

Guideline D3:

Assisting a person to roll or turn

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 roll or turn:

Please note the word **roll** has been used here to indicate the movement that involves travel to a different part of the bed i.e. from the centre to the edge of the bed (usually to give personal care, change sheets etc). **Turn** refers to the movement where a roll is combined with a sliding movement so that the person moves their position but remains in the centre of the bed (usually for comfort or pressure relief). Some care providers prefer to use a 30° tilt to alleviate pressure areas and reduce effort required by regular turning.

Self help	Can the activity be avoided i.e. can the person move independently perhaps if an appropriate rail or bed lever was provided? To roll, encourage them to slightly bend both legs and position one arm in the direction of the roll and the other where it will not be rolled on i.e. above the head, across the chest. Ask them to look in the direction they will roll. To turn encourage the person to shuffle across the bed/table to create space, and then roll as explained above.
Ergonomics	Sufficient space is needed around the bed for the carers. The bed should be of suitable height with a firm mattress. Equipment that may be useful includes a mechanical turning bed, mattress tilting mechanism, low friction roller, sliding sheet, bed lever.
Communication	Check how the person wishes to be assisted and consult their handling plan. Encourage them to assist if possible. It may help to break actions down and explain simply. It can be frightening being near the edge of the bed so reassure as necessary.
Safety	Check that the person cannot roll off the edge of the bed/table. If they are large or cannot cooperate mechanical equipment may be needed. Slide sheet or low friction rollers should be used smoothly with confidence so that the person is not moved in a sudden, uncontrolled manner. Protect the open side of the bed when the person is positioned towards the edge. Roll or slide them towards you. Check shoulder comfort when the person is on their side.

Rolling a person (for personal care etc)

Preparation (2 carers normally needed)

1. Assess how many carers are needed (1 carer may be enough for those requiring minimal assistance, 2 are usually needed. Normally they work on each side of the bed but if a person is large it may be easier for them to work on the same side or a 3rd carer may be needed (2 to facilitate the roll the other to give personal care etc)).
2. The following instructions are for 2 carers and will need to be modified if more or less are used. The carers position themselves on opposite sides of the bed and where possible adjust it to a suitable height. If it is low, they will need to place a knee on it.
3. The carers assist the person to position their limbs ready to roll (see self help above).

Providing assistance

1. The carer, on the side the person is to roll towards, stands level with their waist at an oblique angle and takes open palm holds on the person's shoulder and upper back.
2. They ask the person to look in the direction of the roll. The carer relaxes down a little and comes up again, leading the movement with their head (Fig: 1). this starts to facilitate the roll. Repeat until the desired position is achieved (Fig: 2).
3. The other carer may help to start the roll from the opposite side of the bed.



Fig: 1



Fig: 2

Warning

- Do not leave a person lying on the side of the bed unattended or without safety sides.

Turning a person with a sliding sheet/low friction roller (for pressure care/comfort)

Preparation (2 carers normally needed)

1. Assess the number of carers needed as explained in rolling above.
2. Assist the person to roll onto a sliding sheet/low friction roller (Fig: 3).
3. Check that the person is in an appropriate position ready for the turn (Fig: 4).



Fig: 3



Fig: 4



Fig: 5



Fig: 6

Providing assistance

1. Grasp the top layer of the sliding aid close to the person, use a small gentle pulling action, leading the movement with the head to slide the person a little, retake your hold on the roller and repeat several times and the person will gradually move slightly across the bed and then turn onto their side (Fig: 5).
2. Remove the sheet/roller by gently pulling the bottom layer (Fig 6). Check the person's comfort.

Warning

- Do not leave a person lying on the side of the bed unattended or without safety sides.
- It may be inappropriate for those with certain medical conditions or undertaking some rehabilitation programmes to pull on bed levers. If in doubt check with a therapist.
- If a person has had a recent hip replacement check instructions on how to assist.
- Do not leave a person unattended on a low friction roller.
- Do not leave low friction rollers on the floor – they may cause slipping.

