

TeamTalk Session Guide

Session No. 601

Moving and Handling – Using Hoists Safely and Effectively

Session aim

To help staff understand how to use hoists safely and effectively, why checks and communication matter, and how good practice can support both safety and dignity.

Suggested session length

12 to 15 minutes

Session structure

- 4 to 5 mins: Opening discussion
- Play video
- 5 to 6 mins: Discussion and close

Set the scene

This session looks at how hoists can be used safely to support moving and handling. It focuses on checking equipment, fitting the sling correctly, communicating clearly, and making sure the person is safe and comfortable throughout the task.

Opening discussion

Why are hoists used in care settings?

Suggested answers

- To lift or transfer people safely
- To reduce risk to staff and the person receiving care
- To support comfort, dignity, and safer handling

- To help with tasks such as bed to chair, chair to toilet, or personal care

What should staff check before using a hoist?

Suggested answers

- That the hoist is in good working order
- That the sling is suitable and in good condition
- That the equipment has been tested and serviced as required
- That they have the right training and feel confident to use it
- Whether anything has changed since it was last used

Why does communication matter during hoisting?

Suggested answers

- It helps the person feel reassured
- It reduces confusion
- It helps staff work together more smoothly
- Too many people giving instructions at once can be unsettling

Play video

Using Hoists Safely and Effectively

Existing moving and handling video

Discussion after the video

What stood out most from the video?

Suggested answers

- Hoists can be used for different care tasks
- Checks should happen before starting
- Sling fitting is important

- The person should be reassured and involved
- Staff should work in a calm and coordinated way

Why is it important to check the hoist and sling before you begin?

Suggested answers

- To make sure the equipment is safe
- To reduce risk of harm or equipment failure
- To make sure the sling is suitable for the person
- To make sure the task can be completed safely

Why does the sling need careful positioning?

Suggested answers

- It affects comfort and safety
- Poor positioning may increase the risk of slipping or discomfort
- It helps make the transfer smoother
- Correct fitting reduces unnecessary handling

Why should staff avoid rushing a hoisting task?

Suggested answers

- Rushing can make the task less smooth
- It may make the person feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- Mistakes are more likely if staff hurry
- Calm practice helps the person feel reassured

What did the video show about working together?

Suggested answers

- Staff need to communicate clearly

- Only one person should be physically assisting at one time where appropriate
- One person should focus on reassuring the person
- The handling assessment guides how many staff are needed

Why is it important to encourage the person to do as much as they can for themselves?

Suggested answers

- It supports independence
- It may reduce the amount of handling needed
- It can improve comfort and confidence
- It helps keep the task person-centred

What could we improve in our own setting?

Suggested answers

- Pre-use equipment checks
- Staff confidence in sling fitting
- Communication during hoisting
- Following the handling assessment closely
- Involving the person more in the task

Key learning points

- Hoists should only be used by staff who are trained and confident
- Always check the hoist and sling before starting
- Careful sling fitting is essential for comfort and safety
- Clear communication helps the task run smoothly and reduces confusion

- The person should be reassured, involved, and encouraged to do what they can for themselves

Reflective question

How confident are staff in our setting that they know how to prepare for, carry out, and review a hoisting task safely?

Further support

- Local moving and handling policy
- Hoist and sling guidance used in your service
- Manufacturer instructions for the equipment
- Individual handling assessments and care plans