

What are the hazards and how might they harm?



Back and muscle strain
from manual handling



Bacterial or viral infections
from contact with infected
bodies or bodily fluids



Impact injuries from
falling loads or collisions



Slip injuries from
spillages, trip injuries
from obstructions

What PPE should the individual wear?



What other precautions should be taken?



Wear appropriate footwear
with slip-resistant soles

Movement of deceased and mortuary duties

Safety Task Card STCPS 04

Unit Managers – use page overleaf to list any hazards and control measures specific to your site which are not listed below

Safe System of Work

1. Operators responsible for movement of deceased must have been screened by site occupational health and have had relevant vaccinations. If in any doubt, consult with your manager before starting the task.
2. The number of staff required for the task will be advised by porter control, your supervisor, client staff or the service centre operator.
3. Depending on the move being completed, please ensure you are comfortable to accept the task, otherwise refer to the manager for assistance.
4. Arrange suitable equipment for the required movement.
5. Check the mortuary trolley and bed before use to ensure they are in good working order and any fitted restraints or guards are working correctly.
6. Damaged or defective equipment should be removed from use, labelled as defective and isolated until repaired by a competent person. If this is the property of the mortuary department, ensure that they are made aware with immediate effect to exact the repair.
7. Check with ward staff whether there are any infection risks and that the body has been prepared according to infection-control protocol.
8. If not already done, draw curtains fully to prevent distress to patients in the area and to ensure dignity is maintained throughout the process.
9. Infectious bodies will be sealed in a body bag and labelled by the medical staff at ward level. Body bags labelled as infectious should never be opened.
10. Ensure that any required paperwork in relation to the movement of the deceased is obtained from ward staff before the task is commenced.

Continued on reverse

If you have any concerns, stop and speak with your line manager before proceeding.

List any additional hazards or risks you have identified and control measures required to manage these.

Movement of deceased and mortuary duties continued

Safety Task Card
STCPS 04

Safe System of Work continued

11. Depending on the weight of the deceased and the preparation by medical staff, the operators must lift according to training using the covering body bag, sheet or slider. Follow client site training on the movement of deceased – as this is dependent on size/age of the body.
12. Secure the body and ensure all covers are in place when the body has been placed on the mortuary trolley.
13. Ensure all relevant paperwork accompanies the body.
14. Make progress carefully and steadily, avoiding obstructions, other pedestrians, sudden changes in direction or sudden stops, and giving appropriate warnings when necessary.
15. Take the best possible route to avoid potential contact with patients or visitors and following any infection-control protocols.
16. Avoid routes with uneven floor surfaces, changes in level and wet surfaces.
17. Appropriate protective clothing, including slip-resistant waterproof footwear in line with local policy, must be worn before entering the mortuary.
18. All waste must be bagged as clinical waste and disposed of through the clinical waste stream, unless there are separate infection control requirements which take precedence – refer to your HSE Manager or Infection Control for guidance.

NOTE: Staff working in the mortuary must have received specific training, completed by client personnel. This must include personal hygiene, manual handling and assisting during post mortem preparation of bodies for viewing.

If you have any concerns, stop and speak with your line manager before proceeding.