

Safety Action Notice

Reference

SAN2203

Issued

25 January 2022

Reusable Sling Checks: Joerns Healthcare Technical Bulletin 0442

Summary

Joerns Healthcare has issued Technical Bulletin 0442 on Oxford reusable slings. The bulletin highlights the difference between seam slippage (needle hole elongation) and laddering, rips or tears (wear and damage). Guidance is provided on pre-use checks and thorough examinations.

Action

1. Bring this notice to the attention of all appropriate managers and staff.
2. Download the following documents from Joerns Healthcare;
 - [Technical Bulletin 0442 - Oxford Slings: Identification of Seam Slippage.](#)
 - [Additional Sling and Safety Information](#)
3. Review pre-use checks and thorough examinations ensuring the above guidance is applied.
4. If seam slippage (needle hole elongation) is observed when there is no load in the sling, or if other defects are apparent, the slings should be taken out of use and thoroughly examined.

Background

Joerns Oxford reusable slings may exhibit seam slippage (needle hole elongation) whilst under load (refer to images in the technical bulletin, see annexe). Seam slippage can occur in any area of a sling where a needle and thread has passed through the sling fabric as part of the manufacturing process. It is commonly associated with the shoulder quadrants of a sling where load stress is most evident.

Once the load is removed, seam slippage will contract and the needle hole elongations will no longer be noticeable (refer to images in the technical bulletin). Joerns have updated their Instructions For Use to help identify seam slippage and so prevent confusion during sling checks.

Manufacturer contact details

Joerns Healthcare 0344 811 1158.

Suggested onward distribution

Care for the Elderly
Community Care
District Nursing
Hospices
Medical Admissions
Nursing
Wards
Health & Safety
Medical Physics

Risk Management
Adult Care Services
Adult Day Services
Adult Residential
Services
Adult Social Work
Services
Care Homes

Children's Residential
Services
Day Centres
Home Care services
Loaned Equipment Stores
Moving and Handling
Respite Care Services
Special Schools

Enquiries

Enquiries and adverse incident reports should be addressed to:

Incident Reporting & Investigation Centre (IRIC)

NHS National Services Scotland

Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB

Tel: 0131 275 7575 Email: nss.irc@nhs.scot

For information on how to report an incident: [How to report an Adverse Incident](#)


General information about adverse incidents and safety alerts can be found in [CEL 43 \(2009\)](#) or by contacting IRIC at the above address.

NHS National Services Scotland is the common name for the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service.

<https://www.nss.nhs.scot/>

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Annexe

 HEALTHCARE	<h1>Technical Bulletin</h1>	BULLETIN NO.:
		0442
COUNTRY: UK/EIRE		DATE ISSUED
		16/12/2021

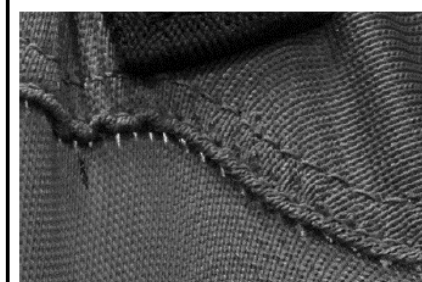
BULLETIN SUBJECT:
Oxford Slings: Identification of Seam Slippage

Product Group: Oxford Slings	Model(s) Affected: All Oxford Slings
Effective Date: Immediate	Serial No. Affective From: N/A

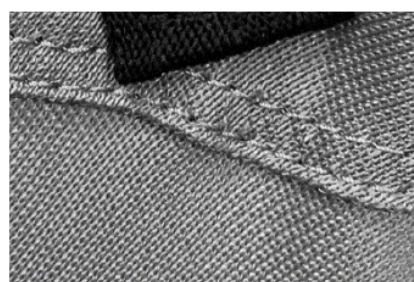
Following a report of concern and confusion in the field, this communication is to help support users and service personnel in what constitutes a safety risk concerning the on-going load bearing ability of a patient sling following daily checks and inspection, specifically in relation to seam slippage.

Seam Slippage (Explained):
 To an untrained or inexperienced eye, seam slippage or single hole elongation might otherwise be confused with more serious safety concerns such as laddering, rips or tears, potentially leading to unnecessary, inconvenient, and potentially costly removal of product from service.

Seam slippage (needle hole elongation) can occur under load in any area of a sling where a needle and thread has passed through the sling fabric as part of the manufacturing process. It is commonly associated with the shoulder quadrants of a sling where load stress is most evident, especially under higher loads. Once the load is removed, seam slippage, where visible, will contract and the area will revert to its former state. See below photos.



Seam Slippage Under Load



Seam Slippage Following Removal of Load

Manufacturer Testing:
 Joerns have conducted appropriate testing on slings in line with BS EN ISO 10535 where seam slippage has been identified and can report successful load testing at 1.5 times of the maximum rated lifting capacity. To offer further reassurance to its customers, Joerns Healthcare can confirm zero reported safety incidents leading to injury in relation to fabric tears or defects in the body fabrics of its Oxford range of slings; testimony to the on-going manufacturing and quality standards we continually work towards.

Instructions for Use & Safety Checks:
 Joerns Healthcare insist that all Oxford slings are subjected to daily pre-use checks according to the sling’s instructions for use (an updated copy of the safety checks manual is included with this bulletin). This is to help ensure Oxford slings are used safely and any concerns are identified prior to use.

In an effort to provide additional guidance around seam slippage, Joerns Healthcare has updated its sling safety checks manual, supplied with all Oxford slings. A sample of the updated content is included with this bulletin and updated manuals will be phased through into stock. In the meantime, a QR code within the sling user guide will point users to the latest content, also available to view and download directly from the Joerns UK website.

Continued >

Annexe (continued)**Continual Improvement:**

Despite testing indicating that seam slippage does not impact the inherent safety or integrity of a sling, Joerns have taken steps in an effort to improve and lessen the visibility of seam slippage in order to reduce and minimise the confusion surrounding daily visual checks and inspections.

Training:

May we take this opportunity to remind Joerns/Oxford customers of the regulatory requirement for only 'competent persons' to carry out LOLER service inspections. Joerns Healthcare offer training in the service, maintenance and inspection of Oxford Hoists and related accessories, including slings. Further information is available on the Education section of our website: www.joerns.co.uk.

Should you have any questions or concerns in relation to the above information, please contact your local area manager or Joerns Healthcare directly on **0344 811 1158**.

What does the Customer need to do next?

Communicate this bulletin and the associated guidance to service personnel and others who are carrying out visual checks on Oxford slings.

Include links or attachments (if applicable) for:

294000.10291 - Sling Safety Checks (Rev D)

Any other information:

N/A