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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Healthcare workers remain at risk of patient handling injuries; national conference advocates for prevention and change

Warrendale, Pa. (March 1, 2018) – Injuries caused by manually lifting and repositioning patients result in lost work time, wages or careers for nursing staff, emergency responders and other healthcare workers. At the annual Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Conference in Orlando, FL., April 16-20, 2018, all stakeholders will meet to continue efforts to reduce these injuries. In recognition of this vital conference, Orlando’s Mayor Buddy Dyer proclaimed April 16-20, 2018 “**Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Awareness Week.**” It is hoped this proclamation fosters support for the reduction of manual handling in all healthcare environments, increasing safety for caregivers and patients.

“People don’t often think of healthcare as a dangerous occupation, but this industry records 6.4 injuries per 100 workers compared with 3.3 per 100 workers for all other industries combined,” said Renée Kielich, president of the Association of Safe Patient Handling Professionals (ASPHP.) “Implementing safe patient handling programs with appropriate equipment mitigates the risk to workers. Healthcare organizations also improve patient care by preventing patient falls and pressure injuries to skin.”

Several of the groups working to advance research, create programs, and educate caregivers include the ASPHP, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Tampa VA Administration Research and Education Foundation, Inc., American Nurses Association, Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health.

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About ASPHP

The ASPHP provides a venue for individuals interested in the science of safe patient handling to share experiences, access education and information, and advance their professional status through a Certification Program. The membership of the ASPHP works to build a credentialed profession dedicated to the safety and comfort of caregivers and their patients worldwide. www.asphp.org;

About the 2018 Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Conference

This is the 19th year of the conference, created with a goal of universal safe patient handling and mobility in all health care settings. The VISN 8 Patient Safety Center of Inquiry and the Tampa VA Research and Education Foundation, Inc. have been conducting research on the cause and effects of safe patient handling and falls injuries on caregivers and patients for nearly 20 years. Participants are exposed to cutting-edge research, best practices and lessons learned through workshops, national speakers and exhibits of new technology. <http://www.tampavaref.org/safe-patient-handling/index.htm>.