



Health & Safety Alert #1-2-07

Safely Transporting Individuals Who Use Wheelchairs

The purpose of this Alert is to increase the awareness of staff and administrators responsible for transporting individuals who use wheelchairs.

Injury can occur when a person hits something, something hits the person, or the person is ejected from their seat. At an impact speed of 30 mph, the front of the vehicle comes to a complete stop within one tenth of a second, but unrestrained occupants and objects continue to move toward the point of the crash at 30 mph. It becomes critical; therefore, that your professionals or key staff develop good safety guidelines and all staff pay close attention to ensure the guidelines are being followed.

Basic Safety Steps

1. Ensure the person's seatbelt and any other wheelchair straps are secured.
2. Check seating and position straps to make sure they are not pressing on sensitive areas where there are shunts, G-tubes, etc.
3. Ensure that the wheelchair is properly secured in the vehicle.
4. Check the strap, clips, locks, and other securing items for damage or improper working order.
5. Ensure staff assignments are clearly identified as to who is responsible for securing and checking.
6. Ensure staff are properly trained and can demonstrate a proficiency of securing individuals and wheelchairs in vehicles.
7. Do not transport individuals with a lap tray on the wheelchair.
8. Be sure the individual's head and neck are protected from whiplash.
9. Do not transport in a tilted or reclined position.
10. Put anti-tippers down during transport, if available
11. Do not transport someone in a side-facing position.

For questions or comments regarding the above Alert, please contact the MUI/Registry Unit at (614) 995-3810.