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(54) ADJUSTABLE TRANSFER DEVICE

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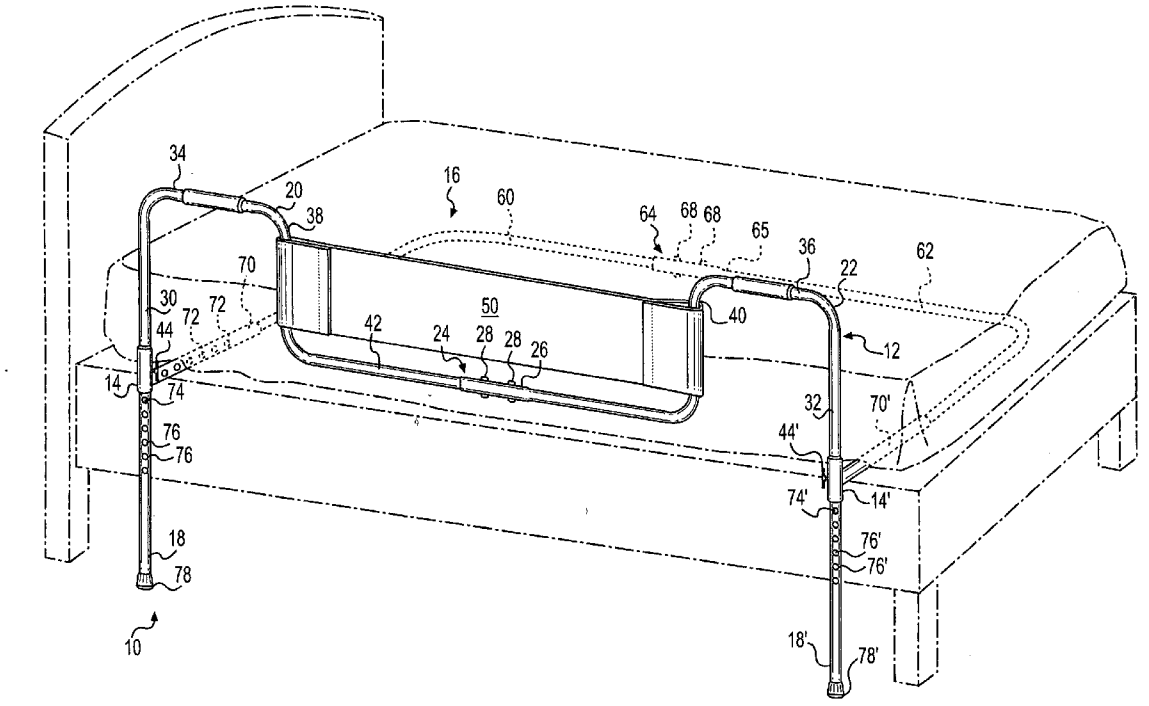
(57) **ABSTRACT**

The invention relates to a device for facilitating a person's transfer onto and off-of a support surface such as a bed by providing a transfer device that includes a rail member connected to a lateral support. The transfer device is height adjustable, depth adjustable and width adjustable, and the transfer device can be adjusted independently in each direction. An optional retainer acts a selectively operated gate to secure a patient or user on a bed. An optional securement strap attaches to the frame of the bed and the transfer device to anchor the device to the bed.



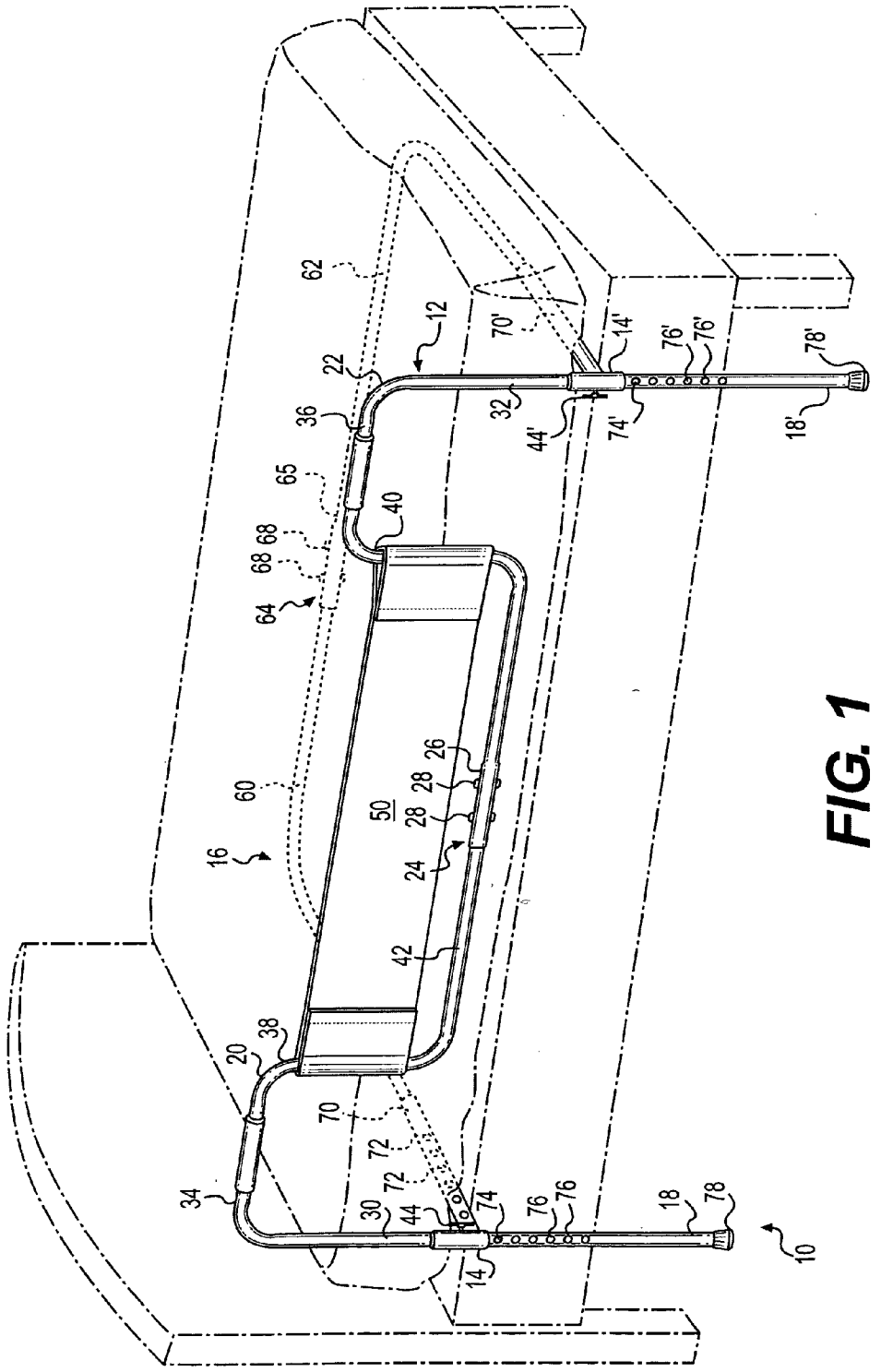

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FIG. 1

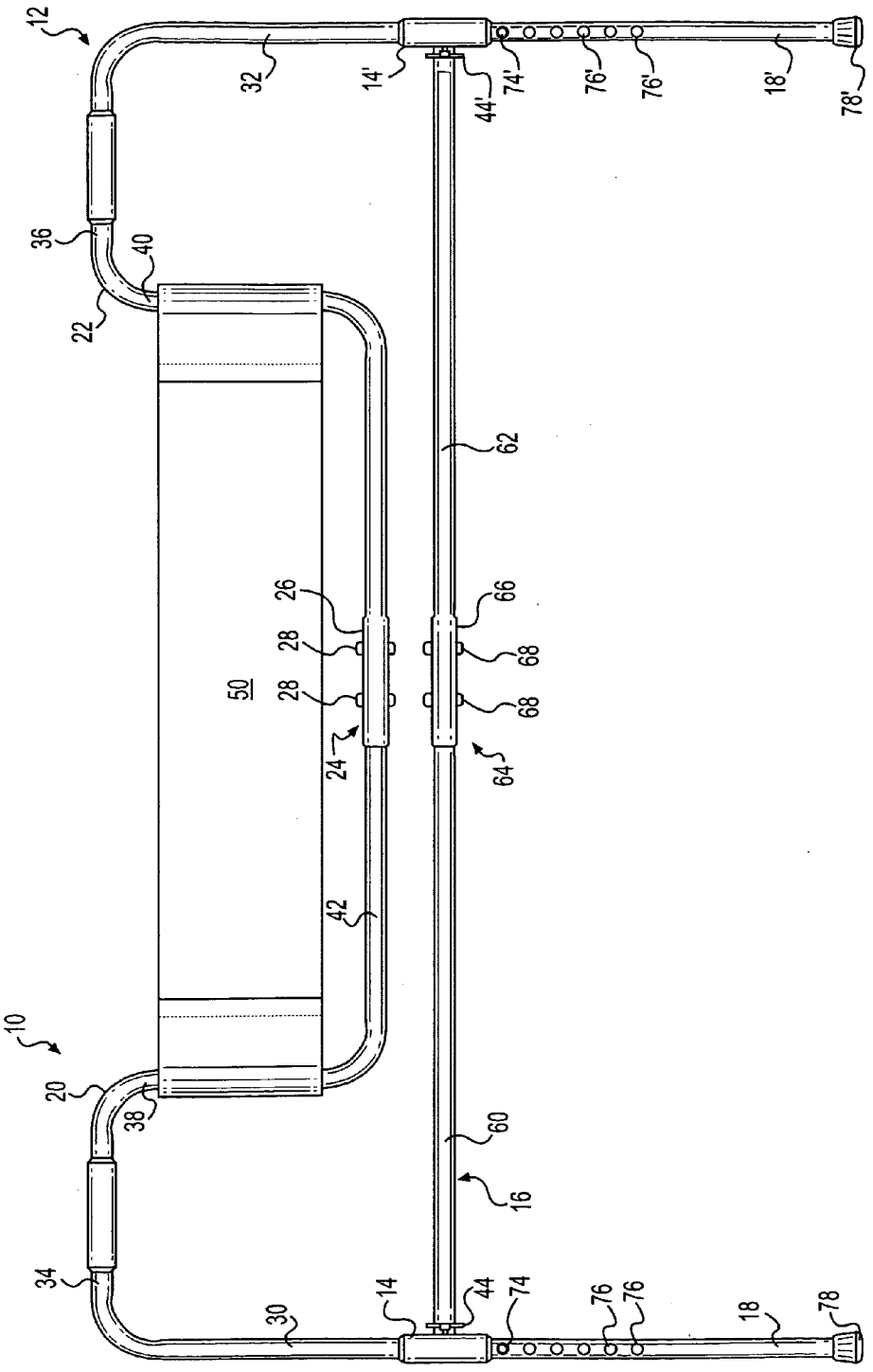
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FIG. 2

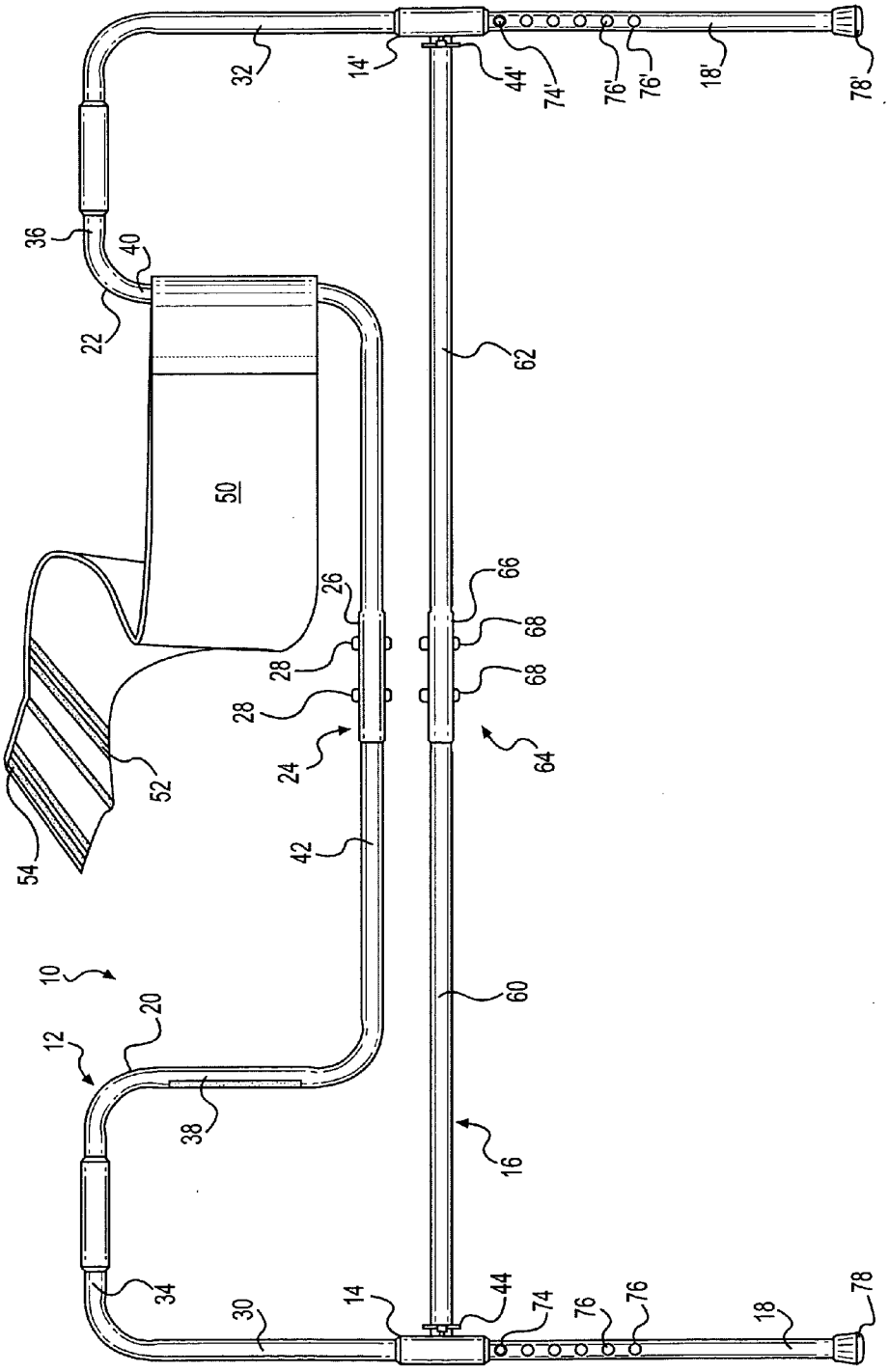
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FIG. 3

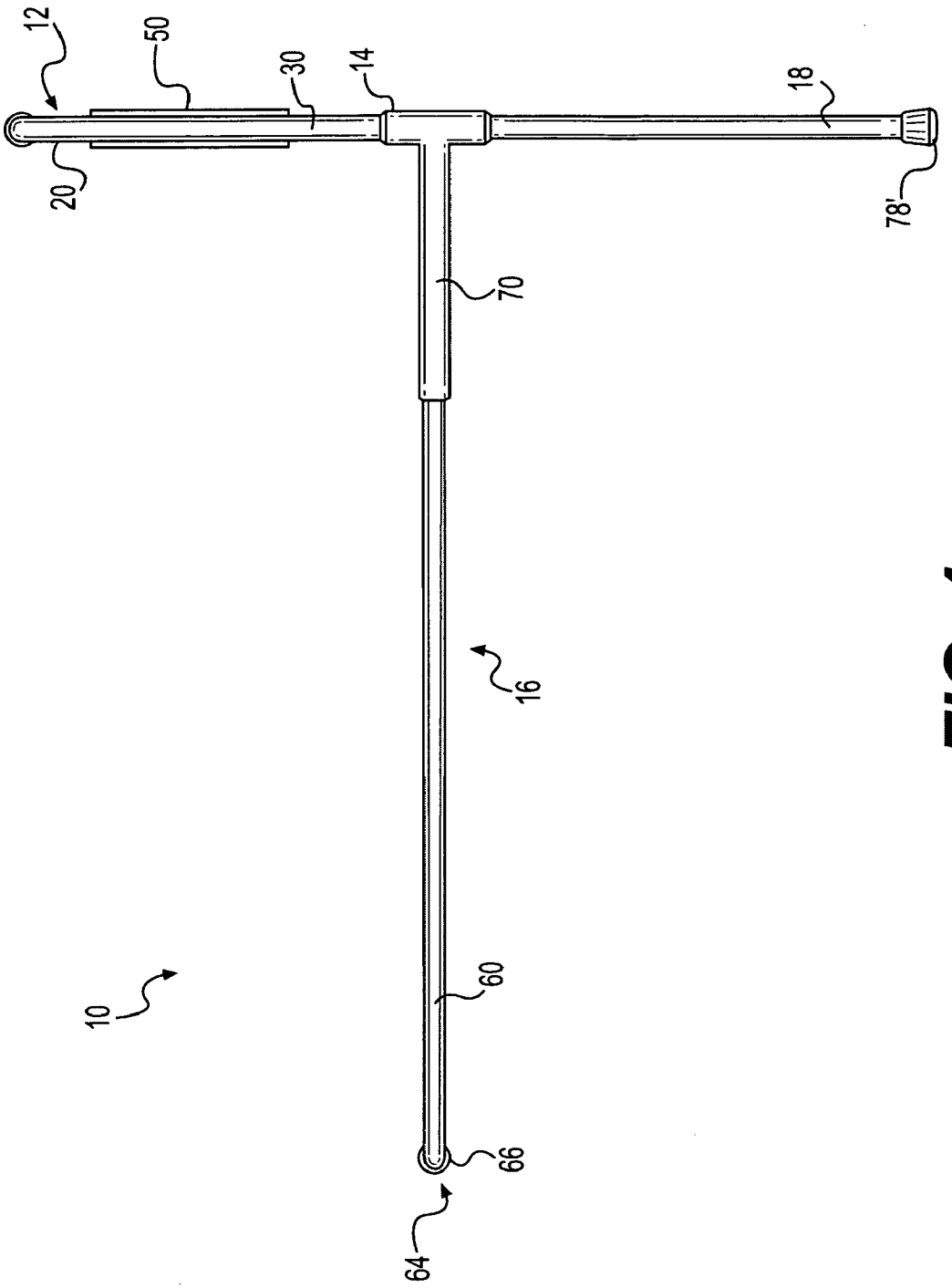

FIG. 4

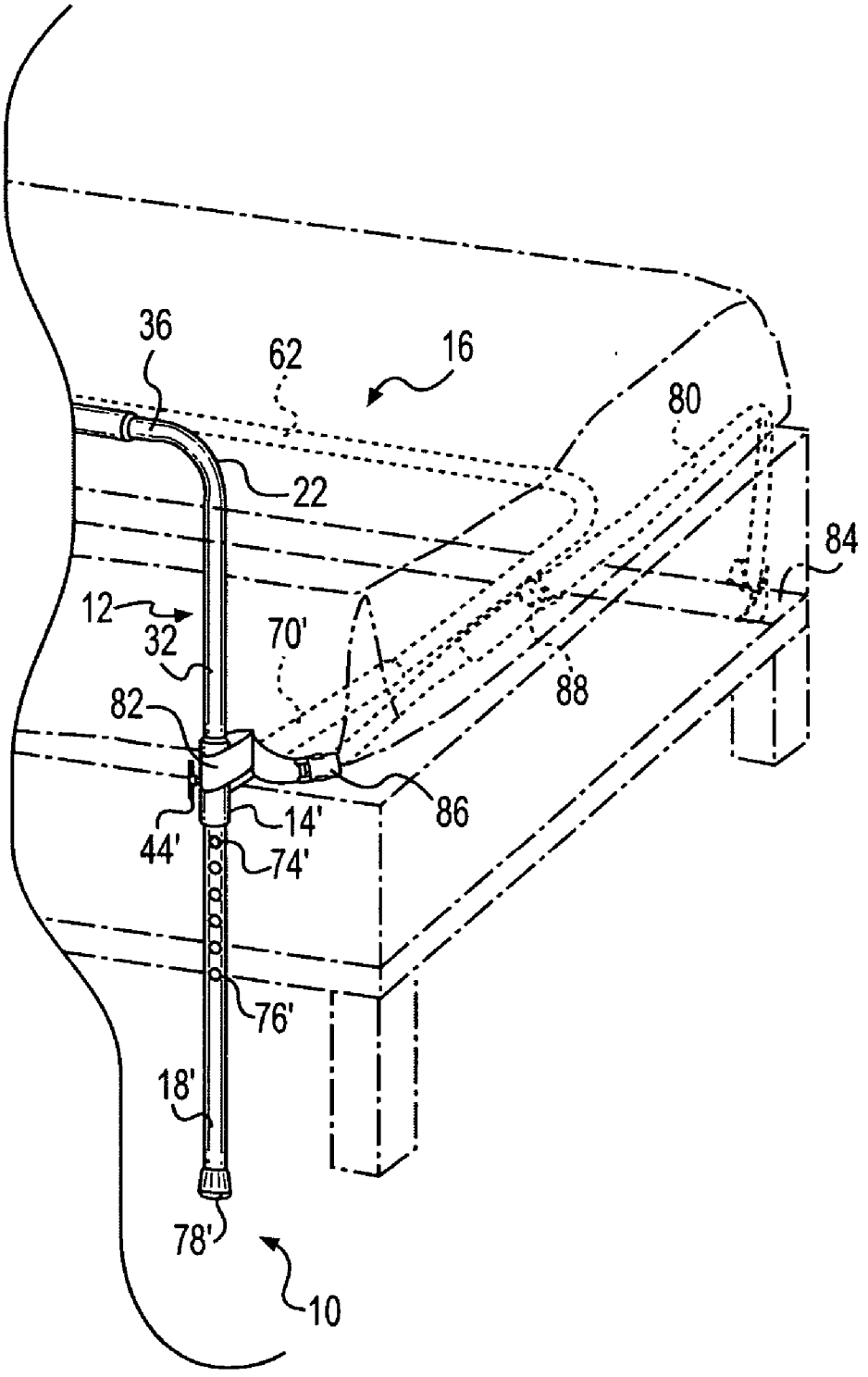

FIG. 5

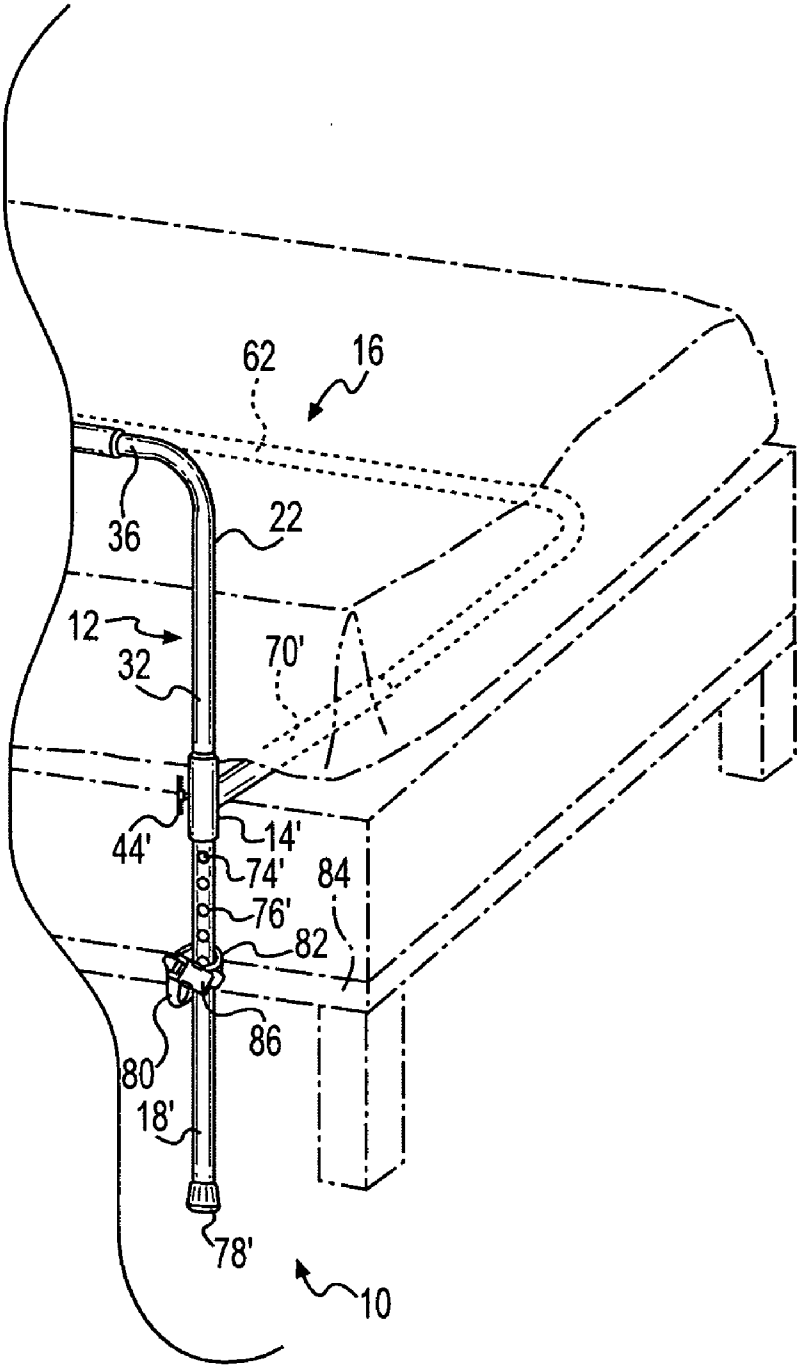

FIG. 6

ADJUSTABLE TRANSFER DEVICE

[0001] The present invention relates to an adjustable transfer device and more particularly to a transfer device separately adjustable in the height, width, and/or depth directions.

BACKGROUND

[0002] In certain instances it has been known that individuals may need assistance getting into and out-of bed. In some instances where an individual has been injured, the need may be temporary. In other cases, where the individual is elderly or suffers from a permanent disability, the problem may be persistent. Often times the individual may be living alone or have access to limited financial assistance when the need arises for some additional help in transferring to and from the bed. Many times the individual may have a limited income or the problem may persist for such a short period time that limited funds are available for such a need.

[0003] Expensive and elaborate bed transfer systems, such as hospital beds with bed rails formed integrally therewith, have been available for some time; however, such systems are cost prohibitive for home-care use. Other bed transfer systems have been developed for home care use which utilize a wooden board or other rigid, sheet-like material for insertion between the box spring and mattress of a conventional bed to which a transfer rail is attached thereto. Such systems, while adequate for there intended purpose, may be difficult for the elderly or persons with injuries to install and remove. By providing a rigid layer between the bed and the box spring, such systems inherently interfere with the comfort level achieved by the cooperation of the mattress with the box spring. Such a barrier may not always be desirable. Thus, the need exists for a low cost and easy-to-use bed transfer device that provides a both long and short term solutions for individuals when transferring into or out of bed.

[0004] Existing devices include still further drawbacks including the need for adjustability of a transfer device that can be adapted to fit specific size and width beds. Also, bed rails should not, in some applications, be overly restrictive to a patient. There is a need for a releasable or easy-access bed rail. Still further, there is a need for a bed rail having a secure means of attachment to a bed so that a patient cannot inadvertently remove the transfer device from the bed. This securement device must also be accessible by a provider, so the securement means should be releasable and accessible.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] In accordance with the present invention, an adjustable transfer device is provided that is adapted to be size adjustable in up to three directions. The transfer device is more specifically described as a bed transfer device comprising a rail member, a lateral support, and a plurality of floor supports or legs. The rail member is aligned with a bed's lengthwise direction. The lateral support rests under the mattress and on top of the mattress support surface (box frame, slats, bed frame, etc.). A collar is located at each end of the rail member. The collars serve as a height adjustment mechanism for the lateral support.

[0006] The rail member is in a telescoping relationship with the legs so that it is height adjustable relative to a support surface. The rail member is also width adjustable. The lateral support is joined to the rail member, and the lateral support is also width adjustable in order to match the width of the rail member. In addition, the lateral support is also depth adjustable relative to the collar. A user can determine, therefore, how far under the mattress the lateral support should extend. The lateral support can also be adapted for use with beds or mattresses of varying widths. In summary, the bed transfer device is size adjustable in the height, width, and/or depth directions.

[0007] In one preferred embodiment, a retainer is selectively attached to the rail member in order to help secure a patient or user on a bed or mattress. It acts as a releasable or selectively removable gate. The retainer is preferably width adjustable and/or elastic. The retainer can be secured to or secured around the rail member by a number of methods obvious to one skilled in the art. In one embodiment, the retainer includes hook and loop fasteners used to secure the retainer around two positions on the rail member.

[0008] In another preferred embodiment, the transfer device includes a securement strap that releasably connects the transfer device to a bed frame or bed rail. The strap effectively acts as an anchor. The securement strap can be tied, snapped, wrapped around, or otherwise secured to the rail member, a collar, and/or a leg. The other end of the strap is connected to a bed frame supporting a mattress. The strap could be of a fixed length or length adjustable.

[0009] In use, a user places the bed transfer device adjacent a mattress with the rail member extending along the lengthwise direction of the bed. The collars are adjusted on the rail member so that the collars are located proximate the bottom edge of the mattress. The lateral support is inserted above a mattress support surface and under a mattress. The lateral support can be adjusted or telescoped relative to the collars depending on a user's preferences, the width of the mattress, or the like. The rail member, which is supported on the legs, is also adjusted or telescoped relative to the legs depending on a user's preferences, the height of the mattress, or the like. The width of the transfer device is also adjusted to account for the height of the user, length of the mattress, or some other factor. The optional retainer is detached at one or both ends so that a user can transfer onto or off-of the mattress. The optional securement strap is connected to a bed frame supporting the mattress and to the transfer device.

[0010] In summary, a transfer device in accordance with the present invention efficiently addresses at least one of the problems associated with prior art bed transfer devices. The foregoing and additional features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those of skill in the art from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the transfer device in accordance with one preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] FIG. **2** is a front view of a transfer device in accordance with the present invention;

[0013] FIG. **3** is an additional front view thereof;

[0014] FIG. **4** is a side view thereof;

[0015] FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the transfer device in accordance with one preferred embodiment of the present invention; and

[0016] FIG. **6** is a perspective view of the transfer device in accordance with one preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0017] The transfer device of the present invention operates to assist elderly, infirm, or otherwise handicapped individuals as they get onto or off-of a platform, support surface, bed, or the like. The transfer device is more specifically described as a bed transfer device comprising a rail member, a lateral support, and a plurality of floor supports or legs. The rail member, lateral support, and legs are all coupled together. The legs and rail member are secured to each other. A collar slides along each end of the rail member and the collar is connected to the lateral member. The leg/rail connection is operable to adjust the height of the transfer device relative to the ground. The lateral support member is substantially perpendicular to the legs and is placed between a mattress and an underlying mattress support (box spring, slats, bed frame, etc.). The depth of the lateral member, relative to the rail member, and width of the lateral support can be adjusted. The rail member is located atop the legs. The rail member provides assistance to a patient transferring onto or off-of a platform, mattress, bed, or the like. The rail member can also be adjusted in the width direction. Advantageously, the lateral support member, rail member, and legs can all be adjusted independently. Overall, the transfer device is adjustable in up to three directions.

[0018] Turning now to a more detailed description of the present invention, there is illustrated in FIGS. **1-4** at least one preferred embodiment of an adjustable bed transfer device **10**. Transfer device **10** includes generally an adjustable rail member **12** having two ends. The rail member roughly resembles an inverted, W-shaped railing formed from horizontal and vertical segments with rounded corners connecting the segments. The ends of rail member **12** support collars **14**, **14'**. The collars connect rail member **12** with a U-shaped lateral support **16** (discussed further below). Rail member **12** is adjustably mounted to substantially vertical legs **18**, **18'**.

[0019] Rail member **12**, lateral support **16**, legs **18**, **18'**, and collars **14**, **14'** are preferably fabricated from metal tubes. The diameter of the tubes preferably fall within a range of about 0.5 inch to 2 inches, although the specific diameters used are not crucial to the operation of the transfer device. Various sizes of tubing, shapes of tubing, and methods for fabricating the tubing will be obvious to one skilled in the art. It is also obvious that alternative methods of coupling the various components exist. Overall, the tubing is preferably easily gripped by a user, is strong enough to support the weight of a patient, and is easily placed between a mattress and a support surface without causing undue discomfort to a user on the mattress.

[0020] In greater detail, rail member **12** comprises two separate halves: a left rail member half **20** and a right rail member half **22**. The halves are basically mirror images with each half having a first end (effectively the ends of rail member **12**) supporting a respective collar and a second end coupled to the second end of the opposing half. Joining the halves together forms the generally inverted, W-shaped rail member **12**. The second ends are coupled in an adjustable or telescoping manner so that the width of rail member **12** can be adjusted.

[0021] Width adjustment of the rail member is preferably accomplished by the second end of one rail member half having a larger diameter than the second end of the opposing rail member half in order to create a standard male-female connection **24**. As illustrated, right half **22** includes the larger diameter, or female, connector **26**. The second end of left half **20** is the male connector (not shown; internal to female connector **26**). A plurality of aligned apertures are provided through the diameter of the male connector. A pair of apertures formed through the diameter of female connector **26** are sized to accept a pair of fasteners **28**. Corresponding male and female apertures are aligned so that fasteners **28** can be inserted through both the male and female connectors. The fasteners, such as pegs, screws, rivets, or the like, secure left half **20** to right half **22**. Spring biased mechanisms, such as push buttons, as known in the art, also could provide a means to secure the male and female portions together.

[0022] In use, a user adjusts the width of rail member **12** by removing the fasteners, adjusting one of the halves relative to the other, and then reinserting the fasteners through aligned apertures in the male and female connectors. In the case of a spring biased mechanism, a user would merely actuate the spring biasing mechanism and adjust the width of the rail member. Bayonet connections, snap locks, and the like are suitable for the male-female connection.

[0023] Together, left half **20** and right half **22** form the inverted, W-shaped rail member **12** wherein each half includes horizontal and vertical segments with rounded corners connecting the segments, as briefly mentioned above. In even greater detail, the segments of each half will be described in order progressing from the first end of each half to the male-female connection **24**.

[0024] Each half beings with a vertical segment extending upwards from a support surface to form outer rail segments, which are identified as elements **30** and **32**. The collars slide along the vertical outer rail segments. The outer rail segments are bent or turned into horizontal upper cross members **34** and **36**. A pair of rubberized grips **34'**, **36'** can be included on the respective upper cross members **34**, **36**. The cross members are then turned downwards into inner rail segments **38** and **40** (see FIGS. **2** and **3**). The inner rail segments are again turned horizontally to form a lower cross member **42**. Lower cross member **42** includes the male-female connection **24** formed by joining the two second ends of left half **20** and right half **22**. Typically, upper cross members **34**, **36** will be positioned above the upper surface of a mattress to be used by a patient while main cross member **42** will be located beneath the surface of a mattress to provide access to the bed. One skilled in the art will appreciate that additional grips, a rubberized cover, or the like may be included on the individual rail member segments.

[0025] Collars **14**, **14'** can be adjustably placed along outer rail segments **30**, **32**. Each collar includes a wing nut **44**, **44'** which threadably screws into the respective collar **14**, **14'** for a conventional friction fit engagement against the rail member **12**. It will be appreciated that any number of fasteners may be used to secure the rail member in the collars, including screws, compression rings, push buttons, friction fit, clevis pins, cotter pins, or the like. Reducers (illustrated

but not labeled), as known in the art, can be used to compensate for the diameter differences between the rail member and collars. Reducers are known in the art, and they help to prevent rattling between the collars and rail member.

[0026] In one preferred embodiment, a fabric retainer **50** extends from left inner rail segment **38** to right inner rail segment **40**. Retainer **50** is selectively attached to the inner rail segments **38**, **40** as a gate to secure a patient on a bed or mattress. One or both ends of retainer **50** are releasably secured to rail member **12**. Therefore, retainer **50** acts as releasable or selectively removable gate.

[0027] Retainer **50**, further illustrated in FIG. **3**, is essentially a rectangular piece of fabric having a width greater than the distance between inner segments **38** and **40** and a height less than the length of either inner segment **38**,**40**. The fabric is formed from nylon, polyester, cotton, rayon, acrylic, rubber (e.g., Spandex),. a mixture thereof, or the like. The retainer is preferably width adjustable and/or elastic. The retainer can be secured to or secured around the rail member by a number of methods obvious to one skilled in the art. For instance, an end of retainer **50** may be sewn back onto the retainer to form a permanent loop. The loop would then fit around rail member **12**.

[0028] In the illustrated embodiment, retainer **50** utilizes mating hook and loop fasteners (a/k/a Velco) to secure the retainer around the rail member. A strip or strips of hooks **52** is included on retainer **50**. The hooks engage a strip or strips of loops **54**, also included on retainer **50**. In use, the user would simply pull the loops away from the hooks in order to open retainer **50**. Buttons, snaps, ties, and the like could be used in place of the hook and loop mechanism.

[0029] Turning now to the generally U-shaped lateral support **16**, there is illustrated two support halves: a left support half **60** and a right support half **62**. The halves are basically mirror images with each half having a first end (effectively the ends of lateral support **16**) coupled to the respective collar and a second end coupled to the second end of the opposing half. Joining the halves together forms the generally U-shaped lateral support **16**. The second ends are coupled in an adjustable or telescoping manner so that the width of lateral support **16** can be adjusted.

[0030] The lateral support width adjustment is preferably accomplished according to the width adjustment mechanism described above for rail member **12**. Namely, the second end of one support half has a larger diameter than the second end of the opposing support half in order to create a standard male-female connection **64**. As illustrated, support half **62** includes the larger diameter, or female, connector **66**. The second end of support half **60** is the male connector (not shown; internal to female connector **66**). A plurality of aligned apertures are provided through the diameter of the male connector. A pair of apertures formed through the diameter of female connector **66** are sized to accept a pair of fasteners **68**. Corresponding male and female apertures are aligned so that fasteners **68** can be inserted through both the male and female connectors. The fasteners, such as pegs, screws, rivets, or the like, secure left half **60** to right half **62**.

[0031] In use, a user adjusts the width of lateral support **16** by removing fasteners **68**, adjusting one of the halves relative to the other, and then reinserting the fasteners through aligned apertures in the male and female connectors. It is also envisioned that a spring biasing mechanism(s), such as a push button mechanism, could be used to secure one half of lateral support **16** to the other half while providing the ability to adjust the width of the support. In the case of a spring biased mechanism, a user would merely actuate the spring biasing mechanism and adjust the width of the rail member. Both connections **24**, **64** can be accomplished using mechanisms other than specifically described, and bayonet connections, snap locks, and the like are all suitable for the male-female connections.

[0032] Each collar **14**, '**14** includes an extension, identified as left extension **70** and right extension **70'**. The first ends of support halves **60**, **62** can be adjustably moved into and out of extensions **70**, **70'** so that the depth of lateral support **16** can be adjusted relative to collars **14**, **14'**. A plurality of spaced apart apertures **72** in extensions **70**, **70'** engage a spring biased button as known in the art (not shown). The button is provided by the left and right support halves **60**, **62** proximate the first end of the halves. The extensions are attached to the collars by welding or other securement means.

[0033] In use, a user inserts the first end of halves **60** or **62** into the respective extension. The spring biased button is depressed. When the button is aligned with one of extension apertures **72**, it automatically, due to a spring force, extends into the aligned aperture and locks the lateral support to the corresponding collar. A user actuates the button to adjust the lateral support towards or away from collars **14**, **14'**. It will be appreciated that any number of techniques or mechanisms may be used to secure lateral support **16** within collar extensions **70**, **70'**, including screws, compression rings, push-buttons, friction fit, clevis pins, cotter pins, or the like.

[0034] Legs or support supports **18**, **18'** allow the rail member to be vertically adjusted relative to the ground. Legs **18**, **18'** are inserted into rail member **12** in a telescoping relationship. Again, a mechanism, such as a known push button mechanism, can be used to selectively prevent the telescopic movement of the legs within rail member **12**. Preferably, the mechanism is a push button arrangement including at least one of spring-biased button **74**, **74'** engaging one aperture in a set of apertures **76**, **76'** located in spaced apart relation along the length of left and right outer rail segments **30**, **32**.

[0035] It has been found that sliding the respective collars along the rail member can depress the corresponding leg's push button. The user may, therefore, accidently allow the leg to telescope in relation to the legs whilst they are adjusting the height of the lateral member. In a preferred embodiment, each leg includes more than one button with the buttons positioned farther apart than the height of the respective collar. Therefore, as the collar slides along the rail member, it can only depress one button at a time and the legs are prevented from telescoping in relation to the rail member.

[0036] Rubber stops **78**, **78'** are located at the base of the respective legs **18**, **18'** to resist lateral movement along a floor or support surface.

[0037] Turning now to FIGS. **5** and **6**, there is illustrated preferred embodiments of a securement strap **80** with a proximate end and distal end. The proximate end of strap **80** forms a part of, or connects to, a loop **82** that is situated on transfer device **10**. Specifically, loop **82** is located around rail member **12**, collar **14'**, or leg **18'**. For purposes of the illustration, loop **82** is located on collar **14'** in FIG. **5** and on leg **18'** in FIG. **6**. The distal end of strap **80** is connected to a bed or bed frame, typically via a bed rail **84**.

[0038] In greater detail, FIG. **5** illustrates strap **80** wherein the proximate end of the strap is sewn to the strap to form

the loop. The loop may be placed on transfer device **10** before or after assembling the components of the transfer device together.

[**0039**] A conventional quick release buckle **86** allows a user to quickly disconnect device **10** from bed frame or bed rail **84**. The quick release buckle is located adjacent the loop or in a position that is accessible to a user. The length of strap **80** is adjusted via an optional length adjustment buckle **88** joining two sections of strap **80**.

[**0040**] FIG. **6** illustrates an alternative embodiment wherein the strap's proximal end terminates as a male or female quick release buckle component. An appendage with the opposing male or female quick-release buckle component would be sewn or secured to the strap near the proximal end. The two buckle components would snap together around collar **14'** or leg **18'**. Therefore, when the quick release buckle **86** is snapped together it forms the loop **82**. In this embodiment, the distal end of strap **80** is secured to bed frame **84** adjacent to transfer device **10**. The distal end of the strap is wrapped around rail **84** and threaded through a cinch buckle or length adjusting buckle (not shown in FIG. **6**) located on strap **80**. The buckle operates to introduce slack in strap **80**, remove slack from strap **80**, or release strap **80** from bed frame **84**. Additional means for securing strap **80** to device **10** and frame **84** are available.

[**0041**] While the invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments thereof, it will be understood that numerous variations, modifications and additional embodiments are possible, and all such variations, modifications, and embodiments are to be regarded as being within the spirit and scope of the invention.

1. A transfer device for use with a bed having a surface layer and a bed frame supporting the surface layer, the bed transfer device comprising:

a plurality of floor supports;

a width adjustable rail member height adjustably positioned on the floor supports;

a plurality of collars mounted on the rail member,

a width adjustable lateral support adjustably received by the collars, the lateral support being removably inserted between the surface layer of the bed and the bed frame; and

wherein the transfer device is independently adjustable in the height, width, and depth directions with respect to the bed.

2. The transfer device of claim 1, further comprising a securement strap releasably connecting the bed frame to the transfer device.

3. The transfer device of claim 2, wherein the securement strap is not connected to the lateral support.

4. The transfer device of claim 1, wherein the rail member, floor supports and lateral support are fabricated of metal tubes.

5. The transfer device of claim 1, wherein the rail member is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the rail member; and

the lateral support is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the lateral support.

6. The transfer device of claim 1, further comprising the lateral support having ends, wherein each end is slidably inserted into an extension on the respective collar; and

a mechanism adapted to selectively maintain the lateral support in a stationary relationship with respect to the collars.

7. The transfer device of claim 6, wherein the lateral support is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the lateral support.

8. The transfer device of claim 1, wherein each floor support in the plurality of floor supports includes a height adjustment mechanism adapted to releasably secure the position of the rail member relative to the floor support.

9. The transfer device of claim 8, wherein the rail member is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the rail member; and

the lateral support is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the lateral support.

10. The transfer device of claim 1, further comprising a fastener on each collar, the fastener adapted to selectively maintain the collar in a stationary position on the rail member.

11. The transfer device of claim 10, wherein the fasteners comprise a wing nut frictionally engaging the rail member.

12. The transfer device of claim 10, wherein the rail member is comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the length of the rail member.

13. The transfer device of claim 1, further comprising a retainer selectively secured to the rail member, the retainer operable to secure a user on the bed.

14. A bed transfer device for use with a bed having a mattress and a bed frame, the bed transfer device comprising:

a rail member adjacent the mattress;

a lateral support connected to the rail member, the lateral support located below the mattress;

a retainer secured to the rail member, the retainer comprising a section of fabric having opposite ends, and where in the opposite ends of the fabric are releasably secured around different portions of the rail member to thereby form a releasable gate; and

wherein the retainer is releasably attached to the rail member to selectively secure a user on a mattress.

15. A bed transfer device as described in claim 14, farther comprising a plurality of floor supports adjustably coupled to the rail member.

16. A bed transfer device as described in claim 15, wherein the floor supports include tubular segments telescopically coupled to the rail member.

17. A bed transfer device as described in claim 15, wherein the lateral support is adjustably connected to the rail member.

18. A bed transfer device as described in claim 17, wherein adjusting the lateral support relative to the rail member is independent of adjusting the floor supports with respect to the rail member.

19. A bed transfer device as described in claim 17, further comprising a plurality of collars slidably mounted on the rail member, each collar adjustably receiving the lateral support and coupling the rail member to the lateral support; and

a fastener on each collar, the fastener adapted to selectively maintain the collar in a stationary position on the rail member.

20. A bed transfer device as described in claim 19, wherein the fasteners comprise a wing nut frictionally engaging the rail member.

21. A bed transfer device as described in claim 14, further comprising a securement strap releasably connecting the bed frame to the bed transfer device and wherein the securement strap has a variable length.

22. A bed transfer device as described in claim 14, wherein the rail member and lateral support arc fabricated of metal tubes.

23. (canceled)

24. A bed transfer device for use with a bed having at least two surface layers and a bed frame, the bed transfer device comprising:

a rail member having a plurality of ends, the rail member comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the rail member; and

a lateral support substantially crosswise to and connected to the rail member, the lateral support comprised of at least two pieces that telescope one within the other to vary the width of the lateral support.

25. A bed transfer device as described in claim 24, wherein the rail member and lateral support are fabricated of metal tubes.

26. A bed transfer device as described in claim 25, a plurality of collars slidably mounted on the rail member, the collars including an extension that slidably receives the lateral support.

27. A bed transfer device as described in claim 24, further comprising a securement strap releasably connected on one end to the bed frame and releasably connected on another end to the transfer device.

28. A bed transfer device as described in claim 27, wherein the securement strap is not connected to the lateral support.

29. A bed transfer device as described in claim 24, further comprising a plurality of collars slidably mounted on the sail member;

a plurality of floor supports, the rail member height adjustably mounted on the floor supports;

the lateral support having ends, wherein each end is slidably received by a collar; and

a fastener associated with each of the collars adapted to maintain the collars in a stationary relationship with respect to the rail member.

30. A bed transfer device as described in claim 29, wherein sliding the lateral support relative to the collars is independent of adjusting the floor supports with respect to the rail member.

31. A bed transfer device as described in claim 24, further comprising a plurality of floor supports adjustably coupled to the ends of the rail member and wherein the floor supports include tubular segments telescopically coupled to the rail member ends.

32. A bed transfer device as described in claim 31, wherein the floor supports include a height adjustment mechanism adapted to releasably secure the position of the floor supports relative to the rail member.

33. A bed transfer device as described in claim 32, wherein sliding the lateral support relative to the collars is independent of adjusting the floor supports with respect to the rail member ends.

34. A bed transfer device as described in claim 24, further comprising an adjustable length retainer selectively secured to the rail member, the retainer operable to secure a user on a bed.

35. A bed transfer device for use with a bed having a mattress and a bed frame, the bed transfer device comprising:

a rail member adjacent the mattress;

a lateral support adjustably connected to the rail member in the crosswise direction, the lateral support located below the mattress;

a plurality of collars slidably mounted on the rail member, each collar adjustably receiving the lateral support and coupling the rail member to the lateral support; and

a securement strap releasably connecting the bed frame to the bed transfer device and wherein the securement strap has a variable length.

36. The bed transfer device of claim 35, further comprising a retainer secured to the rail member; and

wherein the retainer is releasably attached to the rail member to selectively secure a user on a mattress.

37. The bed transfer device of claim 36, wherein the retainer comprises a piece of fabric piece having opposite ends, and wherein the opposite ends of the fabric piece are releasably secured to different portions of the rail member to thereby form a releasable gate.

38. The bed transfer device of claim 35, further comprising a plurality of floor supports adjustably coupled to the rail member.

39. The bed transfer device of claim 38, wherein the floor supports include tubular segments telescopically coupled to the rail member.

40. The bed transfer device of claim 38, wherein adjusting the lateral support relative to the rail member is independent of adjusting the floor supports with respect to the rail member.

41. The bed transfer device of claim 35,

wherein a fastener is associated with each collar, the fasteners adapted to selectively maintain the collar in a stationary position on the rail member.

42. The bed transfer device of claim 41, wherein the fasteners comprise a wing nut frictionally engaging the rail member.

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