

Appendix 1: Exceptional and Life-threatening Situations

Generic risk assessments for routine and emergency situations are available from the:

- Health & Safety Pages on the NHS Fife Intranet.
- Home Page | A-Z | H | Health & Safety - subject | Manual Handling

Emergency Situations

The 'Royal College of Nursing' and the 'National Back Exchange' advise that there are only four real emergencies where manually lifting a person may be necessary;

These are when a patient is in imminent danger of;

- drowning
- being in an area that is actually on fire or filling with smoke
- a bomb or a bullet
- a collapsing building or other structure

Special handling situations

Since cardiac and respiratory arrest is neither a sudden nor unpredictable event, in 80% of cases there is a deterioration in clinical signs. It can be argued, therefore, that a cardiac arrest is not an emergency as this can be expected to occur within a hospital environment and is a foreseeable event (Resuscitation Council UK (2001)). As such, this situation should be assessed for risk and the outcome of this should lead to plans and provisions being implemented locally to handle the cardiac arrest situation safely (Resuscitation Council UK (2001)). Managers must ensure that plans are in place for dealing with special handling situations including the management of a falling patient and must develop local procedures accordingly (a manual handling task specific risk assessment is available on NHS Fife intranet which can be downloaded and altered to suit individual departments). The Resuscitation Council (UK) has developed "Guidance for safer handling during resuscitation in hospitals". This document is available on the intranet or from Resuscitation officers.

Advice may be sought from the manual handling practitioners with regards to complex special handling situations such as evacuation from a pool etc.