

## **News release**

Thursday October 13, 2011  
For immediate release

### **Bend over backwards to avoid pain and strains**

Posture is the key to good back health when lifting, shifting and carrying out tasks in the workplace.

As part of Back Care Awareness Week which runs from October 17-23, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland PCT Cluster is reminding workers to take extra care at work.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics show nationally more than 14,000 people were diagnosed with work-related back problems caused by incorrect lifting or moving last year.

According to website *Back Care UK*, up to 80 per cent of the population will experience back pain at some stage in their life. During any one year, up to half the adult population (49%) will have back pain at some point.

Deb Watson, director of public health in Leicester, said: "Workers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland need to know the importance of good back care and posture in the workplace, especially when lifting, shifting and moving objects. If you experience any pain or discomfort whilst at work contact your health and safety manager who should arrange for an assessment of your work area to ensure you are getting the correct back support."

Lifting objects is part of our daily life. However, lifting (or manual handling as it is often called) is also a common cause of back pain. In order to prevent back pain it is best to lift with care and not to lift more than you can easily handle.

- Use manual handling equipment when this is available and make sure you use it correctly.
- When lifting objects, bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Make sure you have a stable base to stand on when lifting objects.
- Carry objects close to your body.
- Lift heavy objects or awkwardly shaped objects with two or more people.

Staying active by walking, swimming and Pilates or yoga will help to improve posture and strength of the back muscles. Taking extra care when moving around the office and when using office equipment will also lower the risk of developing back pain or spinal injury at work.

For more information on back care visit NHS Choices website at <http://bit.ly/qcUAJG>.

ENDS

**For interviews or more information please contact media officer Liz Thomas on 0116 295 7677 or [liz.thomas@leicestercity.nhs.uk](mailto:liz.thomas@leicestercity.nhs.uk) or senior media officer Caroline Higgs on 0116 295 7663 or [caroline.higgs@lcr.nhs.uk](mailto:caroline.higgs@lcr.nhs.uk).**

Notes to editor:

In October 2010 NHS Leicester City and NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland joined forces to form a 'cluster', in line with the requirements of the Department of Health. Although we share one Cluster Board and our staff work across the city and county boundaries, we have not legally merged, and retain our separate statutory duties. Together we serve a population of more than a million people. Cluster formation is an interim stage in the reform of the NHS, involving ongoing transfer of most local commissioning functions to GP-led clinical commissioning groups, in line with the Health and Social Care Bill, now before Parliament and the House of Lords.