

M10-EN.13 HELIPORT

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M10-EN.13.1 Introduction

Health care personnel charged of moving the patients from and to the heliport area has to face several hazards, such as noise, difficulty on communicating with each other, condition of the helipad, ergonomics, equipment, fuels.

M10-EN.13.1.1 Noise/Communication

Exposure to noise at the heliport area is responsible for potential hearing loss, hearing impairment, high blood pressure levels and other health hazards due to their exposure to the loud sounds of the operating helicopter. High noise levels pose an additional threat to employees if they are unable to communicate or warn each other of possible dangers or situations.

Safety Precautions require that **employers** must:

- Implement a health and safety program that identifies and addresses the hazards from noise exposure
- Provide appropriate equipment for the protection of the personnel's hearing (earplugs, earmuffs, etc)
- Ensure that employees use aviation helmets including particular hearing protection and specific communication systems in order to communicate through the helmets

M10-EN.13.1.2 Ergonomics

Musculoskeletal disorders can occur from lifting and/or lifting and twisting patients while they are moved to and from helicopter to carts or gurneys.

Safety Precautions

- Use ergonomic equipment for the minimisation of lifting and/or twisting
- Use a portable and adjustable stretcher inside helicopter in order to avoid employees twisting and minimize lifting
- Use a cart that drives patient to emergency department so that the personnel will not have to carry the patient by hand (**M10.13.1.jpg - M10.13.3.jpg**)

M10-EN.13.1.3 Equipment Hazards

When a hospital has a heliport, employees working there can be exposed to equipment hazards associated with helicopters. These can be the tail rotor and the main rotor

system (helicopter blades). These blades can injure or cause death of unaware or uneducated personnel. Hats, loose clothing, gloves etc, can be sucked into the engine air intake fans and cause the helicopter to malfunction and potentially crash.

Safety Precautions

- Only fully trained personnel in helicopter equipment hazards may have access in helicopter area. Avoid the tail rotor and the helicopter blade area
- No Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) should be done to patients on transport carts while the carts are under the helicopter blade. This may elevate height of the personnel to the extent of being hit by the helicopter blades

M10-EN.13.1.4 Helipad

Elevated winds produced by the helicopter blades can throw loose items or garbage etc, on the employees and injure them.

Safety precautions

- Maintain good housekeeping in all helicopter loading and unloading areas
- Clean and keep helipad area free from garbage, litter, or other debris
- Properly secure items (e.g. loose clothing, hats, gloves, scarves), prior the entrance at the helipad area
- Use appropriate eye and face protection

M10-EN.13.1.5 Fuels

Exposure to fuelling hazards is possible at the heliport area. These hazards can be fire or explosions occurring from a spark or match in the helipad area.

Safety Precautions

- Do not smoke at heliport area
- Place proper signs
- Attach a grounding cable to the helicopter during fuelling, to prevent sparks