

Home Health Care - Falls at the Same Level



103 Home Health Care workers were seriously injured in falls on stairs and at the same level in the years 2000-2004, resulting in over 21,900 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 \$1.12 per hour per employee paid by home health care 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 \$1.39 per hour per employee.

Stated in another way, if you had 10 full-time home health care employees and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$22,500 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$5,300 more or about \$27,800 in premiums in 2006.

Causes of fall injuries

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

Other hazards resulting in falls include tripping over carpeting and mats, wheel chairs, furniture, equipment, and objects on the floor, and tripping or misstepping on uneven ground, sidewalks, steps, and ramps.

Falls also occur when workers who are assisting or moving clients lose their balance, or are knocked over or pulled down by the clients.



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

Ways to prevent falls

- Clean up any water, grease, and other liquid or food spills immediately.
- Use non-slip mats in toilet/shower, kitchen, and other slippery areas.
- Keep shoes dry and clean of water, mud, and grease. Wear non-slip shoes to help with traction on wet or icy pavement and ground.
- Clear halls, pathways, and work areas of obstacles and obstructions.
- Re-lay or stretch carpets or mats that bulge or have become bunched to prevent tripping hazards.
- Use adequate lighting to improve visibility of the work areas and hallways.
- Do not carry items that may block your view of the ground in front of you or where you are walking.
- Always watch where you are going and be aware of any potential hazards, such as broken steps or tiles, electrical cords on the floor, clutter, etc.
- When assisting clients with activities of daily living, make sure you are not working in an awkward position that would cause you to lose your balance easily.