



# VISIONQWEST Healthcare GROUP

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TO: ALL HEALTHCARE STAFF

FROM: Michael L. Lodge  
President & CEO

DATE: January 2, 2010

SUBJECT: **SAFETY – ZERO-LIFT POLICY**

## **POLICY:**

VisionQwest Healthcare Group is committed to protecting the safety and health of our employees and clients. To insure this commitment, we have adopted a zero-lift policy of not manually lifting or transferring clients unless there is NO alternative. The goal of the zero-lift program is to create a safer environment for our staff and clients, reduce the physical strain needed to perform lifting tasks and improve the level of care offered in our client facility and homes. Mechanical client lifts are a key component in this effort.

## **PROCEDURE:**

- A. Each patient / client who is required to be lifted and/or transferred for medical or physical reasons on a consistent basis will be evaluated for a mechanical lift by the Safety and Nursing team. The recommendation will be documented in the nursing care plan.
1. If the team determines that a mechanical lift will not injure the client, a mechanical lift will be used as addressed in the Individual Care Plan.
  2. An individualized lift/transfer protocol will be developed and implemented. VisionQwest Staff will follow the facility protocol developed for that facility. Private patient care protocol has been developed for care-giving assignments. The protocol will include the type of mechanical lift to be used for each lift/transfer and instructions for the techniques to be used.
  3. Staff will be trained in each individual use of the mechanical lifts.
  4. Each lift or stand will be equipped with sufficient slings, belts, or covers and the equipment will be maintained in proper working condition as specified by the manufacturer.
- B. In cases where mechanical lifting is unsafe for the patient / Client, other administrative procedures and engineering controls that prevent excessive lifting and transferring will be utilized. Each case will be re-evaluated annually with the goal of, as technology progresses, identifying a safe mechanical lift.
- C. All staff members who use a mechanical lift will complete a competency-based training with the specific lifting equipment prior to being allowed to operate the equipment independently with the patient / client. There will be periodic supervisory monitoring to assure that the equipment continues to be used as intended.