

Nursing Homes - Falls at the Same Level



291 Nursing Home workers were seriously injured in falls at the same level in the years 2000-2004, resulting in over 3000 days off work.



The injuries from these accidents were so serious, the workers had to take time off from work or in some cases were permanently disabled. These serious injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the base rate of \$0.84 per hour per employee paid by nursing home employers in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your “experience rating” could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$1.03 per hour per employee.

Stated in another way, if you had 10 full-time nursing home employees and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$16,800 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay almost \$3,900 more or about \$20,700 in premiums in 2006.

Causes of fall injuries

Injuries to workers result from falls at the same level and to the work surface. Falls occur when workers lose their footing from a slip, trip, or misstep, or otherwise lose their balance. Slips due to water, urine, grease, or other liquid on the floor account for many of the fall injuries.

Other hazards resulting in falls include tripping over floor mats and carpeting, wheel chairs, foot rests, bed cranks, bedding and mattress edges, equipment, and items on the floor.

Falls also occur when workers are assisting or moving patients and lose their balance or are knocked over or pulled down by patients.



Many fall injuries are due to slipping on water when assisting patients with bathing.

Ways to prevent falls

- Use no-skid waxes and surfaces coated with grit to create non-slip surfaces, or use non-slip mats, in toilet/shower, food prep, and other slippery areas.
- Make sure floors are kept clean and dry.
- Clean up water, grease, and other liquid or food spills immediately. Provide warning signs for wet floor areas.
- Provide workers with non-slip shoes.
- Keep hallways, walkways, and work areas clear of obstacles and obstructions.
- Re-lay or stretch carpets or mats that bulge or have become bunched to prevent tripping hazards.
- Watch where you are going. Do not carry items that may block your view of the ground in front of you or where you are walking.
- Provide adequate lighting especially during night hours. Use flashlights or low-level lighting when entering patient rooms.
- Seek additional help from others when assisting or moving patients.

