

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to patient lifting and handling practices;
 3 creating s. 381.029, F.S.; providing a definition;
 4 requiring hospitals to establish a policy concerning the
 5 lifting and handling of patients by hospital employees;
 6 requiring a committee to develop the policy; providing for
 7 membership and duties of the committee; requiring
 8 continuing evaluation of the policy; providing an
 9 effective date.

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 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 13 Section 1. Section 381.029, Florida Statutes, is created
 14 to read:

15 381.029 Patient lifting and handling practices.--

16 (1) As used in this section, the term "hospital" means a
 17 health care facility licensed under chapter 395.

18 (2) A hospital shall establish an evidence-based policy
 19 regarding the safe lifting and associated handling of patients
 20 by hospital employees that minimizes the risk of injuries to
 21 patients and employees. The policy shall be developed by a
 22 committee composed of an appropriate mix of management and
 23 nonmanagement employees, including registered nurses engaged in
 24 direct patient care. The hospital may assign the task of
 25 developing the policy to a newly created committee or to an
 26 existing committee.

27 (3) The committee shall:

28 (a) Use data to evaluate the risk of injury to patients
 29 and employees.

30 (b) Determine the appropriateness of alternative
 31 strategies for lifting and handling patients based on the
 32 population of patients at the hospital and identified hospital-
 33 specific risk factors. At a minimum, the committee shall
 34 consider:

35 1. Using mechanical lifting devices or other engineering
 36 controls that minimize the need to lift and handle the patient
 37 manually.

38 2. Using teams to lift and handle patients.

39 3. Providing training in safe lifting and handling
 40 practices for employees engaged in caring for patients.

41 4. Incorporating physical space and construction design
 42 for mechanical lifting devices in architectural plans for
 43 construction or renovation of the hospital.

44 (c) Develop an ongoing evaluation process to determine the
 45 effectiveness of the policy established under this section.

46 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2009.