

# Foundations of Practice and Beyond

## Monday

### Stream G

Session 1 1130

Session 2 1445



## Carol Foster and Ann Drinkwater

### Moving and Handling in the Funeral Services.

#### Biography

##### **Carol Foster**

Carol qualified as a Registered General Nurse in 1992 and first developed an interest in Moving and Handling whilst working within acute elderly medicine at the Leeds General Infirmary. This led to the role of Moving and Handling Advisor within Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Primary Care for 9 years. She is currently the Moving & Handling Specialist Advisor for Wakefield Community Healthcare Services (Primary Care) where she has been working for the last 3 years, with a particular role in promoting musculoskeletal health of the workforce and involvement in staff return/access to work programmes. In addition to working for the NHS, Carol also carries out moving and handling training and consultancy work across a diverse range of settings, developing particular expertise within the Funeral Industry over the last 6 years. She is a Registered Member of National Back Exchange and is currently Product Review Editor for Column.

##### **Ann Drinkwater**

I qualified as a Remedial Gymnast in 1977, becoming a Chartered Physiotherapist in 1985. Following broad rotational experience I specialised in neurology working as a Physiotherapist in this field for a further eleven years. During this time I also developed an interest in Moving and Handling, doing additional work for Social Services. I worked as Manual Handling Facilitator in Private Healthcare for 8 years and currently I work on a strategic level as a Specialist Moving and Handling Adviser for the NHS within the field of Mental Health, and as a private consultant and trainer. I have been a member of N.B.E. for 15 years and a Registered Member for the past 2 years.

#### Abstract

Motorised hearses have replaced the practice of carrying coffins from the house to the graveside, stopping along the way to rest at the local pub, yet the role of the Funeral Director is still fraught with Moving and Handling risk.

The balance of dignity, legislation and tradition is often hard to achieve for many Funeral Directors, who pride themselves on being receptive and sensitive to the needs of the family. Our work behind the scenes of several Funeral Directors across the country has revealed the amount of postural risk they are exposed to and often prepared to take in order to maintain tradition. Correction of posture seemed an obvious solution but this often conflicts with other

hazards they are exposed to; public expectation, sensitivity and a keenness to please, traditions, forensic issues, a misconception of regulations to name but a few.

Punnett et al (1) believe that:

*“Postures that deviate from anatomical neutral [are] physical stressors”.*

The work of Bousenna et al (2) and Nachemson (3) Punnett et al (1) all claim that:

*“Exposure to two or three non-neutral postures in the regular work cycle was found to involve a higher risk than exposure to only one posture”.*

Whilst the risk of postural deviation from anatomical neutral is well documented these Funeral Directors, (male and female), are being exposed to many non neutral postures on a daily basis. There is virtually no funeral specific research or documentation on this.

The role of the Funeral Director is unique and not all handling risks can be eliminated but they can be reduced.

The presentation aims to:

- share our experiences and approach to training for the funeral industry
- highlight the diversity of the role and its demands
- look at our recent evaluation of using a First Call Stretcher to remove the deceased down stairs
- explore possible risk reduction measures appropriate to the needs of the service