

Health And Safety Guidelines**1. Objective**

The objective of these guidelines is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of volunteers and stroke group members. You should take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourselves and of other persons who may be affected by your act or omission.

2. Responsibility

All volunteers of the Group should ensure the Health and Safety Policy is implemented. You should accept any advice considered necessary by them.

3. Accidents and Hazards

1. Please report immediately to the group leader:
 - a) Any hazard or potential hazard - the Trustees should follow this up.
 - b) Any accident, injury, or untoward incident, however trivial.
2. Record any of the above as soon as possible in an Accident and Incident Book.
3. Maintain a safe environment at any meeting place by keeping entries, exits, and walkways clear of obstructions.
4. Any spillages should be cleared up immediately.
5. A list should be available of everyone present at each group meeting or activity.
6. Members who are reliant on a wheelchair will remain in it during meetings. This is necessary in case of emergency evacuation.
7. Raise the alarm if you discover a fire. (See TSG G03 for fire alarm procedure for Jubilee Hall).
8. Follow the fire procedures and instructions of the group leader or a volunteer.

4. Catering

1. Maintain a clean, hygienic and safe environment for the preparation and serving of drinks and refreshments.
2. Follow safe working practices and use equipment with care.

5. Driving

1. Volunteer drivers who transport Group members must be fit to drive, hold a current driving licence, valid MOT certificate, and have appropriate insurance. Any change that might affect fitness to drive should be reported to the Membership Organiser.
2. Volunteer drivers must notify their current insurance company of the nature of their voluntary work and confirm this with the Membership Organiser.

3. Any damage to a vehicle while engaged in a Group activity should be covered by the drivers own insurance.
4. Drivers must obey road traffic laws and drive within speed limits at all times.

6. Guidelines For Volunteer Drivers

1. People who have had a stroke are often anxious. Be sure you give clear and complete information so that collection will be prompt and without any confusion. (If you are unable to fulfil an engagement, please give the Group Transport Organiser as much notice as possible). If you pick up anyone on a regular basis, it is helpful to give them your telephone number so they can call you to cancel for any reason
2. Stroke victims may be forgetful, be prepared to ask them if they have everything they need (e.g. keys, medication, walking aid).
3. Stroke victims may be unsteady on their feet. Please escort them to and from premises, using suitable walking aids and if necessary a wheelchair and do not leave them until they are settled inside their destination. Ask them how much help they need to get in and out of the car. It is helpful to position the car where the ground is level.
4. Make sure that seat belts are worn.
5. Some stroke victims have difficulty with speaking but can usually understand what is said to them. Please speak clearly in short sentences, **but don't shout**.
6. For your own safety, if you have to lift a wheelchair it is advisable to bend your knees, rather than your back. If you protect the sill of your car boot with a piece of carpeting, you can rest the wheelchair there and slide it into the boot.
7. Drivers must not consume, or be under the influence of alcoholic drinks or drugs whilst transporting passengers.
8. In the event of adverse weather, Group meetings may be cancelled. The Event Organiser will contact drivers as soon as a decision is taken using the cascade system and hopefully, all stroke victims and volunteers will be informed.
9. If you encounter any difficulty, are worried about an assignment or feel concerned about a passenger, please discuss it with the Chairman.
10. If your passenger is taken ill in the car, either:
 - a) Return the passenger home, if you know there will be someone there to help.
 - b) Go to the nearest hospital emergency department.
 - c) Stop the car and call and summon an ambulance.
 - d) Consider your own safety and the safety of the vehicle
 - e) Be guided by the passenger's wishes and your judgement of the seriousness of the situation.
11. It is advisable to carry a first aid box in your car.

7. Out And About

1. Venues for outings should be safe and have adequate facilities for the needs of members. Sufficient volunteers and a designated First Aider should accompany the outing. Members, carers, volunteers, visitors and the driver should be informed of the arrangements, procedures and areas of responsibility, safe practice and emergency procedures.

Volunteers

2. Volunteers should be fully informed of duties, risks, procedures, members' needs and lines of communication and responsibility. An adequate number of volunteers should be present on each occasion to meet members' needs.

Stroke Members

3. Stroke Members should not go on outings if they need nursing care or lifting. They should not be put in situations where they may become mentally confused. Their needs should not be beyond the capabilities and training of volunteers.

8. Notes On Coach Safety

1. Only coaches equipped with lifts should be used for coach outings.

Stroke Members

2. Always remain seated whilst the coach is in motion.
3. Allow some volunteers to exit from the coach first so that they are available to help. At least one volunteer should remain on the coach and help stroke members if needed and get them to their destination safely.
4. Use the lift if you have any difficulty with the steps.
5. Do not get onto the lift unless the authorised operator is present.
6. Wait until the lift has stopped before you get on/off, and hold onto the rail if standing.
7. Come down the steps backwards if you experience difficulties.
8. Remember, usually, there is a larger drop after the last step.

All Members

9. When storing luggage on above-head racks, be careful that it is securely stowed.
10. Never put luggage, sticks, etc. in the central aisle.
11. Try not to distract the driver, except in an emergency.
12. If you need help whilst the coach is in motion, raise your arm to attract attention.
13. Make sure you know where the emergency exit is.
14. In the case of an emergency: **keep calm** and listen for instructions from the driver.
15. Never exit from the coach into the middle of the road: the driver should always park on the kerb side. (Driver's responsibility).

16. Avoid crossing the road from immediately in front of, or behind the parked coach unless a volunteer is monitoring traffic.
17. The front seat of a coach can be the most vulnerable. It is best to sit there only if there is a guardrail in front of you.
18. Always use seat belts when provided.

9. Boarding and Alighting from a Coach

1. Encourage anyone who cannot use the steps without assistance to use the side-lift.
2. The driver is in charge of the coach, so be guided by them and allow them to load the wheelchairs into the boot.
3. Never operate the lift without the driver's permission.
4. See that a volunteer helper is positioned at the bottom of the steps when people are boarding and alighting. Encourage the use of handrails
5. When wheelchair passengers are secured in place by the driver check that lap belts are fastened and head restraints erected.

10. Coaches - Additional Notes For Volunteers

1. Always be aware of the help a member may need and monitor the situation.
2. Check that wheelchairs are safely stowed and counted. (Driver's responsibility).
3. Make sure that someone is responsible for supervising:
 - a) On the lift
 - b) On the steps
 - c) Crossing the road
 - d) Individual members who need extra help.
4. When escorting individual members, make sure that you are aware of their needs, for example- lack of balance, diabetic, poor sight, poor hearing, emergency or regular medication.
5. Before members leave the coach/car, make sure that they know about:
 - a) Assembly points
 - b) Time of departure
 - c) Catering
 - d) Availability of toilets.
6. Make sure that all members needing support have a volunteer allocated to them.
7. Visually inspect wheelchairs before use, and always check that brakes are on before a member gets in or out of it.
8. Only accept responsibility for pushing a wheelchair if you are fit enough and familiar with the 'Guidelines for Handling Wheelchairs'.

In the Case of an Emergency

9. If necessary, ask the driver to stop the coach as soon as it is safe to do so.
10. Call for the first-aider.

In the Case of a Fire/Accident

11. **Keep calm**, make sure the register is available and that everyone assembles in a safe place.

11. Manual Handling – Assisting People

1. Close attention must be given to the risks of manual handling. Follow these guidelines to avoid risk to stroke members **and to your own back**.
2. **If you feel unhappy with a handling situation, feel free to say 'no', get expert help and report the circumstance to the officers. Know your limitations!**

Falls

3. If a person has a fall then proper safety procedures should be followed. First, ensure the safety of the faller, then check their condition while still on the ground, seek medical help if necessary and do not move them if injury is suspected. If the person is unhurt, encourage them to move themselves and then assist them to get up when they are ready. Two people should always be on hand to assist the person up from the ground in case they feel faint when moving into an upright posture. If possible provide a chair for the person to sit on and allow a reasonable recovery period to get over the shock of the fall.
4. **Never** rush a person up on their feet after a fall.
5. **Never** give drinks of any kind if broken bones or other serious injury is suspected.

General

6. Establish a co-operative relationship with the person you are helping in order to build up a feeling of independence and trust.
7. Avoid lifting and:
 - a) Allow the person the independence to do what they wish to do and can do safely for themselves.
 - b) Clear any obstacles out of the way to provide space for manoeuvre.
 - c) Position the wheelchair close to the seat and at an angle. See that the brakes are applied and the foot rests folded away.
 - d) See that the person's feet are in good position for standing (slightly apart).
 - e) Stand close to the stroke-affected side of the person and adopt a stable posture. Encourage them to lean forward and transfer weight onto their feet. If they need steadying, stand very close, flex your knees and hold the person at waist level. **Do not** hold the affected arm. **Do not** lift. (A handling belt may be useful).
 - f) Always allow plenty of spare time for disabled people to achieve any manoeuvre, do not rush them. It is helpful to advise them when it is safe to lower onto the seat.
 - g) If assistance with toileting is needed, foster trust, establish what the person's needs and capabilities are and allow plenty of time. Make sure the person is stable and well supported (e.g. use available rails). If you need to help with adjusting clothing, stand close and flex your knees when bending. It may be advisable for two helpers to assist if space allows.

- h) When transferring into a car, follow the Guidelines for Handling Wheelchairs.
- i) Always drop off the stroke member as near to the venue as possible and make sure they are safe before parking your vehicle.

12. Accompanying A Walking Disabled Person

1. Allow the person to go at their own pace, but only within the extent of their capability. If they are unsteady or tired, offer the use of a wheelchair, especially if the surface is wet or uneven.
2. It is preferable that you walk on the affected side unless the person requests to link their arm with yours. **Do not** hold the affected arm.

13. Manual Handling - Loads

1. For wheelchair handling, see separate guidelines in section 15
2. When loads (e.g. boxes of goods, chairs, catering equipment, etc.) need to be moved, use available equipment (e.g. trolley) wherever possible. Do not attempt to lift very bulky or heavy items.
3. Before lifting, clear any obstacles away to create adequate space. Adopt a stable posture and flex the knees. Grasp the object firmly with both hands; test the weight before lifting; distribute the weight evenly (or, if too heavy, divide into two lighter loads, if possible); lift, holding the object close to the body. **If in any doubt do not lift.**
4. When lifting from the floor to above waist level, lift in two stages.
5. For bulky items, share the task with another person; agree the procedure before lifting. Avoid extremes in height and ability difference between lifting partners.

14. Guidelines For Handling Wheelchairs

1. Check that the wheelchair is properly assembled and safe.
2. When Transferring:
 - a) See that both brakes are applied before the person gets in or out of the chair. See that the footrests are folded safely out of the way; they are a potential hazard for people and car paintwork!
 - b) It is a good idea to ask how much help is needed. Each individual is different. It is good to encourage independence
 - c) Stand to the weak side of the person, but **never** grip a paralysed arm. Support under the armpit or around the waist, if necessary, or use a handling belt if available
 - d) Encourage them to position their feet correctly, and transfer their weight onto their feet by leaning forward. You should not pull or lift - just guide and support
 - e) Have the front seat of the car set as far back as possible.
 - f) Position the wheelchair as close to the opening as possible (but still allowing room for you to assist if required).

- g) If your passenger needs to hold on to something when standing up, encourage them to hold the frame of the car, rather than the door. If they have to hold the door, ensure that it is held firm
 - h) If suitable for your regular passenger, consider the use of a 'handy bar'.
 - i) The disabled person should move into the car, bottom first. When they are safely seated, move the wheelchair away and help, if required, to lift legs into the car, as the person swivels in the seat. (It can help to have a shiny surface on the seat, e.g. a plastic bag). Allow plenty of time; lift a stiff leg slowly; a little pressure behind the knee can assist the knee to bend.
3. Remember that you are conveying a person who may be feeling insecure. A lap belt is advised. If there is a lap belt on the wheelchair, always use it, especially on unfamiliar territory. Consideration for his/her safety and comfort is most important. When out walking, remember to include your 'passenger' in conversation. Ensure that the weak or paralysed arm and leg are well positioned and supported. When negotiating down slopes it is safer to go backwards when practicable.
 4. If you have to tip a chair, always tip it backwards and give reassuring warning that you are going to do so. It is easier to go up a kerb, ramp or single step forwards and down them backwards. The chair must never tip or lean forwards. Remember - flex your knees and keep your back straight when taking the weight. Use gentle slopes between different levels where available. Seek assistance whenever necessary.
 5. Make sure the wheelchair is not causing an obstruction and beware of knocking the legs of other people, and that there is sufficient space for manoeuvre.
 6. Ask members to put their name on all removable parts of their wheelchair and on the cushion so that they cannot be confused with others' chairs. Remind people about this if you notice it has not been done.
 7. Protect car sills and boot from damage with a piece of carpeting.
 8. When Lifting A Wheelchair In And Out Of A Car Boot:
 - a) Apply the brakes.
 - b) Fold the wheelchair to as compact a size as possible.
 - c) Remove all easily removed parts to reduce the weight.
 - d) Adopt a stable posture close to the car. Grasp the chair firmly with both hands. Test the weight and adjust the grip to distribute the weight evenly. Bend your knees and lift the chair, keeping it close to your body.
 - e) Lift in two stages - first from the floor or kerb to the boot sill; rest the chair on the sill (protected by carpeting). Stand close to the car, facing the boot; slide the chair into the boot. Put removable parts into the boot.
 - f) Keep carpeting handy for the reverse procedure when lifting the chair out of the boot.
 - g) Re-assemble the chair.

15. General First Aid Hints

1. All members should carry a list of their medication and contact details in case of an emergency.
2. When possible wash your hands before treating wounds, burns or eye injuries. Take care not to contaminate the surfaces of dressings.
3. Casualties should be seated or lying down while being treated.

4. A record should be made in writing as soon as practicable after the incident.
5. Casualties with minor injuries of a sort they would attend to themselves if at home may wash their hands and apply a small sterilised dressing from the container. No ointments or liquids should be applied.
6. Each item used from the container should be replaced as soon as possible.
7. Carry out regular checks of the first aid kit.

16. Guidelines for Swimming Group

1. Refer to the Swimming Group Guidance (TSG G02)

17. Associated Documents

1. Health & Safety Policy TSG P01
2. In Case of Fire at the Jubilee Hall Alveston TSG G03
3. Swimming Guidance TSG GO2

Prepared By: Trustees

Agreed By: Trustees

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May 2014	Minor format changes, added ref. to supporting documents
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