



Older People Active Lives

Helping People Move Safely

Information for Staff and Volunteers who;

- May from time to time assist a member when they enter a building, walk a short distance or get in or out of a chair.





Older People Active Lives

Aims of this information sheet

- This guidance helps volunteers and staff assist people safely when entering buildings, walking short distances, or getting in and out of chairs.
- The aim is to: - Keep everyone safe - Encourage independence - Reduce risk of injury to volunteers, staff and visitors.

Please note

This is **not** training in lifting or manual handling. Volunteers must never lift or carry a person's body weight.



Golden rules for safe assistance

DO

- Ask first — always gain permission before helping and ask what help they would like
- Tell them what you are going to do before you do it and seek their help and co-operation
- Encourage independence
- Do not lift body weight
- Move slowly together
- If unsure — stop and get help

DON'T

Attempt to move someone and seek help immediately if they;

- Have fallen and hit their head
- Report pain or injury
- Cannot stand using their own strength
- Appeared confused, dizzy or drowsy
- May have lost consciousness
- You feel unsafe assisting
- Call emergency services if injury is suspected

INFECTION CONTROL

- Clean or sanitise hands before and after assisting
- Do not assist if you feel unwell
- Use gloves if bodily fluids present



General safety principles



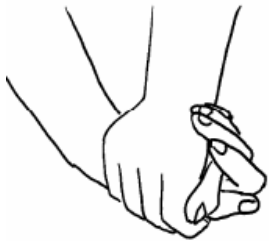
- Stand close and slightly to the side.
- Keep feet apart for balance.
- Move together slowly.
- Turn with your feet — avoid twisting.
- Keep walkways clear.
- Know your own physical limits.



Assisting someone to walk



- Check walking aid is available (stick/frame).
- Ensure footwear is secure and route is clear.
- Plan your route and ask for assistance if falling is a risk.
- Stand slightly behind and to the side they feel less steady on.
- If support is required, hold their hand using a palm-to-palm hold with the other arm around their back towards their far hip.
- Walk at their pace — never pull them forward.
- Guide toward a chair if they become unsteady.





Helping someone to stand up from a chair

If the member needs assistance to stand from a chair:

- Explain what will happen and agree a cue such as “stand now.”
- Reassure them, take your time and be aware that the person may be dizzy after they first stand up from sitting.
- Ask them to shuffle forwards away from the back of the seat. Making sure their feet are firmly on the ground and under their knees, ask them to push themselves up using the seat’s hand rests/arms.
- Stand to side and slightly behind to steady and ask them to pause after standing in case of dizziness.



Helping someone to stand up from a chair

- If they need more assistance than that, stand at the weaker side of the person, facing forwards and if necessary place one arm around their back towards their far side hip and the other hand on their closest shoulder at the front.
- On the command (e.g. ready steady stand) encourage them to push forwards and upwards, using the arms of the chair. At the same time, you step forwards and upwards together with them, one foot in the direction you are going, head upright. Remember to bend your knees and keep a good back posture.
- When sitting back down, position the person so that the backs of their legs are touching the seat of the chair. Then encourage them to 'stick their bottom out' so they can sit far enough back in the chair. Ask them to sit down slowly.



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Helping someone to stand up from a chair

Do's



The Drag Lift from chair

Through Arm Lift

Bear Hug/Pivot Transfer

Dont's



Don't pull people by their arms or put your arms under their upper arm or shoulder to pull or drag them forwards.



Assisting members in and out of a car

Bear in mind members could have memory problems, sight or hearing problems, may have suffered a stroke or have balance problems.

- Ensure the path to the car is clear of obstacles.
- Where appropriate offer the arm of assistance and reassurance to and from the car.
- Assist the member by opening the car door and guiding them to sit down.
- Use the "sit first, legs second" technique by having them back up to the seat and sit down facing outwards before swiveling their legs in one at a time, supporting their weaker leg from behind the knee if necessary.
- Be aware that they don't bang the back of their head sitting down in your car and that the skin on their lower legs could be delicate and prone to injury/ulcer.
- If required, assist the member with putting their seat belt on.



Risk Assessment Summary

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures
Person falling	Injury	Clear routes, walk at person's pace, guide to seat
Attempted lifting	Back or shoulder injury	Volunteers do not lift body weight
Dizziness on standing	Falls	Pause before walking
Poor environment	Trips/slips	Check lighting and obstacles
Wheelchair movement	Trapping/tipping	Apply brakes and seek help on slopes
Infection risk	Illness spread	Hand hygiene precautions



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Key Points

Staff and Volunteer responsibilities;

- Follow this guidance at all times
- Work within your confidence and physical ability
- Report incidents or near misses to your Organiser / Line Manager
- Ask for assistance whenever needed



Remember



Most older people live independently. Supporting safe movement helps maintain dignity, confidence, and independence while keeping everyone safe.

Thankyou for volunteering with OPAL and supporting our members.