

- the size of the mattress in use, for example the overall height of the mattress or overlay could compromise the safe use of the bed rails
- ensure that the bed rails are inspected at regular intervals especially prior to use, but at least once per week

The manufacturers' instructions for the safe fitting of bed rails must be followed at all times.

If any staff members are unsure how to fit bed rails correctly then they must request advice and assistance in the safe fitting of the bed rails and must not attempt to fit them themselves.

Further advice can be obtained from:

- Manual handling advisor
Tel: 01244 385 189
- Health and Safety Department
Tel: 01244 385 187

<p>If you require translation services or a copy of this document in other languages, audio tape, Braille or larger print, please speak to a member of CWP staff, e-mail info@cwps.nhs.uk or write to: Communications, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Upton Lea, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1BQ.</p>
<p>যদি আপনার ট্রান্সলেশন সার্ভিসের বা এই দলিলের কপি অন্য ভাষায়, অডিও টেপে, ব্রেইল বা বড় ছাপায় দরকার হয় তবে অনুগ্রহ করে সিডব্লিউপি এর স্টাফদের সাথে কথা বলুন, ইমেইল করার ঠিকানা info@cwps.nhs.uk বা কমিউনিকেশন, চেশায়ার ও উইরাল পার্টনারশীপ এনএইচএস ফাউন্ডেশন ট্রাস্ট, আপটন লী, কাউন্টেস অফ চেস্টার হেলথ পার্ক, লিভারপুল রোড, চেস্টার, সিএইচ২ ১ বিকিউ ঠিকানায় লিখুন।</p>
<p>如果您需要翻譯服務或想索取這份文件的其他語文、錄音帶、凸字或大字體版本，請向我們的職員查詢。您亦可以寄電郵至 info@cwps.nhs.uk 或寄信到 Communication, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Upton Lea, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1BQ.</p>
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<p>Os oes arnoch angen gwasanaeth cyfiethu neu gopi o'r ddogfen hon mewn ieithoedd eraill, tâp sain, Braille neu brint mawr, siaradwch ag aelod o staff CWP, e-bost info@cwps.nhs.uk neu ysgrifennwch i: Communications, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Upton Lea, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1BQ.</p>

Feedback

We welcome any suggestions you have, please send your **comments, concerns and compliments** to: PALS, Patient and Carer Experience Team, Trust Headquarters, Redesmere, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1BQ.

For more information see www.cwps.nhs.uk

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Guidance for the safe use of bed rails

Information for staff

This leaflet is to be read in conjunction with the Therapeutic Observation Policy and the Management of Slips, Trips and Falls Policy

This leaflet will help provide guidance to staff in the assessment and safe use of bed rails or what are commonly known as “cot sides” and to help reduce the risk of harm to service users whilst they are in hospital.

Bed rails should only be considered for use as a means to reduce the risk of a service user accidentally slipping, sliding, falling or rolling out of bed.

Types of bed rails available

There are two types of bed rails available

- rails purchased separately from the bed (third party)
- rails purchased as part of the bed package (integral)

Following investigations by the Medicines and Healthcare Related products Agency it was found that third party type bed rails are involved in more incidents than the integral type, mostly in a domestic or care home setting where a divan type bed may be used.

Responsibility and rail assessment

Any decision concerning the use of bed rails needs to be made in the same way as other forms of treatment or care; this should include the consideration for consent for their use. The proposed use of bed rails should be discussed wherever possible with the service user / relatives.

Relatives or carers cannot make a decision for an adult service user regards the use of bed rails, except in certain circumstances where they may hold a Lasting Power of

Attorney extending to healthcare decisions under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The use of bed rails should be considered as part of an overall strategy for the prevention of falls.

What should be considered?

A full risk assessment must be carried out for each individual service user and should consider the individual, the type of bed; type of mattress and which type of bed rails are available.

The risk assessment form is attached to the Prevention and Management of Slips, Trips and Falls policy (appendix 6)

Bed rails **may not** be suitable

- if the service user is agile enough or confused enough to climb over the rails
- if the service user would be independent if the rails were not in place
- if there is a possibility that the service user could injure themselves on the bed rails
- if the use of bed rails increases distress to the service user
- if the gap between the bed rail is large enough to allow the head or body of the service user to pass through and become trapped, (Figure 1).



Figure 1

Once completed the formal risk assessment is to be included in the service users care notes so that all staff have access to the assessment.

If there is any change in the service users' condition or wishes, the use of bed rails must be reviewed immediately, but as a minimum the use of bed rails must be reviewed every week.

Safe use of bed rails

When fitting the bed rails staff should consider

- can they be fitted to the bed correctly?
- if mounting clamps are used, make sure they are fitted correctly and securely
- is there any gap between the lower bar of the rail and the top of the mattress?
- gaps at the end of the bed rail and the headboard / footboard that could cause entrapment? (See below)

