**Care & Help, LLC. Home Care Agency**

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**Workplace Safety**

Four Areas of Risk in Homecare

1. Muscle and bone injuries,
and strain.
2. Exposure risks.
3. Emotional and mental stress.
4. Emergency and personal safety

Muscle/Bone Injuries and Strains

* Transferring clients
* Carrying heavy loads, such as
laundry, equipment, or other
heavy items
* Moving clients in bed
* Lifting or moving furniture
or other heavy objects
* Bending and stretching while cleaning or helping clients with activities of daily living
* Tripping in the home or walkways up to the home

Exposure Risks

* Airborne germs
* Body fluids
* Needlesticks or sharps wounds
* Cleaning agents
* Pets
* Latex
* Second-hand smoke
* Infestations of bugs
* Too hot or cold temperatures

Emotional and Mental Stresses

* Working many hours, trying to do too much in too little time.
* Grief related to clients or loved ones.
* Abusive and challenging interactions with clients or others in homes, and
in personal life.
* Life stresses
	+ Finances
	+ health,
	housing
	+ transportation
	+ childcare
	+ relationships

Emergency and Personal Safety

* Fire, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, electrical outages,
and other events while at work
* Driving to and from work
* Dangers in the areas
around homes
* Violence in the homes

Health and Safety is So Important Because …

* If you get injured or ill, you miss work, you lose income, and you can leave clients without support
* Strained backs and muscles create more risk of hurting clients
* Clients often worry about you when you are hurt

It’s painful—and stressful— to be sick, or to have sprains, strains, and broken bones

* Getting injured or ill affects all aspects of your life
* If you are sick, you can infect clients and others

Homecare Workers May Put Their Health and Safety at Risk Because …

* They hurry—trying to do too much in too little time
* They don’t want to let clients down and need their wages, so they work when hurt or sick
* They haven’t received training— or haven’t been trained enough—to know how to maintain their health and safety
* They put doing what clients want and need over their own health and safety
* Clients want them to do things that aren’t safe or treat them in ways that are stressful, and they haven’t learned how to set healthy boundaries

Tips for Staying Healthy and Safe on the Job

* Stay alert and get training (and never stop learning) about the four areas of risk:
	+ Physical strains
	+ Exposures
	+ Stresses
	+ Physical and emergency safety
* Speak up and listen constructively—out of respect for yourself and *with* respect for others. Talk with clients and supervisors to address concerns

More Health and Safety Strategies…

* Use assistive devices if available—ask for them and help select them, if possible
* Learn and use good body mechanics
* Use Standard Precautions—especially gloves and hand-washing—to avoid exposures
* Use approved containers for disposing of sharps and needles
* Report concerns to clients and management immediately

Take Care of Yourself

* Get sleep, exercise, and follow a healthy diet
* Drive safely with your seat belt on, with no phones or distractions
* Take time weekly to plan and care for your own well-being
* Engage others in your life in helping you address stress—talk it over assertively

Talk it Over! Bring Up Health and Safety Issues as Soon as Possible:

* Plan the discussion
* Be respectful—make a request, not a demand
* Use “I” statements. Describe what you observe and how it affects you rather than blaming the other
* Listen and see the issue from the other’s point of view
* Consider several solutions beyond your first choice
* Know your bottom line