Interdisciplinary Excellence: Safe Patient Handling and Movement  
Cindy K. Edmondson, BSN, RN  
Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth  
Michelle M. Hampton, Ashley Britting, Kimberly Judd

**Problem:**  
Utilizing mechanical assistive equipment to perform safe patient handling and movement (SPHM) tasks has been shown to reduce the risk of work-related MSDs (Nelson & Baptiste, 2004), however there are concerns that this equipment reduces rehabilitation potential and impedes improvement in patient functional status and independence (Waters & Rockefeller, 2010).

**Evidence:**  
Collaboration between an interdisciplinary team on SPHM tasks will advance the mutual goals of promoting a culture of safety protecting both patients and staff, ultimately leading to early mobility of patients in the acute care setting with improved outcomes (Waters & Rockefeller, 2010).

**Strategy:**  
Using a patient-centered practice model, an interdisciplinary team focused on improving: patient safety during handling and movement tasks, functional status and independence of patients to achieve optimal rehabilitation potential, safety of care-providers during tasks, utilization of evidenced based research on SPHM, and communication between the team members regarding SPHM methods.

**Practice Change:**  
In order to promote a culture of safety while focusing on patient rehabilitation, the following were implemented: a facility wide OSHA ergonomics program, an interdisciplinary committee was formed, with representation from all service lines and disciplines, a facility wide policy for patient handling and movement was developed and is reviewed annually, yearly safety fairs were implemented, and annual competencies were initiated for all departments within the organization.

**Evaluation:**  
Patient falls, adverse events, lost revenue, patient and staff satisfaction, and efficacy of safe patient handling equipment when integrated into therapeutic activities was reviewed.

**Results:**  
Overall a 75% reduction in reported injuries resulted from the facility Safe Patient Handling and Movement Program. The organization has consistently outscored both Magnet and non-Magnet facilities on the NDNQI Nursing Engagement Survey and patient and staff satisfaction are consistently above desired benchmarks for facility.


**Recommendations:**
Outcomes support continuation of the program with ongoing evaluation of all program components.

**Lessons Learned:**
Patient and staff safety and satisfaction have been positively impacted by the program and interdisciplinary communication and partnerships has developed greater levels of confidence amongst professions.

**References:**