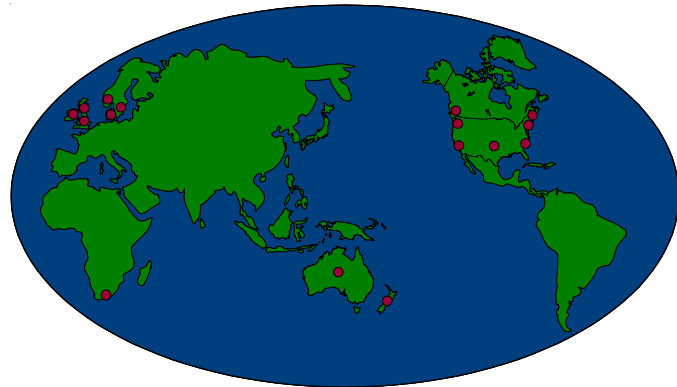


ZERO LIFT is a policy decision to use mechanical devices in patient lift and transfer activities.

Where is ZERO LIFT currently being implemented or used?



- ◆ **Outside of the US:** *England, Australia, British Columbia, Ireland, South Africa, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.*
- ◆ **Inside the US:** *Los Angeles County Hospital, California; Duke Medical Center, North Carolina; Sisters of Charity, Maine; Johnson Memorial, Connecticut; Enid Memorial, Oklahoma; among others.*

- ◆ **Washington State:** *Providence Marionwood; University of Washington and Harborview (lift teams).*
- ◆ **Washington Hospitals Workers' Compensation Program Members include:** *Coulee Community Hospital, Newport Community Hospital, Othello Community Hospital, Prosser Memorial Hospital, Regional Hospital, Sunnyside Community Hospital, Willapa Harbor Hospital, Valley General Hospital, Whitman Hospital and Medical Center, and Lincoln Hospital.*



Why are so many members of the Workers' Compensation Program involved in implementing ZERO LIFT?

The Public Hospital District Workers' Compensation Trust Board and the Washington Hospitals Workers' Compensation Trust Board jointly created a VISION for the Workers' Compensation Program that states:

To lead our Membership to create and maintain the safest work environment.

What has the Workers' Compensation Staff done to help their membership implement and maintain ZERO LIFT?

In early 1999, the staff created an Injury Prevention Committee comprised of member hospital representatives to study how to reduce injuries from lifting patients. The Workers' Compensation Program obtained an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) grant with the assistance of the Washington Health Foundation in late 1999 to begin a program that has since become ZERO LIFT. The grant lasted two years, and during that time, two sets of pilots were initiated, totalling 14 member sites. With the success of the program, the ZERO LIFT has now been implemented at most member sites. Eventually, the program will be implemented at all member sites. Key to the program success and maintenance is the root cause analysis process that is part of the program implementation as well as the continuous support of the Program's Safety Coordinators.

Are there many ZERO LIFT devices available?

Many varieties of devices that provide safer lifting of patients are currently available, and many more are being developed as the demand for them increases. For example, devices are available to assist with lateral transfer, total lift, and sit-to-stand lifting. Freestanding, portable and ceiling-mounted devices are available. In addition to mechanical lift devices, products have been developed that assist in repositioning, turning and pivoting patients.

Why use ZERO LIFT?



Employees

- ◆ Manual lifts put employees at risk for back injuries.
- ◆ Back injury rates have doubled for nursing home employees in the last ten years and increased 40% for hospital employees.
- ◆ Studies show ZERO LIFT programs substantially reduce back injuries.
- ◆ Back injuries affect all aspects of life.

Employer

- ◆ Lifting injuries cost healthcare institutions millions of dollars and thousands of lost work days.
- ◆ ZERO LIFT is a good recruitment and retention tool.
- ◆ Employee turnover rates have been reduced by up to 45%.
- ◆ ZERO LIFT devices pay for themselves in 12-15 months with savings from reduced employee injuries.
- ◆ Employers must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing, or are likely to cause, serious injury. (WAC 296-800-11005)



Patients

- ◆ ZERO LIFT devices are safer and more comfortable for patients.
- ◆ ZERO LIFT devices reduce risk of patient injury or falling, decreasing liability.
- ◆ ZERO LIFT devices are made with high-tech fabrics so that patient skin integrity is maintained.
- ◆ ZERO LIFT devices can be used to enhance patient rehabilitation.



How do we implement a ZERO LIFT program?

In order to implement a ZERO LIFT program, your organization needs to answer the following questions:

- ◆ Does the Administration support this policy?
- ◆ Who will be accountable for implementing and monitoring the program?
- ◆ What resources (staff time and capital budget) are needed for implementation?
- ◆ How will we budget for the initial expense of implementation?
- ◆ What resources will be used to maintain the program?

The Washington Hospitals Workers' Compensation Program staff assists its members with implementation and maintenance of the ZERO LIFT program. Components of the ZERO LIFT include review and recommendations for updating patient lifting policies and procedures, review and assessment of equipment needs for program implementation, and "Train the Trainer" programs.



For more information on **ZERO LIFT**, contact:

Beverly Simmons

Executive Director, Workers' Compensation Program

300 Elliott Avenue West, Suite 300; Seattle, WA 98119

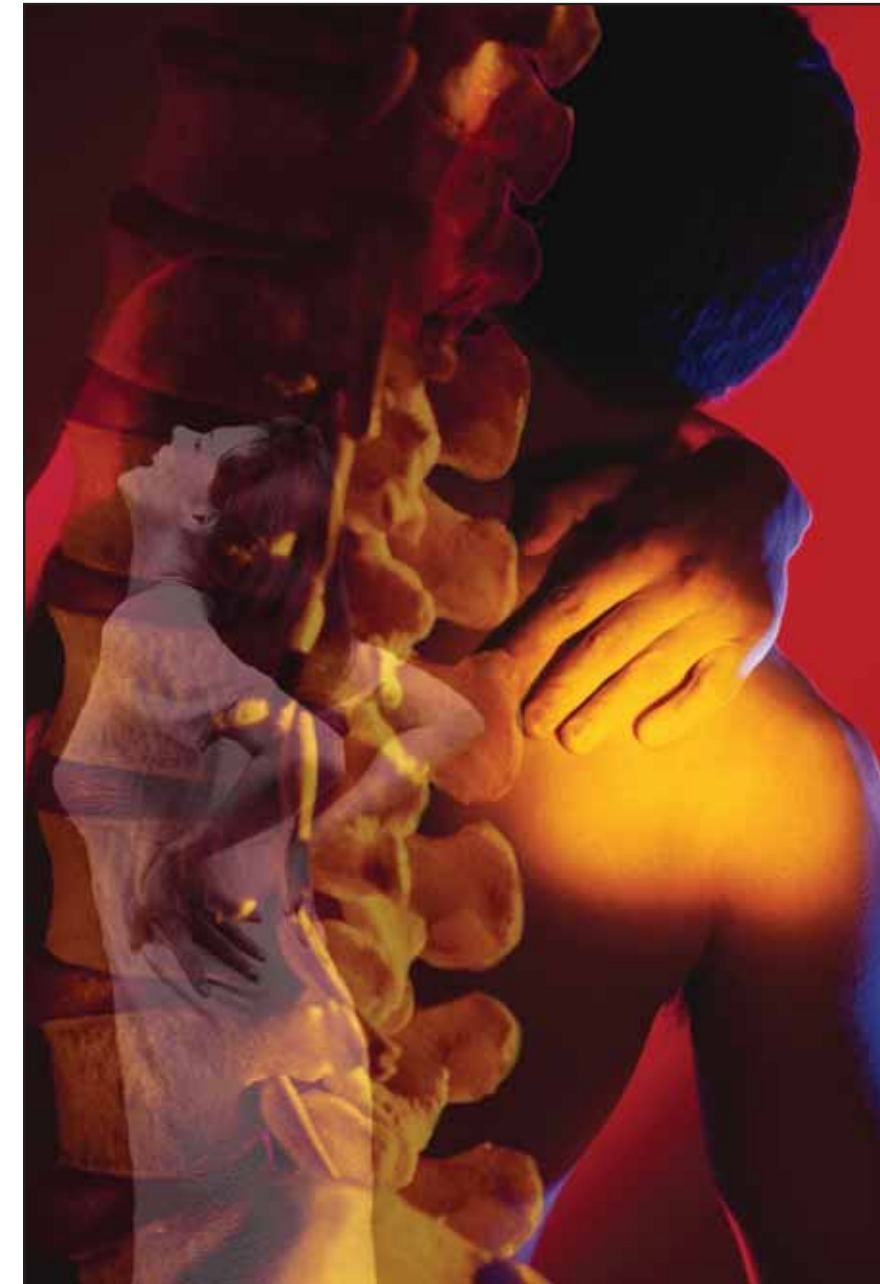
Phone: 206-216-2536 Fax: 206-283-6122 E-mail: beverlys@wsha.org



Equipment photos courtesy of Wy'East Medical
1-800-255-3126 www.wyeastmed.com



You Can't Afford to Ignore Back Injuries



Prevent Them with **ZERO LIFT**