

Our Experience - Slide Boards

With regard to weight limits of Slide Boards, this is an area where the ability and strength of the Patient and Carer is important. The strength of the material is largely irrelevant because:

1. **As opposed to a Lifting Sling, the Slide Board will never be taking someone's full weight**
2. **The material strength will far outweigh the strength of a Carer**
3. **Slide Boards will not compress under the weight of a Patient**

In use, Slide Boards do not take the full weight of a person. They are designed to be supported underneath, for example by a bed, a wheelchair, or a car seat. The gap between the two surfaces the person is moving to and from, should be kept to an absolute minimum. The smaller the gap, the more support and the stability the Board has, and the safer the transfer. As a general rule, only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Slide Board should be unsupported, however, this may be overruled by your Workplace Health & Safety Officer.



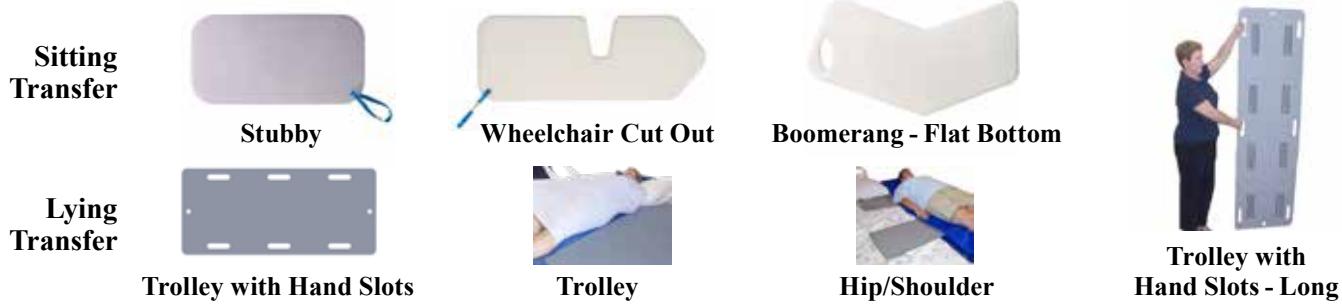
Depending on the ability of the person using the Slide Board, a Carer may or may not be required to assist in the transfer. The strength and ability of the Carer will be important, and we recommend that Carers practice any new Manual Handling transfers with an able bodied person first, so that they are familiar with how a person's weight moves.

Wooden Slide Boards are still in existence, but are generally being phased out. Plastic Slide Boards have some important advantages over the wooden types:

Plastic Slide Boards	Wooden Slide Boards
Cannot be affected by humidity	Can be affected by moisture in the air, ie. humidity
Cannot be affected by water	Can be affected by water, eg. rain, drink spillages
Some plastics cannot snap, but will bend	Can snap without warning
The plastic keeps its shape	Can splinter at the edges
Flexible	Does not bend

All plastic Slide Boards have some degree of flexibility. This flexibility can differ, depending on the Patient's requirements. More flexibility is generally required when going from one height to another. The flexibility has to be taken into account for the Slide Board's designated use, as too much flex may be dangerous. Plastics used for Slide Boards should not snap and break. Pelican has carried out in-house testing, bending the Slide Boards 45° and then successfully straightening the Board back to normal.

Some Pelican Slide Boards use a white plastic material in construction. The advantage of this material is that it is virtually self-lubricating. The disadvantage is it can be marked easily, and a brand new product can look second hand. However we feel the advantage outweighs the disadvantage. Pelican have a variety of Slide Boards for both sitting and lying down transfers. Special sizes can be made on request.



Key points:

- Keep the gap as small as possible
- Keep the Slide Board on the bed/chair/wheelchair etc. as much as possible, so that it is supported
- Use a Carer to assist where necessary

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