



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

This was a literature review focused on use of ceiling lifts for patient transfers in healthcare facilities that specifically investigated the following questions: How effective is the use of ceiling lifts for preventing patient transfer related risks and injuries? Are the costs of installing this equipment justified by the benefits? What are the benefits and drawbacks of connecting bedrooms and bathrooms by ceiling lifts? What are the issues to be considered when using ceiling lifts?

Facing the challenge of patient transfers: Using ceiling lifts in healthcare facilities

Vieira, E. R., Miller, L., 2008 | *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal*. Volume 2, Issue 1, Page 6-16

Key Concepts/Context

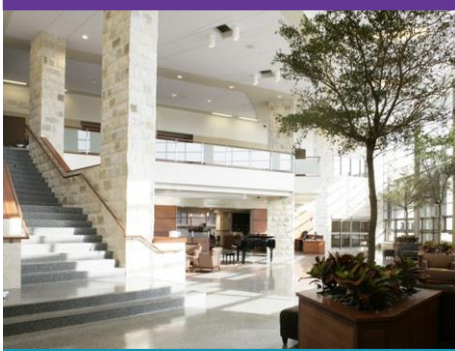
Manual patient transfers contribute to a higher rate of injury for healthcare providers. Manual patient transfers present a high risk of injury and nurses are at significant risk for transfer-related injury, including low back problems. As many healthcare organizations transition and utilize ceiling lifts for patient transfers, little evidence exists regarding how lift equipment is being used and how effective this equipment is at mitigating healthcare worker injury.

Methods

Scholarly databases, literature cited in selected articles, and gray literature were all included in the search method. Twelve articles were identified and included in the review.

Findings

Both from a cost-benefit perspective and an injury reduction perspective, the installation and use of ceiling lifts provides multiple benefits to healthcare staff, patients, and organizations. The use of ceiling lifts reduced the number of steps required for patient transfers, reduced risks related to bariatric patient transfers, and were more readily available for use. The literature reviewed also demonstrated lower injury rates for staff in long-term care facilities. Another significant finding was the benefits of having bedrooms and bathrooms connected by ceiling lift rails.



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Limitations

A limited number ($n = 12$) of studies dealing specifically with ceiling lifts was found. Most of them were cross-sectional or descriptive and had limitations in their methodologies. A systematic review was not feasible given the small number of high-quality case-control and cohort studies in this area. This exploratory narrative review is limited in its ability to reach definite conclusions.

Design Implications

Information gathered suggests that the use of ceiling lifts reduces the musculoskeletal injuries to staff and patients. Moving forward, designing care spaces that include this equipment will be of importance to healthcare organizations and is a necessary inclusion in evidence-based design practices.

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