POLICY STATEMENT

We acknowledge that manual handling is the single biggest cause of occupational injury for community sector workers. The insured and uninsured costs of manual handling injuries add significantly to the cost of providing health, aged care and community services. Most manual handling injuries are preventable. Beata is committed to ensuring our staff members have access to equipment that support their right to a healthy and safe work environment and minimise their exposure to risk of injury, in compliance with our regulatory obligations to them.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible completing:

- Manual Handling: Assisting the client safely;
- Duty of Care for the safety of self and others; and
- Manual Handling: use of Equipment to Assist the Client.

DEFINITION

Manual handling tasks are defined as any activity where a worker is required to grasp, manipulate, carry, move (lift, lower, push, pull), hold or restrain a load or weight.

PRINCIPLES

This Manual Handling Policy is based on the principle of risk management through a systems approach to task organisation, design, planning and control. Our objective is to reduce the incidence of manual handling injuries through early and effective management of potential problems to ensure manual handling risks are eliminated or controlled.
1  
**Risk Management**

Beata’s integrated risk management strategy provides a structured framework for the identification, analysis and treatment of all situations of risk. Our procedures for manual handling are cognisant of this approach, and aim to minimise the exposure of our staff to risk through effective planning and control systems. For more information on how our Workplace Safety policies dovetail into our risk management strategy, please refer to Governance Policy POL 05.01 *Integrated Risk Management*.

Management and staff will work together to identify, evaluate and control manual handling problems, using a team based problem-solving approach.

2  
**Manual Handling Tasks and Risk of Injury**

Manual handling tasks can contribute to injuries affecting all parts of the body, particularly the back, shoulder and wrist. Repetitive strain injury can develop through frequent lifting with the back bent or twisted; pushing or pulling loads, including wheelchairs; working in a fixed position such as continuous sitting or driving for long periods; repetitive work with the hand or arm such as having to grip tools or loads tightly; using vibrating equipment or tools; or working with the neck, shoulders and arms in a fixed position such as at computer workstations.

3  
**Identification of Manual Handling Problems**

Each client’s functional assessment includes mobility and transfer manual handling assistance requirements, which are indicated as “Identified Special Needs” on the *Client Care Plan*. The care plan includes a risk assessment, and a plan for managing that risk.

Manual handling problems experienced by staff may also be identified through *Workplace Incident and Accident Reports*, and through observation of work practices.

Staff who identify a potential manual handling task problem are to complete and submit a *Hazard Notification* to the designated Health and Safety Representative.

4  
**Assessment of Manual Handling Problems**

Once a manual handling problem has been identified, a *Manual Handling Risk Assessment Checklist* is to be completed by the designated Health and Safety Representative. The risk factors to be considered in assessing manual handling problems include the following ten elements:

- Forceful exertions that place high loads on muscles and other tissues, including factors such as pushing, pulling, speed of movement, handling heavy or bulky weights
- Working postures, including awkward, fixed or static positions which cause muscle fatigue
- Repetitive work tasks requiring static positions, such as constant repetition of the same movement, or the duration of a task when it requires holding a position for a long time
Control of Manual Handling Problems

Once the risks have been assessed and a manual handling problem has been confirmed, the problem is to be eliminated or controlled.

The designated Health and Safety Representative, in consultation with relevant staff, is to complete the Manual Handling Risk Control Plan.

The Manual Handling Risk Control Plan is to be submitted to the Health and Safety Committee meeting for urgent discussion and risk resolution.

There are two types of solutions Beata will adopt to control manual handling risks. They are design controls and administrative controls.

Administrative Controls

Administrative controls involve reducing the time staff are exposed to a risk factor. Administrative controls include:

- Work organisation such as staff rotations, task sharing, introduction of regular breaks, avoiding peaks in workflow
- Task-specific training for employees in relation to the use of tools or mechanical aids and equipment, or lifting techniques and manual handling skills
- Adjusting equipment servicing and maintenance schedules
- Provision of additional personal protective equipment (PPE) such as knee pads, boots, gloves.

Review of Effectiveness of the Control Solution

All approved improvement plans, including those for manual handling design or administrative controls, are recorded in the Beata’s Continuous Improvement Register. The register entry includes
the planned timeframe for review of the effectiveness of the chosen strategy. This evaluation will be undertaken by the Quality Committee, and reported to the Committee of Management.

### EXPECTED OUTCOME

- 100% of all staff are trained in manual handling and have completed the annual training.
- Work related physical injuries are minimised.

### Attachments:
- Client Care Plan
- Hazard Notification
- Manual Handling Risk Assessment Checklist
- Manual Handling Risk Control Plan
- Risk Assessment Guide
- Work Environment Audit Checklist
- Workplace Incident and Accident Report

### References:
- Manual Tasks Involving the Handling of People Code of Practice 2001
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Commonwealth)
- Governance Policy POL 05.01, Integrated Risk Management