

**CONTROL HIERARCHY** – Use this systematic process to select the best control measure for eliminating or minimizing hazards found in the home. From most to least effective, control measures fall into the following categories:

**Engineering control\*** – A control measure that requires physical modification of the work environment to eliminate or reduce exposure to the hazard. This includes isolation, or structural changes to the work process or the environment to interrupt the path of potential exposure.

**Administrative control\*** – A control measure that involves modifying the work tasks to change the way the work is performed or to change the organizational factors that support the way the work is performed. For example: providing and upgrading training and education, rotating work task groups, and establishing safe work practices.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – A control measure that is used when other control measures are inadequate or impossible. PPE is protective clothing or equipment designed to protect the worker against exposure.

\*The priority is to **eliminate** the hazard and associated risk, or **substitute** it with something that has less potential to cause injury.

## ERGONOMICS

Use reference guide on the back to identify the ergonomic risks for each task the CHWs will perform.

### Example Control Measures:

**Engineering controls:** Install a floor or ceiling lift. Re-arrange the furniture for better access. Replace a manual wheelchair with a power chair.

**Administrative controls:** Have a “No-Lift” policy. Train workers to identify signs/symptoms of an MSI.

**PPE:** Supply knee pads for kneeling on bare floors. \*\*Only use PPE as an interim measure until engineering or administrative controls are implemented.

**BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS** Use the Resource Guide to identify routes of transmission and control measures for eliminating or minimizing CHWs risk of exposure to any communicable diseases the client or household members may have.

### Things to look for:

- \*Sneezing/coughing client; \*Food preparation tasks; \*Presence of cytotoxic drugs;
- \*Exposure to contaminated dust particles or disrupted pet waste;
- \*Risk of handing contaminated objects (e.g. bedding or laundry);
- \*Presence of rodents or insects (i.e. mosquitoes, ticks, mites, or fleas);
- \*Risk of exposure to blood or body fluids (e.g. sharps, dressings) while providing care.

### Example Control Measures:

**Engineering controls:** Provide sharps containers.

Use safe sharp technology, if available.

**Administrative controls:** Train CHWs in policies & procedures for hand washing, universal precautions, safe work practices.

**PPE:** Supply PPE such as gloves, gowns, masks, goggles, & respirators as required.

## CHEMICAL HAZARDS

| Product:   | Potential Risks and Health Effects:   |
|--|---|
| All-purpose cleaners, Glass cleaner, Windex, Mr. Clean, Formula 409, Tilex | Eye and skin irritant; corrosive; poisonous; ammonia vapors can irritate lungs or trigger asthma; <i>Ammonia produces toxic fumes when mixed with chlorine bleach</i> |
| Household cleaners, deodorizers, mildew remover, bleach products           | Corrosive. Eye, skin, and respiratory irritant – <i>Produces toxic fumes if mixed with ammonia</i>  |
| Oven Cleaner   | Burns or irritates eye, nose, throat and skin; mental fatigue; poisonous; corrosive   |
| Toilet bowl deodorizers  | Possible carcinogen (cancer-causing agent)  |
| General Bathroom Cleaner   | Eye, nose, throat and skin irritant; mental fatigue   |
| Drain Cleaner  | Corrosive; poisonous; can cause burns to skin and permanent eye damage  |
| Insecticides / Insect Repellant  | eye, skin and lung irritant; flammable; poisonous; toxic; mutagenic; may be carcinogenic; may affect central nervous system   |

Can less toxic alternatives be used?

Are the CHWs trained to safely handle the product?

### Things to look for:

\*Windows to open for general ventilation while the product is in use

\*Original product packages with legible consumer labels \*No mixed products or unlabelled containers

\*Gloves for cleaning task, and mask or respirator where appropriate

### Example Control Measures:

**Engineering controls:** Substitute a product with a less toxic alternative.

**Administrative controls:** Instruct the CHWs to *NOT USE* a product.

Train CHWs on policies, safe handling procedures, and chemical hazards.

**PPE:** Supply correct PPE such as rubber / neoprene gloves and chemical splash protection.

## VIOLENCE & WORKING ALONE

### Client and non-client behaviours to look for:

#### Verbal Aggression

- Makes loud noises / shouts angrily
- Yells mild personal insults
- Moderate threats to others and self
- Makes clear threats of violence

#### Physical Aggression – Against CHWs, Against Objects, With Objects

- Slams doors, scatters clothing
- Makes a mess, marks walls
- Throws things, kicks furniture
- Breaks objects, Sets fires
- Makes threatening gestures, grabs clothes
- Strikes out, kicks, pushes, pulls hair - no injury
- Attacks others - mild injury (bruises, sprains)
- Attacks others - severe physical injury

### Other things to look for:

A history of substance abuse

Presence of weapons/firearms

Unauthorized visitors

Language or cultural barriers

Limited or unreliable communications

Obstructions or entrapment areas

Family, job, personal stressors

Evidence of criminal activity

Evening/night shifts

Attitude to care givers

Parking more than a block away

Limited safe locations to call for help

Mental illness

“Sub-culture” membership

Aggressive pets




Frustrations with service

Limited daily traffic

Remote or rural locations

### Example Control Measures:

**Administrative:** Have clear violence and harassment policies. Establish a reliable check in procedure. Arrange for CHWs to work in pairs. Provide travel by taxi. Work with local police departments. Schedule daytime visits. Restrain pets during visit. Train CHWs to identify risk factors and how to respond safely. Be responsive to reporting and unsafe work refusals.

| Risk Factors   | Hazard Conditions  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Height of working surface</b><br><small>(for more than 30s)</small> | <b>Lower than waist</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> awkward trunk posture if CHW bends at waist<br><i>Body part at risk:</i> low back   |   | <b>Higher than elbow</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> awkward shoulder posture (shrug shoulder to lift arms)<br><i>Body part at risk:</i> shoulder   |
| <b>Height of client transfer point</b>                                 | <b>Lower than client's knee</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk posture and increased lifting/lowering force as CHW bends far at waist (client is in a poor position to assist with their legs)<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back and shoulders                               | <b>Higher than client's mid-thigh</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> lifting force to lift the client to higher surface.<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back and shoulders  |   |
| <b>Height of bed for turning or repositioning</b>                      | <b>Lower than worker's mid-thigh</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk posture and lifting force as CHW bends far at waist; (client in poor position to assist)<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back, shoulders  |   | <b>Above worker's hip</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward shoulder posture (flex shoulders); lateral movement (legs are limited in ability to assist with weight transfer)<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> shoulders, upper back |
| <b>Repetitive reaching or lifting</b>                                  | <b>Beyond arm length</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk and shoulder postures (fully extended arms/shoulders); lifting/lowering force<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back and shoulder   | <b>heavy objects from ABOVE shoulder</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward shoulder postures; lifting/lowering force<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> shoulders, upper back   | <b>heavy objects from BELOW knee</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk postures (if worker bends at waist); increased lifting & lowering force<br><i>Body part at risk:</i> low back                                       |
| <b>Obstacles &amp; Small Work Spaces</b>                               | <b>Around the bed, bath, shower, toilet, or other client transfer points</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk and shoulder postures, when reaching, bending, twisting; lifting/lowering forces; creates trip/slip hazards<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back, shoulders, wrists |  |  |
| <b>Doorways &amp; Walking surfaces</b>                                 | <b>Narrow doorways</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk and shoulder postures, and lifting/lowering force a when transferring clients or carrying items<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back, shoulders, wrists   | <b>Raised door thresholds; uneven/sloped surfaces</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> increased pushing/pulling force; lifting/lowering force when maneuvering transfer devices; trip hazards.<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back, shoulders |  |
| <b>Equipment (including grab bars)</b>                                 | <b>Heavy</b> (e.g. vacuum cleaner)<br><i>Risk Factors:</i> increased pushing/pulling force, increased lifting/lowering force<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back and shoulders  | <b>Requires repairs</b> (ie/cracked or damaged wheels)<br><i>Risk factors:</i> increased push/pull force<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low back, upper back and shoulders  | <b>Poorly designed or non existent handles</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> increased gripping force and awkward postures when lifting/carrying<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> fingers, wrist, elbow                                  |
| <b>Loads (can also apply to client)</b>                                | <b>Awkward size and shape of loads</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> awkward trunk, shoulder, and wrist postures; increased gripping & lifting/lowering force<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> wrist, elbow, shoulder, upper back, trunk  | <b>Heavy loads</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> increased lifting/lowering or pushing/pulling force [Never attempt to <u>lift</u> loads weighing more than 20 kg (44 lbs).]<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low / upper back, shoulders                     | <b>Unstable loads</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> increased lifting/lowering or pushing/pulling force if load shifts while being lifted or carried<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low / upper back, shoulders                       |
| <b>Surfaces</b>  | <b>Sharp edges</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> contact stress when gripping or leaning against objects with sharp edges<br><i>Body part at risk:</i> any  | <b>Hard surfaces</b><br><i>Risk factor:</i> contact stress when kneeling or leaning on hard surfaces<br><i>Body part at risk:</i> any; often knee, wrist, elbow  | <b>Carpeting / wet or slippery surfaces</b><br><i>Risk factors:</i> pushing/ pulling forces to move equipment; slipping on wet surfaces<br><i>Body parts at risk:</i> low/upper back, shoulders                                |