Why dining chairs fail **CARE STAFF**

The journey of aging robs many from living healthy independent lives. Daily challenges associated with ongoing health conditions, injuries, medical diagnosis, surgeries or aging reduces one's mobility it prevents many of us from scooting up-to the table to work on a family puzzle or enjoy a meal with family and friends.

Front line staff are the first to feel the impact of reduced mobility among clients/residents as they are charged with providing whatever effort is required to move a seated person up-to the table.

Today's furniture technology fails as many designs date back some 4600 years to chairs that feature four legs, a seat, and back, and arms.

Circa 2600 BC

Simply stated…

Dining chairs fail caregivers because

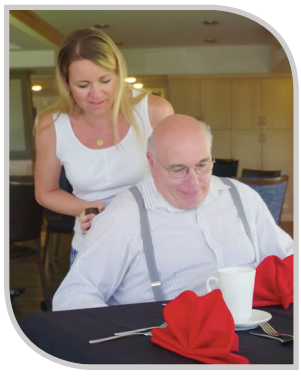
- chairs are not designed to MOVE

Dining chairs fail care staff because

- chairs do not reduce the physical demands of care staff providing mealtime assistance

Therefore…

Care staff are expected to exert considerable physical effort (push / pull / shove / twist) each time meal assistance is provided.



- ✗ Care staff are at increased risk of incurring a work place injury
- ✗ Care staff cannot enjoy a healthier work environment when the physical demands associated with providing mealtime assistance are not reduced
- ✗ Residents are at increased risk of falling / tripping as they get seated at mealtimes
- ✗ Residents are less compliant and less willing to follow care staff directives…often creating a combative, less enjoyable mealtime routine!

Designing Better Care...

While caregivers are expected to assist a seated person to and from the table, the reality is that this task is almost impossible as care staff lack the physical strength required for effective assistance and softer flooring causes chairs to become 'stuck' to the floor. Care communities would be well served to identify a mechanical means that enables caregivers to perform this task with reduced physical effort.

Design question...

How does a caregiver move a seated person up to the table with ease and grace and without the risk of incurring a work-related injury?

A better way...

Chairs designed for care staff should include mobility features that enable chairs to ***swivel***...***roll***...and ***brake*** for safety!

These features eliminate the need for care staff to push / pull / shove / twist when providing mealtime assistance.

As a result...

- ✓ Care staff are at reduced risk of incurring a work place injury
- ✓ Care staff enjoy a healthier work environment when the physical demands associated with providing mealtime assistance is reduced
- ✓ Residents are at reduced risk of falling / tripping as they get seated at mealtimes
- ✓ Residents are more compliant and more willing to follow care staff directives... creating a more enjoyable mealtime routine!

→ **See: 'Outcomes'**

Design Challenge: Our design challenge was NOT to design a chair that rolls easily. These chairs already exist in the form of a task chair or a 1970's dinette chair. The use of these chairs is considered unsafe as they can move unexpectedly and prematurely.

Rather, the design challenge was to incorporate mobility features which balance the need to:

a. move a seated person up-to the table with ease and grace,
b. reduce the physical demands placed upon caregivers,
c. provide the seated person with an increased sense of dignity and self-worth,
d. ...and to do so, without compromising safety for either the seated person or the caregiver.

To Learn More...For seniors living with reduced mobility, these features enable a care provider to offer assistance without risk of injury to themselves.

www.comfortek.com/t2-healthcare
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