

Guideline D2: Assisting a person to reposition on a bed

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 assisting a person to move on a bed:

Self help	Can the activity be avoided altogether i.e. can the person reposition themselves independently if verbal encouragement is given? It may be easier for some to sit out on the side of the bed and shuffle up the edge rather than moving on it in a lying position.
Ergonomics	Plan transfers so that the person is in the correct position to avoid unnecessary moves. An overhead pole, hand blocks, low friction aids, a one way glide, or firm mattress may assist a person to move independently. Profiling beds may prevent people sliding down. If there is no alternative to moving a person up a bed a hoist is likely to be the safest option (refer to guideline F3: Using hoists). Low friction equipment may be suitable to slide lighter people on firm mattresses. This is easier if the bed is adjustable height. Ensure that there is sufficient space for carers to work. Slippery clothes may contribute to a person slipping down the bed.
Communication	Check the person's handling plan for guidance. It may be helpful to break down the movements and give clear instructions for each stage to encourage a person to move themselves. If working with another carer one should give clear instructions to ensure good coordination when using sliding aids.
Safety	Manually repositioning a person on a bed/table is a high risk activity and should be avoided whenever possible. Sliding people on low friction equipment may not be suitable for heavy people or those on soft mattresses. Protect the person's heels from friction.

Method 1: Assisting a person in a lying position

Preparation (2 carers needed)

1. If possible adjust the bed/table to a suitable height and if necessary remove the headboard.
2. Assist the person to roll (refer to guideline D3: Assisting a person to roll or turn) and introduce a low friction roller or slide sheet under the length of their body (refer to guideline D1 – Introducing a slide sheet or low friction roller).
3. Ask or assist the person to keep their arms across their body
4. Stand level with the person's trunk at an oblique angle facing down the bed.

Providing assistance

1. Each carer grasps the top layer of the slide sheet or low friction roller.
2. One carer gives clear instructions e.g. "ready, slide" and they both move together leading the movement with their heads to slide the person a short distance (Fig: 1).
3. Adjust positions and repeat as necessary until the person is in the correct position.
4. Remove the sliding aid immediately.

**Fig: 1**

Method 2: Assisting a person in a sitting position

This method can involve the use of a low friction aid that either slides in one direction only or in both directions. It is only suitable for those with good sitting ability.

Preparation (1 carer needed)

1. Ensure that the person can understand and give a good level of cooperation.
2. Adjust the bed to an appropriate height.
3. Stand close to the bed ready to provide aids and guidance.

Providing assistance

1. Encourage the person to move from side to side and assist to position the low friction aid under their bottom, pass hand blocks if required.
2. Encourage the person to push their body back a short distance and repeat as necessary until they are in the correct position (Fig: 2).
3. Remove low friction aid immediately.

Warning

- 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.

**Fig: 2**