery Team for advice.

Safe transfer conditions include the following:

- The Customer is able to weight-bear; and
- If the Customer is unable to weight-bear/balance alone, a second person is needed to assist with the following:
 - Balancing;
 - Dressing or undressing; and
 - Positioning the Customer at the end of transfer.

2.1. General Principles for Manual Handling

- Keep your back straight.
- Keep your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Bend your knees, not your back.
- Use your thighs.
- Wear supportive shoes with low heels and non-slip soles.
- Work with the Customer to make the transfer safer.

Lifestyle Attendants should note that WorkCover or insurance may not be applicable if organisational policies and procedures are not complied with.

3. Wheelchair Usage and Assistance

3.1. Using a Wheelchair

Lifestyle Attendants must not take wheelchairs up or down stairs or escalators. An elevator must always be used.

- When the Customer is moving in or out of the wheelchair, remember the brakes must be on and the footplates up and back.
- Be aware of uneven paving, soft earth, large stones etc. as these may cause the wheelchair to tip forward.
- When going up a kerb, approach the kerb squarely. Place one foot on the tipping level and use the hand grips to lever chair backwards onto rear wheels. Propel the wheelchair forwards until the front wheels are on the pavement.
 - Alternatively, turn the wheelchair around so that the large wheels are in contact with the kerb. Tip the wheelchair back to facilitate taking the wheelchair up the kerb.
- When going down a kerb, approach the kerb squarely. Place one foot on the tipping level and raise from the castors. Tip the chair back and keep it balanced until the road is safe to cross. Move the chair to the kerb edge and lower.

3.2. Lifting Wheelchair into a Car

- Assist the Customer into the car first.
- Remove any parts which will make the wheelchair lighter and more compact like armrests and footplates.
- Stand the folded chair parallel to the boot a small distance away from the car to allow for the chair to be tipped into the horizontal position.
- Bend your knees and tuck the chair handles under your left arm. Grip the chair frame on both sides with your right hand. Remember to keep your knees bent.
- Push your left knee forwards into the chair and pivot it upwards onto the edge of the boot.
- On the boot edge, tip the chair horizontally and move it into the boot.

3.3. Motorised Wheelchairs

Powered wheelchairs are not suitable for everyone as they do require the user to have adequate visual, perceptual and cognitive skills to be used safely.

Powered wheelchairs generally have two batteries (dry and sealed cell), two motors and gearboxes that turn the wheels on the either side of the wheelchair. A controller (usually a joystick) determines the direction of movement, with buttons or dials to control the speed and to turn the motors on and off.

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If the joystick is pushed a little, the wheelchair will move slowly, and if it is pushed further, the wheelchair will start moving faster. In this way, the person using the wheelchair is in full control even when they are travelling downhill.

When the joystick is released back to its neutral position, the electromagnetic brakes automatically engage, bringing the wheelchair to a stop.

Powered wheelchairs come with either an on-board or off-board charger that plugs into a power point to keep the batteries topped up. All powered wheelchairs feature a 'free wheel' mode that allows manual pushing of the chair. Brakes tend to be electromagnetic and automatically engage when the control is released. Some wheelchairs may have additional manual park brakes.

All powered wheelchairs will have an indicator to show the charge left in the batteries. To get the most out of the batteries, it is generally recommended to charge them whenever not in use, regardless of how much charge is left in them, as they do not be overcharged.