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ISLHD PROCEDURE
COVER SHEET



Health
 Illawarra Shoalhaven
 Local Health District

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FUNCTIONAL GROUP OR HUB	District
NSQHS STANDARD	Standard 1
SUMMARY	The purpose of this procedure is to provide managers and their staff with guidance on applying the risk management process for the control of risks associated with manual tasks.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

Feedback about this document can be sent to ISLHD-CorporateGovernance@health.nsw.gov.au

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) has an obligation under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to identify, assess and control hazardous manual tasks. This procedure ensures that there is a consistent approach across the ISLHD in order to prevent or reduce the severity of injuries arising from manual handling activities in the workplace. ISLHD will ensure that, as far as practicable:

- The plant, equipment and containers used in the workplace are designed, constructed and maintained to be safe and without risk to health and safety when manually handled.
- The work practices carried out in the workplace involving manual handling are designed to be safe and without risk to health and safety.
- The working environment is designed to be consistent with safe manual handling activities.

2. BACKGROUND

Many jobs will have some manual handling component. The degree of manual handling will depend upon the nature of the job and the resources available to eliminate or control the hazardous manual tasks. The Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017(NSW) (WHS Regulations) requires risks from hazardous manual tasks be eliminated from work, so far as reasonably practicable. Where these risks cannot be eliminated, then the risks should be minimised, so far as reasonably practicable.

Hazardous manual tasks cover a broad range of activities. The WHS Regulation define hazardous manual tasks as being tasks that require a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing that involves one or more of the following:

- Repetitive or sustained force.
- High or sudden force.
- Repetitive movement.
- Sustained or awkward posture.
- Exposure to vibration.

The factors identified above have been recognised to place stress on the body and are

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linked to the incidence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) and other types of injuries. A MSD is an injury or disease of the musculoskeletal system that can develop suddenly or over a prolonged period.

A MSD may include injuries such as sprains, strains, damage or degeneration of muscles, ligaments, tendons, joints, vascular or nervous tissues, bones and other soft tissue structures. Such injuries can occur through gradual wear and tear on the soft tissues (muscles, tendons, ligaments, etc.) through repeated or continual use and/or through sudden damage from an unexpected strain or movement. This procedure deals provides guidance on the management of risk for all types of injuries as a result of hazardous manual tasks.

The primary objective of the Manual Task Risk Management procedure is to protect people at work against all types of injuries resulting from manual tasks.

Some basic principles of manual handling must be considered for all tasks, such as:

- Principle 1 - Maintain the three natural curves of your back.
- Principle 2 - Keep the load close to you by avoiding your elbows leaving the sides of your body.
- Principle 3 - Face the task square on - No bending, twisting or over reaching.
- Principle 4 - Use pelvic and abdominal muscles to assist you when you move.
- Principle 5 - Move your legs, rather than your arms, during the transfer.

It is the responsibility of all staff to apply these principles throughout their working day.

In addition, more principles apply when handling people as a load. They relate to the best methods of transferring people and include the following principles:

- Principle 1 - Assist in the transferring of patients; not in the lifting of them.
- Principle 2 - Patients need to be able to take all or most of their own body weight before they can be transferred. If they are not able to, then use transfer aids to complete the lift/transfer.
- Principle 3 - Patients can be moved more easily if they are assisted following the natural pattern of movement.

- Principle 4 - Encourage the patient to do as much as they can before assisting.
- Principle 5 - Never try to control or assist a patient by holding onto their arms only.

Note:

Procedure ISLHD OPS PROC 48 Bariatric Patient Management provides guidelines for the coordination and management of bariatric patients across the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District and shall inform staff of the appropriate procedures/support processes to be implemented, and equipment to be used in the management of bariatric patients.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Employees must:

- Comply with all instructions provided, including the information in this procedure.
- Be mindful and alert to any safety issues.
- Use the appropriate work practices and procedures to reduce the ergonomic and manual lifting hazards.
- Report any musculoskeletal issues or injuries

3.2 Line Managers must:

- Implement the ISLHD Manual Task Risk Management procedure and ensure manual task risks are identified, assessed by an appropriately trained staff member, and controlled by implementing the most effective control measures reasonably practicable in the circumstances. This includes reviewing control measures to ensure they are working as planned.
- Ensure workers are consulted at each step of the risk management process, which encourages everyone to work together to identify manual task risk factors and implement effective control measures.
- Ensure workers receive the training and resources they need to carry out their WHS responsibilities competently.
- Resolve WHS manual task issues brought to their attention in a timely and informed manner.

3.3 Directors/Service Managers must:

- Apply due diligence by monitoring the implementation of the ISLHD Manual Task Risk Management procedure and ensure manual task risks are identified, assessed by an

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appropriately trained staff member and controlled by implementing the most effective control measures reasonably practicable in the circumstances, and reviewing control measures to ensure they are working as planned.

- Ensure workers are consulted at each step of the risk management process, which encourages everyone to work together to identify manual task risk factors and implement effective control measures.
- Ensure workers receive the training and resources they need to carry out their WHS responsibilities competently.
- Resolve WHS manual task issues brought to their attention in a timely and informed manner.

3.4 Chief Executive must:

- Ensure a process is in place to develop and implement the Manual Task Risk Management Procedure
- Ensure resources, time, money, and technology are available to support the Manual Task Risk Management Procedure.
- Ensure training is provided to workers on the Manual Task Risk Management Procedure.

3.5 Manual Handling Champions must:

- Facilitate, demonstrate, train and coach staff in correct manual handling techniques.
- Induct staff on the use of equipment.
- Update staff training records.
- Report to management the level of the training progress made.
- Assist the manager with the completion of the monthly manual handling reports for the department and other associated duties.

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Manual Task Risk Management Process:

As the prevalence and cost of injuries related to hazardous manual tasks can be high, ISLHD aims to reduce the incidence of these injuries and comply with the WHS Regulation by managing the risks associated with hazardous manual tasks. This is undertaken through a risk management process and to do this ISLHD will, so far as reasonably practicable:

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- Identify hazardous manual tasks.
- Assess the risks.
- Eliminate the risks from the hazardous manual tasks.
- Implement control measures, in accordance with the hierarchy of controls, to minimise the risks from hazardous manual tasks where elimination is not practicable.
- Maintain, monitor and review the risk control measures.

Consultation with the worker performing and affected by the hazardous manual tasks is required at all steps in the process described above.

Managers must conduct an assessment of the requirements of this procedure and refer to **Appendix 1 - Manual Task Risk Management Assessment**.

4.2 Identify hazardous manual tasks

The first step in managing risks from carrying out manual tasks is to identify those tasks that have the potential to cause injuries – including musculoskeletal disorders. Hazardous manual tasks are ones that involve involving one or more of the following:

- Repetitive or sustained force.
- High or sudden force.
- Repetitive movement.
- Sustained or awkward posture.
- Exposure to vibration.

Hazards that arise from manual tasks generally involve interaction between a worker and:

- The work tasks and how they are performed.
- The tools, equipment and objects handled.
- The physical work environment.

The Manager must ensure hazardous manual tasks are recorded on the Department WHS Hazard Register.

4.3 How to identify hazardous manual tasks

Hazardous manual tasks must be identified through a range of means including:

- **Consultation with workers**

It can be beneficial to observe workers and seek information from them about tasks that may cause injuries and may be a potential hazard. This may include tasks that are difficult to perform, cause fatigue, involve awkward postures or positions or result in discomfort. A survey or questionnaire for workers can be used to assist this process.

- **Review available information and identify trends**

Reported injuries, incidents, inspection reports and workers compensation claims provide information about activities that may involve hazardous manual tasks. Particular jobs or trends may be apparent that indicate the need for further investigation into the incidence of hazardous manual tasks in specific areas or for specific jobs.

- **Observation**

Observing or inspecting work areas can assist in examining how work is completed and provide information on the posture and movements that may be linked to causing an injury.

- **Review**

Evaluation of the characteristics of a task or environment should be undertaken when changes to activities or processes are being introduced or new tools, machinery or equipment is being considered. This evaluation should consider whether hazardous manual tasks are being introduced with these changes.

4.4 Characteristics of Hazardous Manual Tasks

The following characteristics should be considered when identifying a hazardous manual task:

- **Force**

This is the amount of muscular effort required to perform the task, which can result in overload to soft tissues and associated injury. The types of force to consider are:

- Repetitive force – involving force applied repeatedly over time.
- Sustained force – involving application of continual force for a period of time.

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- High force – where heavy loads or poor positions may be involved in the task.
- Sudden force – where jerky or unexpected force may be needed to manage a task.

- **Movement**

This relates to the change in the position of a body part. Movements to consider include:

- Repetitive movement – where a body part repeatedly uses the same motion over a period of time.

- **Posture**

This relates to the position of the body while the task is completed. Postures to consider are:

- Sustained postures – where a body part is kept in one position for a prolonged period.
- Awkward postures – where a body part is held in an uncomfortable or unnatural position including where the joint is at an extreme angle, or where bending, twisting, asymmetrical or unbalanced postures may be required.

- **Vibration**

Exposure to vibration can impact blood supply, nerve function and other soft tissues. Common forms of vibration include:

- Whole body vibration – where equipment, machinery or vehicles may transmit vibration to the whole body through the supporting surfaces.
- Hand-arm vibration – where the hand or arm have vibration transferred through tools or equipment and the resulting vibration can result in repetitive shock loads to the upper limbs.

4.3 Assessing the risk of Hazardous manual tasks

Where Managers have identified hazardous manual tasks a Risk Assessment must be conducted using the Manual Task Risk Assessment form (ISLHD OPS F 242). A risk assessment allows you to examine the characteristics of a manual task in more detail.

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A risk assessment must be undertaken for any manual tasks that you have identified as being hazardous, unless the risk is well-known and you know how to control it. A risk assessment can help you determine:

- Which postures, movements and forces of the task pose a risk
- Where during the task they pose a risk
- Why they are occurring
- What needs to be fixed

When conducting a risk assessment of manual tasks the following factors must be taken into consideration:

- The posture of the worker
- The forces exerted by the worker and any forces exerted on the worker by the object, person or animal
- The speed of movements by the worker
- Exposure of the worker to vibration
- The duration and frequency of the task

You must also take into consideration the possible sources of the risks, including:

- The layout or design of the work area. For example, is the area set up to prevent awkward postures?
- The work environment. Sources of risk in a work environment include temperature, humidity, floor surfaces, lighting and obstructions.
- Consider the nature, size, weight or number of persons or things handled including any tools used.
- Work organisation and the system of work. For example, the pace of the work and time constraints.

4.4 Controlling the risks

Effective risk control will require that you know what risk factors are present, where they occur and why they are present (sources of risk).

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Risk control measures are ranked in terms of the level of protection and reliability from highest to lowest. This is known as the Hierarchy of Controls and includes:

- Eliminate the risk.
- Minimise the risk through.
 - a) Substitution, b) Isolation, or c) Engineering controls.
- Administrative controls.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The selection of risk controls needs to be undertaken in consultation with the worker performing and affected by the hazardous manual task. Consider the following in examining effective risk controls:

- **Purchasing to minimise risk**
Consider the design, space requirements, physical characteristics and specifications (including vibration) of plant, equipment, tools, machinery, vehicles and containers prior to purchase. This may allow a hazardous manual task to be eliminated or minimised prior to its use in the workplace.
- **Changing the work design or layout**
Changes to the workstation design, the heights, postures and positions used when working at as well as the space available can all be varied to control the identified risks.
- **Changing the nature, size, weight or number of items handled**
Can include varying the size, shape and handling points of loads, the tools and equipment available or the position of the work. Tools and equipment also need to be inspected and maintained to ensure correct operation.
- **Mechanical aids**
Equipment and tools such as conveyers, cranes, hoists, turntables, and mechanical devices may be implemented to minimise risks. Mechanical aids need to suit the load and function and implementation must include providing workers with information, instruction and supervision on the use of the mechanical aid.
- **Changing systems of work**
Organising the work to minimise the duration or number of handlings of material must be considered. Changes in controls of the pace of the work, frequency of

breaks or the ability to rotate tasks are possible areas for risk minimisation.

- **Changing the work environment**

Changes to the conditions where the work is conducted may eliminate or minimise risks such as changes to temperature, floor surfaces, lighting, vibration or other conditions in the work environment.

- **Administrative Controls**

Can include job rotation, rest breaks, implementing team handling practices or information/training/instructions, which may all be used to minimise the risk of hazardous manual tasks. Controls at this level may be used in conjunction with controls at a higher level.

- **Personal Protective Equipment**

Equipment is selected to assist in minimising a risk. This is the lowest level of control offered and control measures from further up the hierarchy must be considered before selecting a control at this level.

4.5 Training

Training as the type of control measure implemented must be provided during induction into a new job, and as part of on-going training needs. Training must be provided to workers required to carry out, supervise or manage hazardous manual tasks.

The training must include information on:

- Manual task risk management, including the characteristics of hazardous manual tasks.
- Specific manual task risks and the measures in place to control them.
- How to perform manual tasks safely, including the use of mechanical aids, tools, equipment and safe work procedures.
- How to report a problem or maintenance issue.

4.6 Implementing Controls

- To implement effective risk controls, a range of options may be needed including short term and long term solutions.
- Workers must be involved in the selection and planning of the implementation of risk controls, including any trials that may be possible / required.
- Effective risk controls must be implemented with training, instructions,

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information and supervision provided to workers using, and affected, by the risk control measures.

- The training and information must include safe operation, use and maintenance of equipment (where relevant) as well as how to identify and report on problems or issues with the control measure/s.
- Implemented control measures must be reviewed, and revised if necessary, and this must be planned prior to implementation.
- Risk control measures must be regularly inspected and maintained to ensure effective operation.

4.7 Review controls

- Control measures that have been implemented must be reviewed, and revised if necessary, to make sure they work as planned and to maintain a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.
- Control measures may be reviewed using the same methods as the initial hazard identification step. Consult your workers involved in the manual task and their health and safety representatives and consider the following:
 - Are the control measures working effectively in both their design and operation, without creating new risks?
 - Are workers actively involved in the risk management process?
 - Are they openly raising health and safety concerns and reporting problems promptly?
 - Have new work methods or new equipment reduced physical strain or difficulty?
 - Has instruction and training on hazardous manual tasks and the implemented control measures been successful?
 - Is the frequency and severity of injuries reducing over time?
 - Is an alteration planned to any structure, plant or process that is likely to result in a worker being exposed to a hazardous manual task?
 - Has an incident occurred as a result of a worker being exposed to a hazardous manual task?
 - If new information becomes available, does it indicate current controls may no longer be the most effective?

If problems are found, go back through the risk management steps, review your information and make further decisions about risk control - See 4.1

5. DOCUMENTATION

- [Manual Task Risk Assessment form](#)
- [WHS Risk Assessment](#)
- [WHS Hazard Register](#)

6. AUDIT

Compliance with this procedure will be audited through internal and external review mechanisms at least every two years

7. REFERENCES

- [NSW Health Policy Directive Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures PD2013_050](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No 10](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- [Code of Practice – How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks](#)
- [Code of Practice – Hazardous Manual Tasks](#)

8. REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approval
September 2003	0	OHS Educator, Approved by CEO 19 April 2004
September 2004	1	Reviewed and re-formatted by Manager, Systems Integration, released without change to content
August 2006	2	OHS Officer SIMB in consultation with Area OHS Practitioners.
March 2007	2	Southern Hospital Network OHS Practitioners in consultation with Manager, Systems Integration. Approved by Executive Sponsor DCO on behalf DWD. Final approval by Area Executive Committee 13 March 2007 as an interim area policy until March 2008

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February 2009	3	MH coordinators SESIAHS
June 2009	3	Updated version approved by Chief executive at Area Executive Meeting 9 June 2009
April 2011	4	OHS Officer, Health Safety and Wellbeing. Amended to reflect change to Local Health Network and Cluster
May 2013	5	Manual Handling Coordinator ISLHD Work Safety and Injury Management Service. To reflect the changes to the new Code of Practice for Hazardous Manual Tasks and new WHS legislation. Approved for publishing by Manager Corporate and Executive Support Services
October 2014	6	Safety and Well-being Manager Updated in review of ISLHD's Safety Management System
September 2015	7	Safety and Well-Being Manager SMS review and development. Approved by Executive Management Committee April 2015
August 2017	8	Safety Coordinator Safety Management System Review

8. APPENDIX 1 – WHS Manual Tasks Risk Management Assessment

Steps	Details	Action required	Documentation
<p>1. Does the workplace have a register of hazardous manual tasks?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IIMS data to identify hazardous manual tasks. • Identify and list causes (hazards) of any manual handling related injury notifications. • Conduct survey of staff to identify hazardous manual tasks. • Discuss with staff at department meeting/other forum. • Review WHS Inspection Checklist. • Maintain the register and add any new hazards that are identified by new incident reports. • Consider high-risk tasks and tasks associated with bariatric patients, patient falls and ergonomic issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a register for hazardous manual tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS Hazard register

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<p>2. Have manual tasks risk assessments been performed for all hazardous tasks?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially check the generic list of risk assessments to determine if one can be adapted for your area. Conduct risk assessments in consultation with staff using MH risk assessment form. All computer workstations should be assessed using the Computer Workstation Self-Assessment form. If task involves patient handling ensure assessment is performed using the nursing care plan or bariatric assessment as appropriate. Ensure all staff are involved in the risk assessment process - allocate risk assessments to staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must carry out a risk assessment for any manual tasks that you have identified as being hazardous, unless the risk is well-known and you know how to control it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WHS hazard register Manual task risk assessment form Computer assessment form Nursing Care plan
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<p>3. Have manual tasks risk assessment been recorded and kept?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain a hard or soft copy of all completed risk assessments - ensure all staff have access to the risk assessment folder (in either hard or soft copy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure manual tasks risk assessments have been recorded and kept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manual task risk assessment form• Computer assessment form• WHS risk assessment• Nursing Care plan
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<p>4. Does the workplace have documented procedures (SWP) for hazardous manual tasks?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a risk assessment determines that a SWP should be developed then this must be done in consultation with staff. • Initially check the generic list of SWP to determine if one can be adapted for your area. • Once developed, ensure that it is signed off, sent to the appropriate person on your individual site, and all staff are aware of the SWP. • Maintain a hard or soft copy of all completed risk assessments - ensure all staff have access to the risk assessment folder (in either hard or soft copy). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the workplace has documented procedures for hazardous manual tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWP • Generic MH SWP
<p>5. Are policies and procedures included in the induction process?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your department Orientation/Induction must include reference to any policies and SWP relevant to your department, as well as any high-risk tasks within your department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies and procedures are included in the induction process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Orientation Checklist and other documentation within the department

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<p>6. Are training records kept and maintained?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any training that staff receive for MH must be recorded within your department and, if appropriate, recorded in My Health Learning. This would include any skills assessments that may be conducted as part of your training program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure training records are kept and maintained as per training matrix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department training records,
<p>7. Are all risks associated with hazardous manual tasks controlled?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with staff, develop controls for the hazardous task using the hierarchy of controls on the MH risk assessment form, including the action plan with timeframes and persons responsibilities outlined. Implement all controls, informing all staff of any changes to be made, and organise any training that is required. If the control involves equipment then ensure all staff have been trained it its use and a SWP has been developed. The Manual Handling Coordinator in your network can be used as a resource person if controls cannot be easily determined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all risks associated with manual tasks are controlled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WHS hazard register Manual task risk assessment form Computer assessment form Nursing Care plan

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<p>8. Have all control measures been reviewed and, if necessary, revised to make sure they work as planned then recorded and kept?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When controls have been put in place ensure that the action plan and evaluation is completed and signed off. • Once controls have been implemented ensure that it is sent to the appropriate person on your individual site and all staff are aware of the controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all control measures are reviewed, revised, recorded and kept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS hazard register • Manual task risk assessment form • Computer assessment form • Manual handling training records • SWPs • Task specific training records • Preventative maintenance of MH equipment • Bariatric Patient Nursing care plan
<p>9. Has any new equipment been trialed prior to purchase and has feedback been provided to the company?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If purchase of equipment is required to control an identified hazard, then the equipment should be trialed prior to purchase. • The trial should be documented using the pre-purchase evaluation form for equipment or the pre-purchase evaluation for consumables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise a pre-Purchase evaluation trial. • Document outcome of trial and feedback given to the company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-purchase evaluation for equipment • Pre-purchase evaluation for consumables

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<p>10. Is there a documented preventative maintenance program in place for all equipment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A preventative maintenance program should be in place for all equipment that may be at risk of breakdown (e.g. beds, commodes, and lifters). This may involve contacting the maintenance department within your facility and organising a regular schedule of maintenance, or organising the supplier of the equipment to schedule regular maintenance as part of the purchase of equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise preventative maintenance program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance records • Planned servicing
<p>11. Is on-going training provided to all workers required to perform manual tasks? E.g. mandatory update training, task specific training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff must have training that is specific to the tasks they perform within their department. Any high risk tasks identified in the hazard register should be addressed during training. • This should be done on induction, as a refresher or as a result of a risk assessment –Your local MH champion would do this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure on-going training is provided to all workers required to perform manual tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department training records,

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<p>12. Does the workplace have a set of manual handling KPIs or a reporting system by which these can be measured?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop regular reports to inform your senior managers of manual handling in your department.• Other steps in this procedure may also be used to develop KPIs (e.g. hazard register, number of risk assessments, staff trained etc.).	<p>Develop KPIs.</p>	
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