

# Pushing Stretchers and Beds – Guideline

- Plan the route before moving the stretcher/bed. Clear a pathway in the hall and or remove obstacles (i.e. equipment, closed doors).
- Under ideal circumstances, transport should be done with a stretcher as opposed to a bed.
- Make sure you can see where you are going.
- Push before you pull whenever possible.
- Ask for help if the weight is too heavy or awkward.
- Ensure the stretcher/bed is functioning properly (i.e. brakes work, “steer” and neutral feature functioning, wheels are rolling and functioning properly). If the stretcher/bed is not functioning properly, do not use it and notify your Manager, please ensure you call Maintenance Services. (Follow your site’s protocol).
- Grasp the stretcher/bed with both hands as close to waist/elbow height as possible (adjust the height of the bed/stretcher as needed). Use handles if available. Keep your wrists straight. Place one foot in front of the other. Keep your back straight, tighten your abdominals, bend at the hips and knees and keep your head up.
- Push the stretcher/bed by weight shifting through the legs (from the back foot to the front foot).
- Keep elbows close to your body. Do not push or pull with arms out from the side or behind your body.
- Perform all movements in a slow and controlled manner. Avoid quick and jerky movements.
- Slow down when approaching a corner and when maneuvering around a corner, use mirrors to see around corners when possible.
- Keep the stretcher/bed you are pushing directly in front of you.
- When going down ramps, activate the STEER mechanism and go down backwards to control the stretcher/bed.

## Neutral/Swivel versus “Lock-out”/Steer Wheel Feature:

**Brake Engaged**



**Neutral / Swivel Mode**



**“Lock out” / Steer Mode**

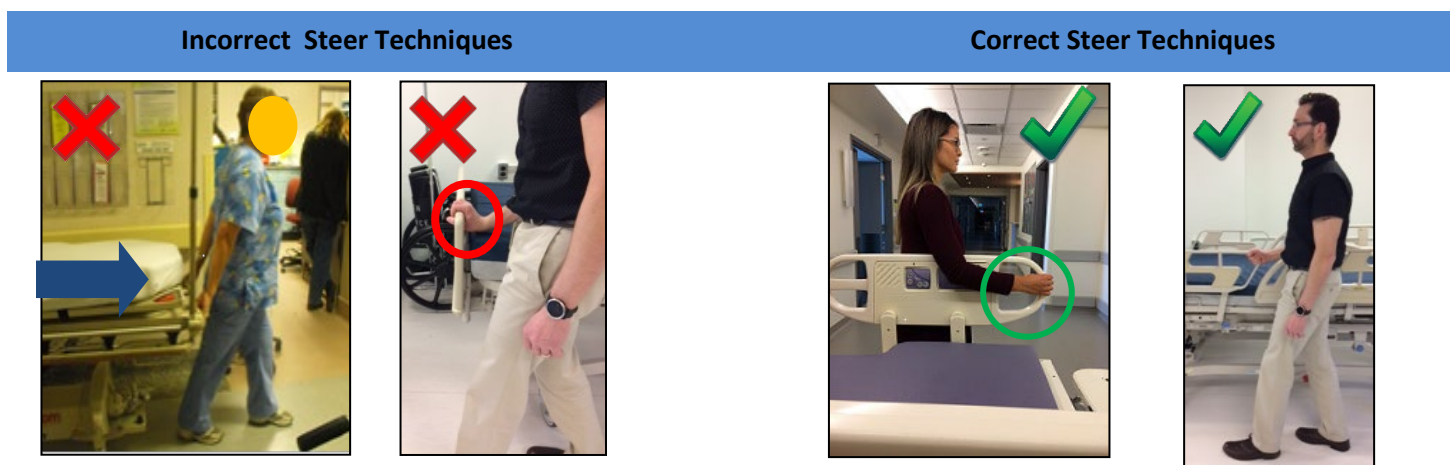


- When pushing a stretcher/bed over longer distances (i.e. hall/corridor), or when cornering:
  - Steer / “Lock-out” feature engaged - wheels closest to the user in free/swivel mode and the wheels furthest away from user are locked in a straight position /” steer” mode.
- When maneuvering a stretcher/bed in confined spaces:
  - Neutral feature engaged - all four wheels in swivel/free mode.

Examples of incorrect and correct Push Techniques:



Examples of incorrect and correct Steer Techniques:

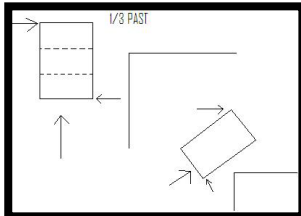


Moving Stretchers and beds around a corner:

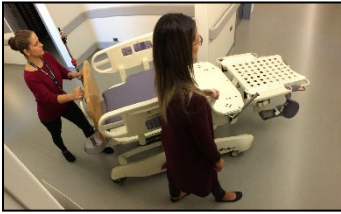
1. Engage "Lock-out" / Steer feature.



2. Push the Stretcher / Bed one-third past the corner.



3. Position body to the side of the stretcher/bed if needed.



4. Use a wide base of support, one foot forward and one foot back, hips and knees bent, back straight arms at side of body.



5. Convex mirrors can be positioned to assist the HCW to view the hall around the corner.



#### Number of Health Care Workers Recommended:

- Additional HCWs may be required when:
  1. Transporting a patient in a hospital bed or bariatric bed/stretcher
  2. Maneuvering Ramps
  3. Increased Patient Weight
  4. Additional Equipment (i.e. I.V. Pole)

#### Battery Powered Bed and Stretcher Movers (OPTIONAL) for Pushing Extra Equipment

If available use battery powered bed and stretcher movers or tuggers.



Health Care Workers steering the stretcher or bed can assist with equipment. Health Care Worker at the head of the stretcher or bed can then focus on pushing.

