

Patient Transfer and Transport

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1. Introduction

- Patient transfer is the safe movement of a patient between beds, wards, departments, or facilities.
- Good practice protects the patient and prevents injury to staff.

2. Types of Transfer

- **Internal transfer:** moving within the same facility, such as ward to theatre.
- **External transfer:** moving between facilities, often by ambulance.
- Transfers may be planned or emergency, depending on clinical need.

3. Assessment Before Moving

- Evaluate the patient's stability, mobility, and equipment needs.
- Ensure airway, oxygen, drips, and monitoring can continue during transit.
- Confirm the receiving area is ready and informed.

4. Safe Handling

- Use correct manual handling techniques and aids such as hoists and slide sheets.
- **Body mechanics:** protect staff from musculoskeletal injury.
- Secure the patient and equipment to prevent falls.

5. Communication and Records

- Use a structured handover, such as SBAR, between teams.
- Transfer notes, charts, and medications must accompany the patient.
- Document the transfer time, condition, and any incidents.