

# Guideline D1: Introducing slide sheets or a low friction roller

**Remember - carers are twice as likely as people in most other professions to injure their backs through moving and handling activities. To help minimise these risks always consider the guidance below before using low friction equipment:**

slide sheets and low friction rollers are useful in a number of situations to reduce friction when a person is being moved. They benefit carers since less force is required to move someone. The person benefits since less effort is required to move and friction damage to the skin is prevented. Low friction equipment is available in two main forms:

1. Sheets used in pairs that move in all directions or folded to give a double layer.
2. Tubes that give a double layer and movement in one direction.

<b>Self help</b>	Can the activity be avoided i.e. can the person move independently? Will introducing a slide sheet or low friction roller allow the person to become independent or more active?
<b>Ergonomics</b>	Be aware of the working postures that need to be adopted to introduce slide sheets or a low friction roller and adjust the height of the bed if possible. Soft beds make the task more difficult.
<b>Communication</b>	Check how the person wishes to be assisted and consult their handling plan. Explain what is going to happen.
<b>Safety</b>	Because it is very slippery low friction equipment is potentially hazardous and should not be left on the floor or close to the edge of a bed where people can slip on it. Do not leave a person unattended on low friction equipment if there is a likelihood of them slipping off. Take appropriate precautions for cross infection and hygiene. Refer to manufacturer's instructions for specific guidance.

## Method 1: Introducing slide sheets or low friction roller when the person is lying

### Preparation (2 carers needed)

1. Decide which carer will give instructions and whether the aid will be unrolled from the person's head or feet.
2. Fold the slide sheets or low friction roller to feed under the person. Each fold should be approximately 15 cm (6 inches) wide. Do not concertina the sheet/roller since this makes it difficult to unroll under the person.
3. The carers stand on opposite sides of the bed and if possible adjust the height so they can easily reach underneath the pillow under the person's head.

### Introducing the sheets/roller

1. One carer slides the folded sheets/roller under the pillow to the other carer. The sheets/roller should lie across the bed with the roll in contact with the bed and positioned so it will unroll (Fig: 1).
2. Both carers adopt an oblique position and hold the top of the sheets/roller firmly with one hand and use the other to unroll the folded section. The aid will unroll under the person and be flat. (Fig: 2).



**Fig: 1**



**Fig: 2**

3. Carers should move together and avoid twisting. If the roll gets stuck one carer may gently ease the person a little towards them whilst the other frees it.
4. Check that the aid is under the person's body wherever friction needs to be reduced. If this is not the case it may be that another smaller aid is needed.

## Method 2: Introducing slide sheets or low friction roller by rolling a person

### Preparation (2 carers normally needed)

1. Carer 1 rolls half of the slide sheets/roller lengthwise into a tight roll.

### Introducing the sheets/roller

1. Carer 2 assists the person to roll onto their side (refer to guideline D3: Assisting a person to roll or turn).
2. Carer 1 places the roll facing downwards on the bed and pushes it underneath the person. Take care not to catch the person's skin by keeping a layer of fabric between the carer's hand and the person (Fig 3).



**Fig:3**

3. The person is rolled onto their back.
4. Carer 2 should be able to place their hand, palm up, close to the person and grasp the fabric to pull the sheets/roller so that they are flat on the bed.
5. Check that the sheets/roller are under the person's body wherever friction needs to be reduced. If this is not the case it may be that another smaller aid is needed.

### Warning

- Ensure slide sheets or low friction rollers are large enough to cover all the relevant friction points on the person being moved.
- Check that there are always two layers of fabric under the person to ensure easy sliding.
- Only slide the person very short distances, repeat the actions rather than overreach.
- Do not leave a person unattended on a low friction aid.
- Do not leave low friction equipment on the floor – it may cause slipping.
- Do not tug at the low friction equipment as this may cause neck and shoulder injuries.