



Handling of the Larger Person Policy

This procedural document supersedes: CORP/HSFS 23 v.4 – Care of the Larger Person Policy



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Amendment Form

Please record brief details of the changes made alongside the next version number. If the procedural document has been reviewed **without change**, this information will still need to be recorded although the version number will remain the same.

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
Version 5	February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title change from 'Care of the Larger Person Policy' to 'Handling of the Larger Person Policy' to best reflect the content/purpose. • Reviewed with minor changes to wording for clarity throughout and updated references. • Updated flowchart (section 1) with minor changes. 	Amanda Day Nicola Vickers
Version 4	22 December 2020	Reviewed with Minor changes to wording for clarity throughout and updated references	Nicola Vickers Amanda Day
Version 3	October 2017	Reviewed with Minor changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team/individual titles updated in line with trust structures. • Update to process for hire of bariatric equipment. • Changes to training and monitoring of compliance. • Update to transfer of deceased larger person. • Updated associated trust procedural documents and references. 	Nicola Vickers Amanda Day
Version 2	September 2014	Reviewed with Minor changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed reference to the Bariatric Issues Group as no longer in existence. • Reference to Tickhill Road Hospital removed. • Associated documents Updated. • Monitoring Compliance Updated • Previous Appendix 1 updated and moved to the front of the document as a 'Quick Guide to Managing the Care of the Larger Person'. • Added Equality Impact Assessment form as Appendix 1 	Janet Scott
Version 1	June 2011	This is a new procedural document, please read in full.	Janet Scott

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2. INTRODUCTION

In this policy the term ‘larger person/patient’ refers to a larger person attending for treatment or diagnostic tests.

A larger person’s weight or weight distribution may exceed the safe working load or dimensions of a supporting surface such as a chair, bed, treatment couch etc. The individual’s weight or weight distribution may also impact on the individual’s mobility and amount of support required.

Overweight & Obesity

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) describe obesity as “one of the leading causes of death and disability worldwide”. NICE describe overweight and obesity as being associated with an increase of risk of developing (or exacerbation of) a number of chronic diseases and conditions.⁽¹⁾ The World Health Organisation defines “overweight” as a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or more than 25 and “obesity” as a BMI equal to or over 30.⁽²⁾ Although BMI is widely accepted to be a useful tool in the identification of obesity, other anthropometric measures (such as waist circumference) are acknowledged to be useful to use in combination with the BMI in assessments of health risks relating to obesity.⁽³⁾

Bariatric(s) - The field of medicine that focuses on the causes, prevention and management of obesity and its associated diseases ⁽³⁾

3. PURPOSE

- To support safe systems of work during the care of the larger person.
- To minimise risks to patient or staff members by means of thorough risk assessment, care planning, provision of specialist equipment and appropriate staffing levels.
- To ensure provision of care to the larger person without compromising their dignity, safety, or independence.

4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Executive Directors, Clinical Directors, General Managers

Responsible for ensuring provision of resources and correct number of skilled staff to maintain service provision within the wards and departments under their control.

4.2 Medical Staff

Responsible for supporting ward/department staff in the overall care of the patient and informing units, wards, and theatres of the planned admission of a larger person as soon as the information is available.

4.3 Duty Matron/Clinical Site Managers

Responsible for having an overview of bed spaces within the hospital and any required bed closures due to local environmental assessments. (The closure of an adjacent bed space may be necessary due to the bariatric bed and other specialist equipment.) Responsible for supporting ward/department managers in ensuring sufficient staffing levels to provide safe delivery of care.

4.4 Divisional Matrons

Responsible for ensuring the safety of the larger person(s) and staff in their area. Responsible for supporting ward/department managers in ensuring sufficient staffing levels to provide safe delivery of care. Responsible for supporting managers with the hire of required specialist equipment and any environmental assessments.

4.5 Ward & Department Managers

Responsible for the safety of the larger person(s) and staff in their area.
Responsible for ensuring availability of suitable seating options for the larger person (in-patient and out-patient areas).
Managers should ensure that patient risk assessments are completed, reviewed and adhered to. Managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate staff levels and specialist equipment are in place. Where larger specialist equipment is required, the manager is responsible for ensuring the environment is sufficient for the safe delivery of care. (This may involve the closure of the adjacent bed space to allow for the provision and safe use of equipment.)
The manager is responsible for arranging the return of the specialist (hire) equipment after use.

4.6 Ward/Department Staff

Responsible for taking reasonable care of their own and others safety whilst caring for the larger person. To complete*, review* (*appropriate staff) and follow patient handling risk assessments in place. In addition, responsible for undertaking ongoing dynamic (personal/on the spot) risk assessments to reduce any unexpected task associated risks.
To assist the ward/department manager in ensuring appropriate equipment is in place and to be aware of components and safe use of the relevant specialist equipment. Responsible for attending mandatory training sessions and any additional training required in relation to the care of the larger person e.g., specialist equipment training. Responsible for requesting additional training (e.g., for equipment) if/when required.

4.7 Manual Handling Advisors & Manual Handling Team

Responsible for providing a specialist source of advice and support in manual handling issues specific to the larger person including advice regarding specialist equipment selection and safe use. Ensure the availability, of mandatory training and where required any additional training specific to the handling of the larger person. Oversee the provision of training relating to hired specialist equipment.

4.8 Skin Integrity Team

Responsible for providing a specialist source of advice and support in skin integrity issues specific to the larger person.

4.9 Dietitian

Responsible for providing a specialist source of advice and support regarding nutritional issues specific to the larger person.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Admissions

5.1.1 Out Patient Appointments

Larger persons visiting the out-patients waiting areas and clinics should have access to extra wide bariatric seating/plinths. Individual requirements must be established on booking and prepared for in advance.

If the larger person requires admission to a hospital ward from the out-patient department, the nurse in charge is to liaise with the appropriate department and give detailed information regarding any specialist needs.

5.1.2 Planned Elective Admissions

- Medical staff or pre-operative assessment clinic are to inform the ward/unit/theatre of the admission of a larger person as soon as the information is available.
- The admitting ward/unit manager should co-ordinate, plan and access the specialist equipment necessary for the care of the larger person prior to admission. They should consider any environmental risk factors, ensuring the setting is suitable for the specialist equipment and care provision.
- If the larger person is for theatre, the appropriate theatre team should be informed in advance to enable preparation of appropriate theatre and equipment.
- Ward/department managers are responsible for informing/referring to the relevant allied healthcare professionals such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Dietitian if required.
- Where larger linen items required eg patient gowns, wider bed sheets etc. the ward/department manager should liaise with linen services.
- The patient handling risk assessment (and any other appropriate assessments) should be completed as soon as possible on admission and regularly reviewed with any change to circumstances.

5.1.3 Emergency Admissions

- Whenever possible the admitting GP/practitioner or ambulance service should inform the Emergency department or the ward/unit that a larger person is being admitted.
- The nurse in charge of the admitting area must make the appropriate arrangements to obtain the specialist equipment and staff required to care for the larger person safely. Staff should consider any environmental risk factors, ensuring the setting is suitable for the specialist equipment and care provision.
- The patient handling assessment (or other appropriate assessment tool) must be completed and actioned on admission by the ward/unit nurse.

5.2 Investigations

- Certain investigations e.g., scanning etc. may be difficult because of the larger person's size or weight. Prior to the investigations taking place, a decision must be made regarding the larger person's suitability for the procedure and whether it is possible to carry out the procedure. All involved parties must be consulted.
- For out-patient investigations it is the responsibility of the medical staff/practitioner booking the appointment to inform the appropriate department that the patient is a larger person.
- For in-patient investigations it is the responsibility of the nurse in charge to inform the prospective department that the patient is a larger person and may require specialist equipment.

5.3 Transfers

A completed patient handling risk assessment (or other appropriate assessment tool) must accompany the larger person on all transfers. In addition, a documented skin inspection and assessment must be carried out upon the transfer of a larger person.

5.3.1 Transfer of the Larger Person from Ward to Ward

The nurse in charge of the ward/unit will inform the nurse in charge of the receiving ward/unit that the larger person is being transferred. Detailed information regarding the specialist equipment and the handling of the larger person must be communicated.

Where specialist equipment is on hire, the equipment supplier should be informed immediately of the planned transfer date and time to ensure the existing equipment is transferred appropriately or to ensure new equipment is in place for the required destination and ready for use on the patient's arrival.

The larger person should be transferred on the appropriate bariatric bed if the transfer is within the same hospital. Prior to the transfer an assessment should be made regarding the number of staff required to move the patient in bed taking into consideration the weight of the bed, the patient, ease of movement, handler capabilities and route to be taken (considering slopes etc). It is not unreasonable to expect 4 handlers to be required for this task; however, the number of handlers could vary dependant on the risk assessment.

If the larger person is to be transported in a wheelchair, ensure that the appropriate wheelchair is used, and the safe working load of the chair is not exceeded. Staff should consider route to be taken and ensure that sufficient handlers are available (i.e., 2 handlers for the bariatric portering wheelchair). Where more than 2 handlers are required, an alternative method of movement should be considered (i.e., trolley or bed) so more than 2 handlers are able to assist.

5.3.2 Transfer of the Larger Person to Theatre

The larger person will be transferred to theatre on the appropriate bed or trolley. If able, the larger person should transfer themselves onto the specialist bariatric theatre table. If this is not possible, an appropriate handling device should be used with the appropriate number of handlers to ensure safe transfer of the larger person and handlers.

Following surgery, the larger person will be transferred from the operating table onto the bed/trolley with the use of an appropriate handling device. The appropriate number of handlers should be available to ensure safety of the larger person and handlers.

5.3.3 Transfer of the Larger Person to another Hospital

The nurse in charge of the clinical area will contact the nurse in charge of the receiving area to advise of the transfer of a larger person in sufficient time for them to initiate their protocol(s). Detailed information regarding any specialist equipment requirements and the handling of the larger person must be communicated.

The nurse in charge of the receiving area must ensure that any required specialist equipment/resource is obtained before it is safe to transfer the larger person.

The nurse in charge of the clinical area will liaise with the ambulance services to give advance notice prior to the transfer.

5.4 Manual Handling

Encourage the larger person to move independently whenever possible and to participate as much as possible if assistance with movement is required.

There may be additional risks when moving the larger person so before assisting with movement the following must be considered:

- Refer to current assessments in place and if necessary, re-assess the larger person's mobility/independence levels and record/update the patient handling risk assessment.
- Ensure that an accurate up to date measurement of patient weight is gained and recorded. This will be necessary in ensuring appropriate selection of equipment.
- Ensure that any required specialist equipment and correct number of handlers are available to enable a safe and dignified movement.
- Always explain fully to the larger person what is going to happen and what they will be required to do to assist, maintaining patient dignity at all times.
- Prepare the environment ensuring enough space for specialist equipment and care provision.
- Ensure that a full explanation is given to all the handlers involved in movement of the larger person, so that they are aware of their own role (especially if help is enlisted from other areas).
- Undertake handling techniques in accordance with training and/or specialist advice provided.
- Adjust the height of the bed/trolley to ensure comfort and safety for the handlers.
- Apply brakes to moveable equipment where applicable.
- Always encourage patient independence, however, when the larger person is unable to move independently, the appropriate handling device(s) (e.g., hoist, lateral transfer device etc) and correct number of handlers should be used.
- Before use, any equipment should be checked to ensure safe for use, this includes the identification of the equipment's safe working load to ensure suitable for the larger person and all appropriate inspections completed.
- Those staff using equipment should be fully trained/competent in its use.
- If the larger person cannot be transferred safely into a chair using appropriate equipment, then they must remain in bed with the appropriate pressure relieving support surface until the appropriate equipment/staff is sourced as soon as possible.
- If the larger person needs to be moved from the floor (i.e. unable to move independently) an appropriate lifting device (e.g. specialist air lifting device) should be used with the correct number of handlers (following assessment at the time). The patient's condition should be considered prior to selecting the most appropriate device.
- As part of ongoing care, referrals or further advice may be sought from Skin Integrity Team, Therapy Services, Manual Handling Services, Dietetics, Medical Equipment Library (not exhaustive list)

5.5 Equipment

Specialist equipment may be required for the larger person. This may include (amongst other items) a bariatric bed, pressure relieving mattress, specialist chair, commode, wheelchair, hoist and in some cases walking aids. This equipment should be obtained before the larger person is admitted (if admission is planned) or as soon as possible after admission (if emergency admission).

ACTION (see also quick guide at the front of the policy)

Within 24 hours of admission an accurate weight should be obtained so that appropriate action can be taken.

Check:

- What equipment is required and whether it is available on site - obtain as soon as possible.
- Whether additional staff will be required - liaise with the Matron
- Whether the patient environment/space is suitable to enable use of specialist equipment and deliver care.

Complete and record:

- The patient handling risk assessment in addition to other associated/clinical risk assessments.

Deliver Care:

- Follow relevant Trust Policies and Procedures

If further specialist advice/support is required, contact the relevant personnel from the list below:

- Duty or Divisional Matron
- Skin Integrity Team
- Therapy Services
- Manual Handling Team
- Clinical Site Managers
- Medical Technical Services Department
- Service Department Supervisor
- Dietitian

5.6 Skin Integrity Team

Undertake a Pressure Ulcer Risk Assessment (Purpose T) and commence the relevant aSKINg Care Plan. Follow Trust policies and procedures.

5.7 Dietitian

Use the 'MUST' tool to establish BMI and classify degree of obesity. Treat any underlying condition, which may also affect nutritional status. Provide specialist advice/support where required.

5.8 Discharge

The nurse in charge of the clinical area will inform any relevant people of the expected discharge.

Community care of the larger person, who is not totally independent, may involve provision of suitable equipment for the larger person's home prior to hospital discharge. Those involved in the larger person's care (for example home carers) may require specific training prior to discharge. Specialist advice/assistance to be gained from Therapy Services if/when required.

Prior to discharge the transport providers/ambulance service should be given details of the larger person's weight and mobility status etc. In some instances, the specialist bariatric ambulance/vehicle may be required.

5.9 Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation

The Resuscitation Council (UK) Basic and Advanced Life Support guidelines⁵ still apply to the larger person. They, in conjunction with the Trust Resuscitation Policy should be taken into account to provide effective CPR when a larger person has a cardiac arrest.

5.10 In the Event of Death

If the deceased larger person cannot be transported to the mortuary in the concealment trolley, they should be transported on their bed covered with the appropriate concealment system (available on all sites). An assessment of the number of handlers required should be made prior to movement, considering weight of bed/patient, ease of movement, handler capabilities and route to be taken. The deceased person's privacy and dignity **must** be maintained at all times.

Site specific arrangements within mortuary setting are as follows:

5.10.1 Doncaster Royal Infirmary (DRI)

The deceased larger person should be transferred onto the bariatric bed adapted for mortuary use. All necessary transfers in the mortuary should be carried out using the specialist equipment and in line with training. There is a large fridge in the DRI mortuary where the bed can be stored to reduce the amount of handling.

5.10.2 Bassetlaw Hospital (BH)

The deceased larger person should be transferred onto the bariatric bed adapted for mortuary use. There is a fridge which has been designed to accommodate a bariatric size bed. If necessary, the deceased must be reported to the coroner as soon as possible and early clarification sought as to the need for a Post Mortem. Due to the single storage capacity for the deceased larger person, early collection by the undertakers should be encouraged. All necessary transfers in the mortuary should be carried out following Trust training.

5.10.3 Mexborough Montagu Hospital (MMH)

The deceased larger person should be transferred to the mortuary and stored in the cold room on the bariatric bed. All necessary transfers in the mortuary should be carried out following Trust training.

5.11 In the Event of a Fire

Fire evacuation should be carried out in accordance with the Fire Policy CORP/HSFS 14. Equipment is available on all sites for the emergency evacuation of larger people.

5.12 Patients Lacking Capacity

Sometimes it will be necessary to provide care and treatment to patients who lack the capacity to make decisions related to the content of this policy. In these instances, staff must treat the patient in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA 2005).

- A person lacking capacity should not be treated in a manner which can be seen as discriminatory.
- Any act done for, or any decision made on behalf of a patient who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in the persons Best Interest.
- Further information can be found in the MCA policy, and the Code of Practice, both available on the Trust extranet.

There is no single definition of Best Interest. Best Interest is *determined on an individual basis. All factors relevant to the decision must be taken into account, family and friends should be consulted, and the decision should be in the best interest of the individual.*

Please see S5 of the MCA code of practice and/or the Trust Policy PAT/PA19 for further information (available via the Trust extranet).

6. TRAINING/ SUPPORT

6.1 Manual Handling Training

Manual Handling training in the 'Handling of the Larger Person' is available and will be carried out in line with individual training needs analysis on the request of the manager.

6.2 Specialist Equipment Training

This will be carried out by the appropriate designated personnel.

7. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURAL DOCUMENT

What is being Monitored?	Who will carry out the Monitoring?	How often?	How Reviewed/ Where reported to?
Training attendance & non-attendance	Clinical Education Manager	Monthly	All training is recorded on OLM & monthly reports generated. This report is made available to all Directors and Heads of Service.
Completion of the Manual Handling Risk Assessments	Ward/Department Managers & Manual Handling Team	At least Annually	Audit carried out & results shared with wards/departments through the Health & Safety Committee.
Completion of the Patient Handling Risk Assessment and other associated assessments	Ward/Department Managers	Monthly	Documentation Audit
Hiring of specialist equipment	Medical Technical Services	Quarterly	Director of Estates and Facilities

8. DEFINITIONS

Overweight & Obesity - The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) describe obesity as “one of the leading causes of death and disability worldwide”. NICE describe overweight and obesity as being associated with an increase of risk of developing (or exacerbation of) a number of chronic diseases and conditions.⁽¹⁾ The World Health Organisation defines “overweight” as a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or more than 25 and “obesity” as a BMI equal to or over 30.⁽²⁾ Although BMI is widely accepted to be a useful tool in the identification of obesity, other anthropometric measures (such as waist circumference) are acknowledged to be useful to use in combination with the BMI in assessments of health risks relating to obesity.⁽³⁾

Bariatric(s) - The field of medicine that focuses on the causes, prevention and management of obesity and its associated diseases ⁽³⁾

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population, and workforce, ensuring that none are disadvantaged over others. Our objectives and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity are outlined within

our equality schemes. When considering the needs and assessing the impact of a procedural document any discriminatory factors must be identified.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted on this procedural document in line with the principles of the Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27) and the Fair Treatment for All Policy (CORP/EMP 4).

The purpose of the EIA is to minimise and if possible, remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religious belief. No detriment was identified. [See Appendix 1.](#)

10. ASSOCIATED TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Fire Safety Policy - **CORP/HSFS 14**

Hand Hygiene Policy - **PAT/IC 5**

Health and Safety Policy - **CORP/HSFS 1**

Manual Handling Policy - **CORP/HSFS 4**

Mental Capacity Act 2005 - Policy and Guidance, including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) - **PAT/PA 19**

Pressure Ulcer Policy - **PAT/T 3**

Privacy and Dignity Policy - **PAT/PA 28**

Resuscitation Policy - **PAT/EC 1**

Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Policy - **CORP/RISK 30**

Wound Management Policy - **PAT/T 7**

Fair Treatment for All Policy – **CORP/EMP 4**

Equality Analysis Policy – **CORP/EMP 27**

11. DATA PROTECTION

Any personal data processing associated with this policy will be carried out under ‘Current data protection legislation’ as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016.

For further information on data processing carried out by the trust, please refer to our Privacy Notices and other information which you can find on the trust website:

<https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/>

12. REFERENCES

- 1 National Institute of Clinical Excellence (2023) ***Obesity: What are the complications?***

Available from:

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/obesity/background-information/complications/> [Accessed 30.01.2024].

- 2 World Health Organisation (2021). **Newsroom, Facts in Pictures: Obesity**. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/facts-in-pictures/detail/6-facts-on-obesity> [Accessed 30.01.2024].
- 3 Muir, M. and Rush A (2013) **Moving and Handling of Plus Size People – an illustrated guide**. Towcester: National Back Exchange.
- 4 Guidance for safer handling during resuscitation in healthcare settings. Working group of the Resuscitation Council (UK) July 2015.
- 5 Resuscitation Council RCUK Resuscitation Guidelines (2021) www.resus.org.uk

APPENDIX 1 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PART 1 INITIAL SCREENING

Service/Function/Policy/ Project/Strategy	Division/Executive Directorate and Department	Assessor (s)	New or Existing Service or Policy?	Date of Assessment
Handling of the Larger Person Policy CORP/HSFS 23 v.5	Manual Handling Services, Education and Research	Amanda Day	Existing Policy review	February 2024
1) Who is responsible for this policy? Manual Handling Services - Education and Research				
2) Describe the purpose of the service / function / policy / project/ strategy? To Outline the Management of the Handling of the Larger Person				
3) Are there any associated objectives? NICE Guidance on Obesity in England				
4) What factors contribute or detract from achieving intended outcomes? – Staff Compliance & Availability of Equipment				
5) Does the policy have an impact in terms of age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy and religion/belief? NO				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes, please describe current or planned activities to address the impact [e.g. Monitoring, consultation] – 				
6) Is there any scope for new measures which would promote equality? Monitor implementation of Policy in line with Equality Legislation e.g. Monitor Incidents/Complaints				
7) Are any of the following groups adversely affected by the policy?				
Protected Characteristics	Affected ?	Impact		
a) Age	NO			
b) Disability	NO			
c) Gender	NO			
d) Gender Reassignment	NO			
e) Marriage/Civil Partnership	NO			
f) Maternity/Pregnancy	NO			
g) Race	NO			
h) Religion/Belief	NO			
i) Sexual Orientation	NO			
8) Provide the Equality Rating of the service / function /policy / project / strategy – tick outcome box				
Outcome 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Outcome 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Outcome 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	Outcome 4 <input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>*If you have rated the policy as having an outcome of 2, 3 or 4, it is necessary to carry out a detailed assessment and complete a Detailed Equality Analysis form in Appendix 4</i>				
Date for next review: February 2027				
Checked by: Nicola Vickers			Date: 9 February 2024	