



## Patient Handling with *C.A.R.E.*<sup>TM</sup>

Nurses and related healthcare workers have some of the highest incident rates for back and other injuries arising from ergonomic risk (now termed work related musculoskeletal disorders or WMSD) of any industry. These WMSD are associated with the physical demands of patient handling. The risk for these disorders is due to the increasing weight of patients, the increasing average age of healthcare workers, and the increased degree of disability while patients and residents are receiving care.

A new group, the Association of Safe Patient Handling Professionals (ASPHP), introduced themselves at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Safe Patient Handling and Movement Conference March 28 through April 1, 2011. The ASPHP is a non-profit association dedicated to enhancing the safety of caregivers and improving the outcome of the patients they serve by promoting evidence-based standards and practice. This association offers both accreditation and membership options. For more details regarding the association go to [www.asphp.org](http://www.asphp.org). Colin J. Brigham, CIH, CSP, CPE, CPEA is a founding member, vice president, and board member of the ASPHP.

The following quote is from the main page of the website:

*"We need to disseminate the research evidence much faster ... the old adage of 'keep your back straight, bend your knees, and lift' just won't work anymore."*

Thomas Waters, PhD, CPE – National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

There is a great deal of literature including research that demonstrates that effective safe patient handling (SPH) programs better protect healthcare workers, patients, and the bottom line of healthcare facilities. Some of this literature is on the ASPHP website.

1Source staff has been helping healthcare employers since 1987 to implement SPH programs. This has included developing and conducting SPH seminars since 1991 where the control, anticipation, recognition, and evaluation of ergonomic and other risks are evaluated. The slogan above that includes the word *C.A.R.E.* is derived from the following actions that are required to have an effective program:

- **Control** – apply appropriate design considerations, equipment, and other resources
- **Anticipate** – changes in patient condition or activities
- **Recognize** – required work practices and obstacles to safe handling
- **Evaluate** – patient and staff condition and ability to assist.

Past clients with exemplary SPH programs include Christiana Care Health System and Lehigh Valley Health Network. For more details, and to learn how we can assist in developing an effective safe patient handling program please, contact Colin J. Brigham at [cbrigham@1ssh.com](mailto:cbrigham@1ssh.com) or 888-873-9983, ext. 24.

