

Bed Pole/Stick Work Instruction

1 Purpose

Mobility aims to ensure the safe and appropriate use of mobility aid and equipment such as bed poles/sticks, which may be employed to assist clients in repositioning themselves, maintaining stability while changing positions, or facilitating the ease of bed transfers. Usage of bed pole/stick may be considered a restrictive practice. To support the use of a bed pole/stick, an Occupational Therapist (OT) risk assessment should be in place with proper client education around the usage of the bed pole/stick.

2 Work Instructions

Positioning a Bed Stick^{i ii iii}

- Stand at the pillow end of the bed and raise the top end of the mattress, sliding the base end of the stick underneath.
- Place the bed stick between the client's shoulder and hip (while lying on the bed), approximately 600mm down from the bed head.
- Ensure the bed stick allows the client to comfortably sit beside it and lie down, reaching the pillow easily.
- The bed stick's arm should extend up the side of the bed, accessible for support as the client turns and moves.
- Confirm the bed pole sits securely against the mattress with no gaps. Avoid tying or fixing it to the bed frame unless equipped with a built-in clamp or fixation device.

How to Use a Bed Stick

- Stand the client with their back of legs against the bed
- The bed stick is positioned between client and the pillow
- Guide client to sit well back on the bed, beside the stick. Grasp the stick with your closest hand.
- While client grips the stick, instruct client to swing their legs up onto the bed and their upper body and head towards the pillow.
- If required, demonstrate how to use the bed stick to reposition themselves in bed.
- To get out of bed, instruct the client to grasp the stick and pull to sit up, swinging their legs off the side of the bed.
- Emphasize the importance of maintaining a grip on the stick until they are standing securely beside the bed.

Precautions:

- A Bed Stick is:
 - NOT to be used on any bed with power options
 - NOT to be used to prevent falls from the bed
 - NOT to be used as a form of restrictive practice
 - NOT to be used for any other purpose than that prescribed by health professional.

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- You must notify mobility office immediately if you noted client functional ability (physical, thinking and/or behaviour) changes resulting in near miss/falls from the bed.
- The bed stick or pole needs to be checked for compatibility with the client's current bed and their functional level during the assessment. If client condition changes or they change beds in the future, mobility office must be notified as we may need to consider having their needs re-assessed by health professional such as an Occupational Therapist.
- Please make sure that you follow the shift checklist every shift.

Cleaning and Maintenance

- Wipe over regularly with a soft damp cloth. Dry thoroughly
- Check the end caps are in place and not damaged
- Check that there is no cracked paint or rust on the metal tubing
- Report any damage.

Moving and Dignity of Risk:

- Emphasize the balance between a client's Dignity of Choice and mobility's obligation through open discussions. This should be discussed between client, carer and the occupational therapist during the assessment.
- This work instruction is intended to promote safe and effective use of bed poles. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact mobility office.

Shift checklist

It is important to check the position of the bed pole every shift to ensure safety. If you answer yes to any of these questions, please follow the instructions on what to do.

Things to check	If the answer is yes, what should I do?
Is the bed pole new to the client and not documented in client's care plan?	Please notify mobility office immediately as it is not safe to use bed pole without assessed and instructed by a health care professional.
Has the bed pole moved?	Re-position the bed pole so that it is firmly under the mattress. Contact mobility office if the bed pole is moving or causing difficulties.
Has the mattress moved?	Re-position the mattress onto the base. Ensure there is no gap between the mattress and bed pole. Contact mobility office if the bed pole is moving or causing difficulties.
Is there a gap between the bed pole and the mattress?	Re-position the bed pole to reduce the gap between the mattress and bed pole. Contact mobility office if the bed pole is moving or causing difficulties.
Has the medical or physical condition of the person using the bed pole changed? For example, drowsiness, confusion, reduced strength or in their arms, legs or body – reduced ability to call for assistance or move away from a dangerous position?	Please notify mobility office immediately as it is no longer safe to use. Client will have to be reviewed by health care professional for further advice.
Is there any change to the type of mattress (e.g. to an air mattress)?	Please notify mobility office immediately as it is no longer safe to use. Client will have to be reviewed by health care professional for further advice.
Is a different bed height being used (e.g. a hospital bed that can be raised and lowered)?	Please notify mobility office immediately if the bed is below hip-height of the person. Client will require health care professional review for further advice.
Is the bed in a different position (e.g. does the bed have a reclining backrest that has been moved)?	Do not put the bed pole under the head or reclining area of the bed. Re-position the bed pole so it is beneath the flat section of the bed.
Is there any item hanging on the bed pole?	Remind the client not to hang anything on the bed pole and gain consent to remove the items hanging on the bed pole.

3 Document History

Reviewed by: Head of Care
 Authorised by: CEO
 Date Adopted: 23/11/23
 Next Review Due: 23/11/25

Version Control

Version	Date	Change
1	23/11/2023	New

Administration of this Policy

The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Related Policies and procedures

mobility Code of conduct
 Restrictive Practice Procedure – Aged Care
 Restrictive Practice Work Instruction – Aged Care

Applicable standards, legislation, or other requirements

Aged Care Act 1997
 Aged Care Quality Standards (ACQS)
 Work Health and Safety Act 2011
 National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS)

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- ⁱ Occupational Therapy Australia. (2015) Position Statement: Provision of Bed Stick and Poles.
 - ⁱⁱ Occupational Therapy Australia. (2015). Practical guide for safe and effective use: Bed sticks and rails for community, acute and residential care use.
 - ⁱⁱⁱ Occupational Therapy Australia. (2015). Fact Sheet: Bed sticks and rails.