

Caring Safely

Workplace Ergonomics for Home Care Workers

Vacuuming and mopping can be a hazardous manual task, especially when the equipment is heavy or working poorly. This buying guide helps residents and their families to choose equipment that reduces exposure to risks such as heavy lifting and repeated awkward postures. It aims to support the health and safety of our valued Home Care Workers, residents and their families.

Vacuum Cleaner Buying Guide

	 Preferred	 Avoid
Vacuum type	<p>Stick vacuums under 3kg for small homes.</p> <p>Barrel vacuums under 4kg are a good option for larger homes.</p> <p>Consider rotating or swivel heads.</p> <p>Adequate cord length of 9-10m to minimise the frequency of accessing power points. Cordless is optimal.</p> 	<p>Avoid commercial vacuums and upright vacuums due to their heavy weight.</p> <p>Avoid battery vacuums with short life of less than 20 minutes.</p> 
Suction	<p>Watts ≠ suction and is only a measure of power consumption. A true measure of suction is air watts (AW) or Pa (pascal pressure). Good performance is 250 AW or 350+ AW for high performance.</p> <p>Adjustable suction to reduce the force need to move the vacuum across thick carpet.</p>	Old vacuums with poor suction which offer poor cleaning and increases repetitive movement.
Wand and handle	Wand extension range to 100-120cm.	

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Mop Buying Guide

	Preferred	Avoid
Bucket weight and size	<p>A 10L bucket that can be filled to 5L is sufficient.</p> <p>Light plastic buckets are preferable.</p> <p>The bucket should easily fit under the tap in the laundry.</p>	Avoid larger buckets that offer more than 10L Avoid metal parts
Mop head	<p>A light weight and easy to wring mop eg. microfibre.</p> <p>Rotating or swivel mop head.</p> <p>Wet and dry functions in one mop are ideal.</p> 	<p>Avoid heavy mop heads.</p> 
Wringing system	<p>Wringing out functions that involve pushing down are preferable to pulling up.</p>	Avoid mechanisms that involve using two feet and awkwardly balancing while pulling up.
Wand and handle	<p>Adjustable wand length for height adjustability.</p> <p>Comfortable handle.</p>	

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