

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Patient Safety Event:

Injury During Positioning of a Wheelchair

Why was this a Critical Incident?

While seated in a wheelchair at a table, a patient's bone was fractured during positioning

What happened in the incident?

During positioning the patients body came into contact with a table, resulting in a bone fracture.

What is the Health Care System learning?

Minimal clearance between the wheelchair height/width and the table increased the risk of the patient contact with the table.

Additional tables were set up in the dining area for patients during the pandemic due to social distancing requirements.

Wheelchair safety education was not available.

A standard guideline does not exist to examine physical design of space or tables, when purchase requests are received for tables.

A clear, proactive process to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility exists provincially with legislation subsections. No physical structure requirements have been implemented yet as a legislated requirement.

What are the recommendations?

Wheelchair and Geri-Chair safety education was developed for staff.

Furniture requests will include the layout of the area to provide evaluation of size and placement, to reduce barriers to accessibility prior to purchasing.

Develop a guideline for purchasing furniture that includes standardized items available to order.

Include the designated Accessibility Planner to provide a lens for purchases that meet intention of legislation.

Keywords: fracture, table, equipment, wheelchair, seated, accessibility

Glossary:

Your privacy is important to us, so in this summary we have removed any details which would help identify the subject of this event. It's important that we can learn from safety events and make changes to improve the care we provide.