

MANITOBA HEALTH PATIENT SAFETY ALERT

Date	October 26, 2012
Sent To	RHA Chief Executive Officers RHA HPSEN Members RHA Planning Network Members RHAM Quality, Patient Safety & Risk Management Committee Members
Subject	Reducing Risks Associated with the Use of the Waverly Glenn P- 440 Ceiling Lift

Issue

Manitoba Health has become aware of 3 recent critical incidents involving the use of a Waverly Glenn Ceiling Lift (Model P- 440).

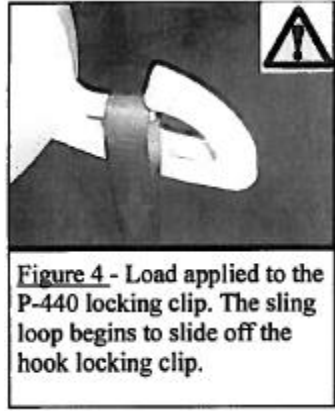
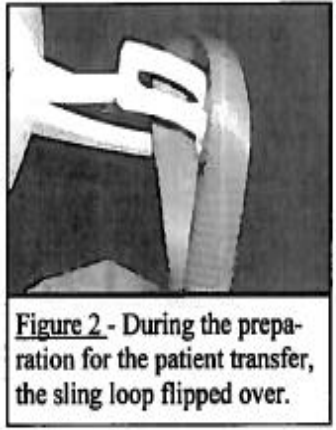
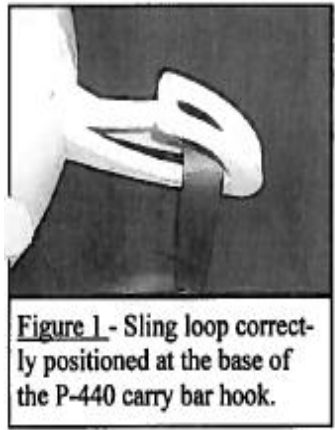
On January 9, 2012, Waverly Glenn issued a technical bulletin entitled “Connection of Sling Loops to P-440 Carry Bar Hook”. A copy of this bulletin is attached to this patient safety alert.

In 2006, Health Canada issued an alert with important safety information on attachment of sling loops to portable patient lifts. This document can be downloaded from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/prof/2006/patient_lift-leve_nth-aah-eng.php

Reducing the Risk

There are two important actions that can prevent this accidental disconnection from occurring:

1. Ensure that the sling loops are correctly connected to the lift.

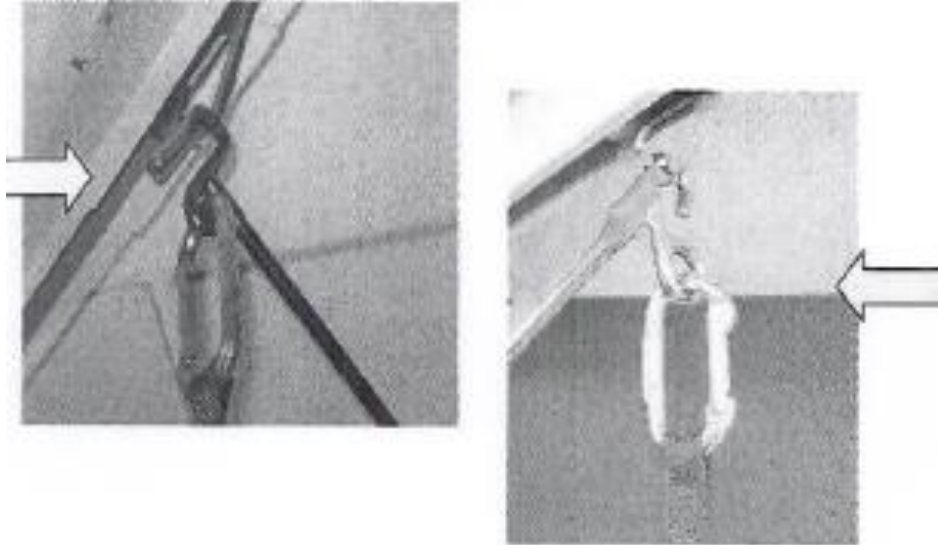


Reference: Technical Bulletin, Waverly Glenn, January 2012

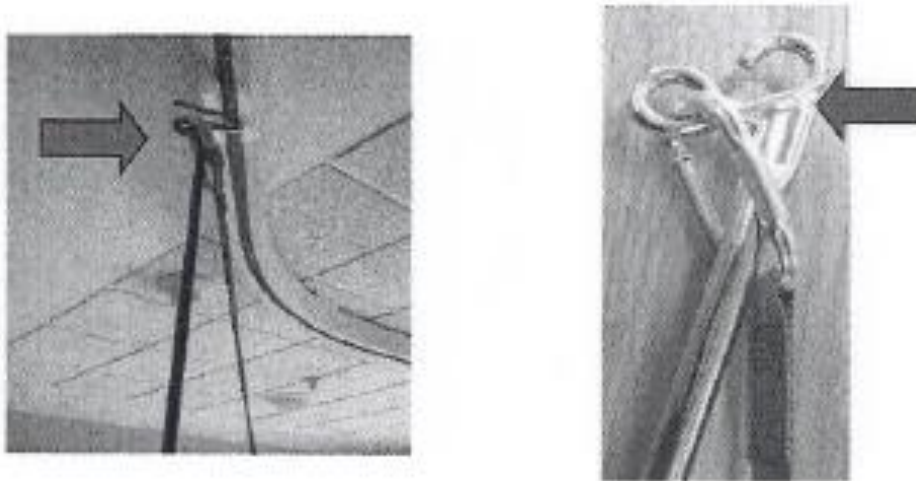
2. If your lift has a long handle with a hook that attaches the lift strap to the ceiling track, ensure that it is not inadvertently hooked onto itself.

See the illustrations below for the correct and incorrect positioning of this hook during the transfer process.

Correct Positioning of the Hooks



Incorrect Positioning of the Hooks



Reference: WRHA Deer Lodge Lifts and Transfers Policies

Recommendations

Manitoba Health recommends that RHAs and facilities using these lifts undertake a review of the lifts and use thereof to ensure:

1. The ceiling tracks have been properly installed.
2. That all portable lifts have spring loaded safety hooks/locking clips, that each is working correctly, and that the spring loaded clip tension has not deteriorated. **If the spring loaded safety hook is not present, contact the manufacturer for the required retro-fit. Do not use the equipment until the retro-fit is satisfactorily completed.** Note that manufacturers suggest sling replacement every 2 years. Many manufacturers will not accept any liability for issues present in slings more than 2 years old.
3. That regional policies and procedures are in place for safe use of the lifts. Regional / facility policies and procedures should require that, **prior to each use of the sling**, sling inspections for any signs of wear and tear occur. Particular attention should be paid loop attachment areas and the loops themselves.
4. That staff have the necessary education and skills to use the lifts safely, and are following regional / facility lift use policies and procedures.

Appendix 1: Considerations to Ensure a Safe Lift and Transfer

About Slings

- Verify that the sling is the correct type and correct size for the patient. Patients' needs can change over time. A sling that was once appropriate may require a reassessment, just as the patient's transfer method may change over time.
- **Prior to using the sling**, inspect the sling for any signs of wear and tear specifically where the loops are attached to the sling and the individual loops for fraying or tears.
- Check the purchase date of the sling that you are using. Manufacturers generally suggest that the slings be replaced every 2 years. Many manufacturers will not accept any liability should an issue arise if the sling is more than 2 years old. This is usually clearly stated in the Operating Manual.
- Ensure that the patient is correctly positioned in the sling and that the sling loops are correctly attached. Attachment of the sling loops determines how the patient is positioned in space in the sling.
- Depending on how the sling loops are positioned to the lift, the patient can be in a more upright sitting position or almost lying flat.
- Depending on the patient's needs and transfers, one position may be safer for the patient and staff than others.

Teamwork and the Lift Procedure

- During the lift procedure, there is always a "lead" person and a "second" person. Both are required to be present from the start to the finish of the lift sequence.
- For safety, apply the brakes to the lift prior to attaching the sling to the lift.
- Both the "lead" and the "second" person **MUST** attend to the action of lifting and moving the patient as the patient rises in the lift. Always move the lift the shortest possible safe distance between two points.
- Hold onto the sling to guide and steady the patient during the lift. **If at any time, the patient appears to be "off center" or sliding, immediately stop the transfer and lower the patient back to the surface from which the lift started.**
- As the patient in the lift is moved across the floor space, ensure that one staff member is always watching the patient's movement to ensure the patient remains appropriately positioned and balanced throughout the lift.

INTRODUCTION:

This bulletin reinforces the importance of ensuring proper connection of the sling loop to the P-440 carry bar hook. The following cautionary notice is found on page 12 of the P-440 Owner's Manual:

Step 4) Following the instructions provided with the sling. Attach the straps of the sling to the carry bar hooks of the lift. The straps on each side of the sling are generally attached to the corresponding side of the carry bar hooks. Be sure to double check to ensure that the straps are properly attached to the carry bar hooks, and that the individual being lifted is properly positioned in the sling prior to lifting.

⚠ Caution: Prior to lifting an individual make sure that the straps of the sling are securely placed on the carry bar hooks and that the straps will not come off.

We have become aware of incidents at a facility in which the sling loop separated from the P-440 hook. The root cause of this near incident can be described by the following sequence of pictures:

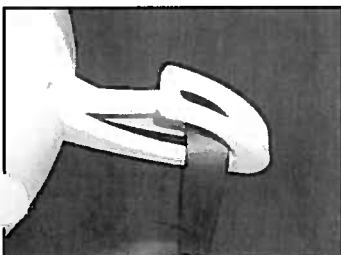


Figure 1 - Sling loop correctly positioned at the base of the P-440 carry bar hook.



Figure 2 - During the preparation for the patient transfer, the sling loop flipped over.



Figure 3 - Sling loop incorrectly resting on the P-440 hook locking clip.

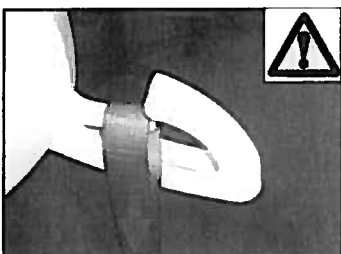


Figure 4 - Load applied to the P-440 locking clip. The sling loop begins to slide off the hook locking clip.



Figure 5 - Sling loop separated from the P-440 carry bar hook.

For your safety and the safety of the patient, please always ensure that the sling loops are correctly positioned on the carry bar hooks. It is suggested to do the check of the sling loops once there is tension to the sling loops but prior to completely lifting the patient.