

Home Employment Insurance

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDE

For employers and personal care assistants



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PREMIER CARE

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Introduction

We are very pleased that you have chosen Premier Care Home Employment insurance to provide you with the legal cover you require as a direct employer of someone to assist you in your home. As part of our service to you we have developed this health and safety booklet to raise awareness of and address health and safety issues which may be present or arise in the home.

Please note that this booklet is only intended as a guide to health and safety and any relevant government legislation should be referred to for more detailed information.

Employer responsibilities

- Help by providing a safe working environment.
- Aim to prevent health and safety issues.
- Speak to your employee about any health and safety issues you feel may arise.
- Make sure you know about safe working practices.

Employee responsibilities

- Follow safe working practices.
- Be aware of any potential health and safety hazards.
- Report any hazards as they arise.
- Consult with your employer if you feel you need more training.
- Speak to your employer about any health and safety issues which may give you concern.

This booklet has been divided into sections. At the end of each section there is a very brief list of questions for you, the employer, to complete (although this booklet should be read by you and your employee(s)). If you answer 'no' to any of the questions you should take appropriate actions to reduce, rectify or eliminate that risk. This could be by resolving a training issue with your employee(s) or, in the case of faulty equipment, arranging for it to be repaired or it could be as simple as making sure you have a first aid kit.

The most important issue concerning health and safety is that you and anyone you employ in your home feel safe and comfortable both with each other as well as within the home environment. So if anything threatens to undermine that, it should be dealt with immediately with either the help of your family, the employing agency or the social services department.



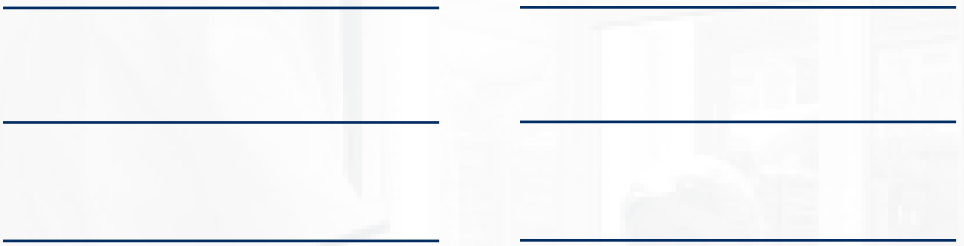
USING EQUIPMENT

Ensure you only use equipment including lifts, hoists and household appliances when

- You have been fully trained to use the equipment.
- You feel totally confident to do so.
- The equipment has been checked to ensure it is in good working order.
- The equipment is correct for the purpose for which it is being used.

If you are an employee using any equipment to assist your employer, e.g a wheelchair, make sure you talk to them to explain what you are doing.

Please list any specialist equipment that your employee(s) would use on a regular basis for which training is necessary (i.e. exclude household appliances).



Are all these products in good working order? Yes No

Are your employee(s) fully trained to operate them? Yes No

Are all these products only used for their fit purpose? Yes No

USING A WHEELCHAIR

When using a wheelchair to provide assistance with mobility you should ensure

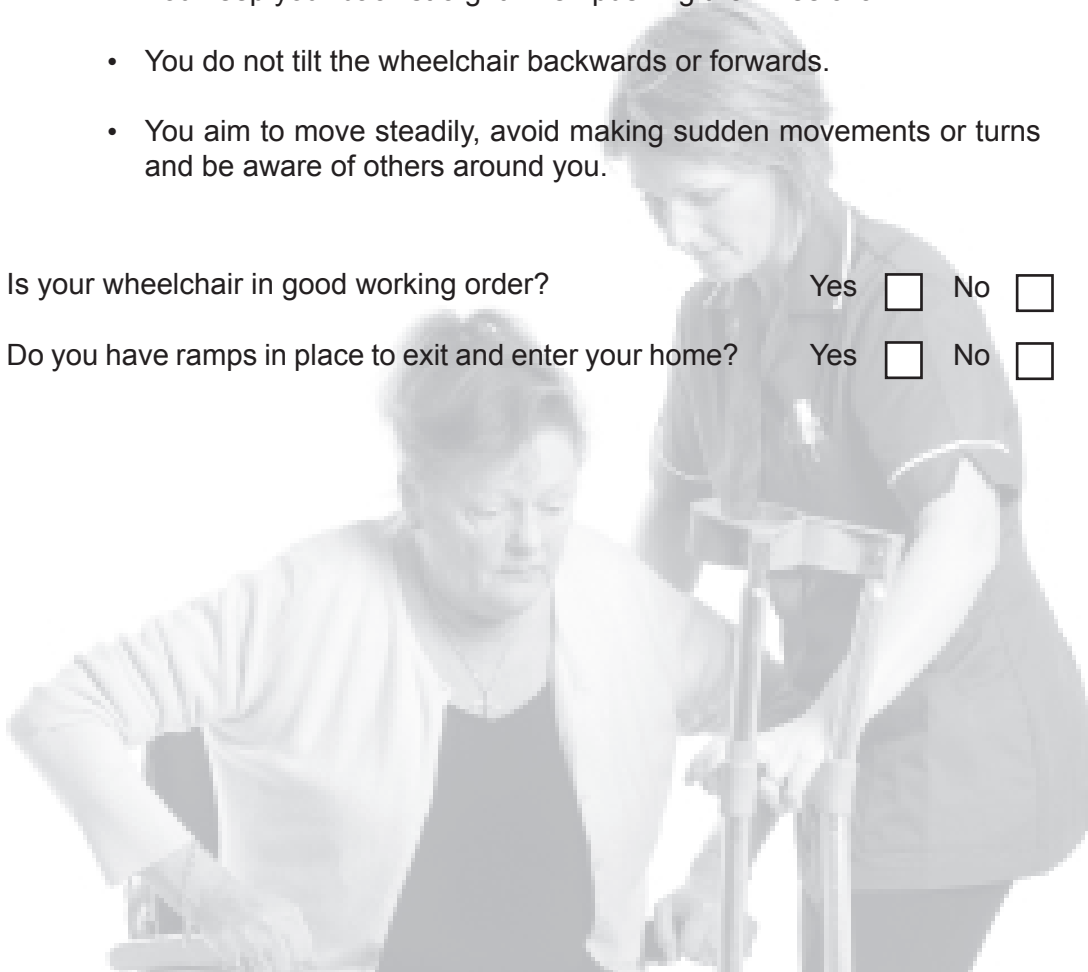
- The person you are assisting has fastened their lap belt.
- You leave enough room to move your feet.
- You keep both hands firmly on the handles when pushing the wheelchair.
- You use the weight of your body to push the wheelchair and do not strain your arms or shoulder.
- You keep your back straight when pushing the wheelchair.
- You do not tilt the wheelchair backwards or forwards.
- You aim to move steadily, avoid making sudden movements or turns and be aware of others around you.

Is your wheelchair in good working order?

Yes No

Do you have ramps in place to exit and enter your home?

Yes No



GENERAL HYGIENE

In order to help prevent the spread of illness/infection you should ensure

- You always wash your hands especially after sneezing, using the toilet and before and after preparing food, using either liquid soap or an alcohol hand wash.
- You wear disposable gloves when coming into contact with bodily fluids and dispose of them safely after use - do not reuse.
- You have all the immunisations you need.
- You cover any cuts and scratches immediately.
- That if either of you think you may have an infection you should inform the other.
- That if either of you have any additional safety measures that you would like to see in place you should inform the other.

Do you have the facilities to ensure that the above general hygiene practices can be maintained including disposable gloves or liquid or alcohol handwash?

Yes No

SAFETY IN THE HOME

To maintain general safety around the house you should always

- Clean up all spills immediately.
- Make sure cables do not trail across doorways or rooms.
- Put equipment back in a safe place after use.
- Use ladders to reach objects above head height.

Are all carpet ends fixed down? Yes No

Are all passageways clean and clutter free? Yes No

Can you see anything that may be a hazard now or in the future? Yes No

Do you know where the first aid box is? Yes No

Do you have a first aid book? Yes No

Do you have a current list of all emergency telephone numbers? Yes No

FIRE RISKS

To minimise the risk of fire in the home you should ensure

- Heaters are kept clear of flammable items.
- If you or your employee(s) smoke, cigarettes are put out before leaving a room.
- Ashtrays are emptied into a metal bin regularly.
- Smoke alarms are installed and kept in good working order.

Do you know where your nearest fire escapes are upstairs and downstairs?

Yes No

Are there smoke alarms installed and kept in good working order?

Yes No

Do you have a fire extinguisher or fire blanket?

Yes No



USING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

To help reduce potential hazards when using electrical equipment you should make certain

- You remember to turn off electrical equipment before cleaning it.
- You remember to take any safety precautions or wear protective clothing if instructions recommend it.
- You check sockets are safe and in good working order.
- You check wiring on the equipment is not damaged or frayed.

Is the equipment stored in a safe place?

Yes No

Is the equipment well maintained and in good working order?

Yes No



HEAVY LIFTING

To avoid injury or strained muscles when lifting heavy objects you should be sure to

- Use a ladder to avoid stretching to reach items above head height.
- Keep the object you are lifting close to your body.
- Bend at the knees and keep your back straight if you are picking something up below hip height.
- Avoid twisting whilst lifting.
- Take regular breaks if you feel you need to.

Do you have a step ladder in good working order?

Yes No

Are there many heavy items in your home which would need to be lifted on a regular basis?

Yes No



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

To avoid accidents or injury when you need to use hazardous materials you should

- Ensure you do not mix chemicals.
- Always follow the instructions on the bottle.
- Make sure that recommended precautions are adhered to.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after use.

Are hazardous materials kept in a safe place?

Yes No

Are all hazardous materials in original bottles with instructions still legible?

Yes No

KITCHEN AND FOOD PREPARATION

To maintain general hygiene and safety when in the kitchen or preparing food you should ensure

- You keep work surfaces clean.
- That food containers are properly sealed.
- You do not eat food that is past its use by date.
- That cooked meats are stored separately and away from uncooked meats.
- That food is always covered properly i.e. cling film, tin foil or plastic containers.
- You keep all meats and fish covered and in the fridge.
- That hands are always washed before and after handling or eating food.
- You always wear oven gloves when handling hot pots and pans or when getting things from the oven.
- You always warn others in the house of hot pots, pans and dishes.
- You take extra care when using sharp objects like knives, scissors and other kitchen equipment, especially when washing up!
- That sharp objects are kept in a safe place and always picked up by the handle.
- That if you break glass you sweep it up, taking care not to touch it and disposing of it safely.

Is the temperature in your fridge/freezer kept at a constant level in line with the manufacturer's recommendations?

Yes No

Are all the appliances in your kitchen in good working order?

Yes No

Are your kitchen work surfaces kept clean at all times?

Yes No

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