

# Welcome to the RBCH eLearning module Health, Safety and Welfare

Authored by: **Georgina Cullum**, Health and Safety Risk Advisor  
Royal Bournemouth & Christchurch Hospitals

## What is Health and Safety?

In the UK, Health and Safety is defined as: 'regulations and procedures intended to prevent accident or injury in workplaces or public environments.'

## What is RBCH's aim for delivering services safely?

'The Trust is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and healthy work environment for all of its staff and to ensure the work activities do not adversely affect the safety and wellbeing of patients and visitors.' **Karen Allman**. Director of HR & Lead for Health & Safety

## Legislation

### Why is it important to act in ways that are consistent with legislation, policies and procedures for maintaining your own and others' health and safety?

#### Moral reasons

1

You have a duty of care to your employees and other people present on your site, this is defined in the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974).

2

#### Legal reasons

Defined by the government's Health & Safety at Work Act (1974), although this is complimented by other acts, regulations and approved codes of practice.

3

#### Financial reasons

Poor Health and Safety practice can potentially lead to accidents and a demotivated workforce. Costs include insurance claims, increased insurance premiums, accident investigation time and resources.

## Staff Consultation

### What are the Trust's arrangements for consulting with staff on health and safety matters?

The Trust's Health and Safety Committee meet quarterly and it is made up of representatives from each department

Managers should consult with you directly through your team meetings and Directorate meetings or via your elected health and safety representative. They will attend the Health and Safety Committee and can feedback on any new developments.

## Policies

### Where are the health and safety policies and the arrangements for implementing the policies located?

Health and Safety policies can be found within the policies section located on the 'Clinical Governance and Risk Management' pages of the RBCH intranet or in the handbook in the Volunteer Office.

To access the policies on the RBCH intranet ask any member of staff.

### What is a Hazard?

The Health and Safety Executive defines a hazard as: 'anything that may cause harm' such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, or perhaps poor posture when sitting at a work station.

The terms Hazard and Risk are often used interchangeably but the following simple example explains the difference between the two:

If there was a spill of water in a room then that water would present a slipping hazard to persons passing through it. If access to that area was prevented by a physical barrier then the hazard would remain though the risk would be minimised.

### Common Hazards

The following are the most common hazards at RBCH:

- Slips, trips and falls
- Physical and verbal abuse
- Chemicals and hazardous substances
- Stress
- VDU (Visual Display Units), workstations and the working environment
- Traffic routes.

### Identifying Hazards

Look at the scene and attempt to identify the hazards, then look at the [answers](#).





## What is Risk?

The Health and Safety Executive defines risk as:

'risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by a hazard.'

The level of risk is often categorised upon the potential harm or adverse health effect that the hazard may cause, the number of times persons are exposed and the number of persons exposed. For example exposure to airborne asbestos fibres will always be classified as high because a single exposure may cause potentially fatal lung disease, whereas the risk associated with using a display screen for a short period could be considered to be very low as the potential harm or adverse health effects are minimal.

Likelihood/Severity	Likelihood				
	1	2	3	4	5
5 Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
4 Major	4	8	12	16	20
3 Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
2 Minor	2	4	6	8	10
1 Negligible	1	2	3	4	5

## Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment is where the severity of the Hazard and its potential outcomes are considered in conjunction with other factors including the level of exposure and the numbers of persons exposed and the risk of that hazard being realised. There are a number of different formulae used to calculate the overall risk from basic calculations using high, medium and low categories.

A risk assessment is something the Trust is required to do by law. To carry out risk assessments, managers need to think about what might cause harm to people and decide whether they are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm.

You can get involved to carry out risk assessments in your area so managers can be sure that what is proposed to be done will work in practice and will not introduce any new hazards.

## Risk Assessment - How might identified risks be managed?

Risk assessments should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know; you are **not** expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

With your manager, look at what you're already doing, and the control measures you already have in place.

### Ask yourself:

- can we get rid of the hazard altogether?
- if not, how can we control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

### Some practical steps you could take include:

- trying a less risky option
- preventing access to the hazards
- organising work to reduce exposure to the hazard
- issuing protective equipment
- providing welfare facilities such as first aid and washing facilities
- involving and consulting workers.

## Slips, Trips and Falls

The common causes of slips, trips and fall and how to prevent them.

- spillages
- moving from one type of floor to another
- wearing inappropriate footwear (stilettos, no grip)
- poor lighting
- a wet, greasy or icy floor
- carrying something large or heavy
- not preparing a safe route first
- obstructions in walkways
- uneven surfaces

### Preventing

RBCH seeks to prevent slip, trip and fall accidents.

To achieve this aim you **must**:

- follow the spillage procedures for your area (local arrangements or Slips and Trips Policy)
- wear sensible footwear at work (Dress Code Policy)
- check there is the right level of lighting where you are walking
- look on the floor for contaminations and obstructions
- prepare a safe route first
- report defects with the flooring to your manager.

## Chemicals and Hazardous Substances

- A substance hazardous to health is a substance or preparation (mixture) with the potential to cause harm if they are inhaled, ingested, or come into contact, or are absorbed through the skin.
- Chemicals are part of modern life, and you are likely to encounter them everyday - from the chemicals used at work, to products in the home such as paint, and detergents and pesticides used in the garden.
- In a healthcare environment chemicals are encountered regularly and it is important to identify and manage the risks from chemicals.

See how chemical and hazardous substances are described.

Chemicals and Hazardous Substances are listed under the COSHH Regulations as **very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant**.

Chemicals and Hazardous Substances are:

- which the HSE has approved a **Workplace Exposure Limit**.
- a **biological** agent (including blood borne viruses - Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV from needlestick or contamination injuries).
- a **dust of any kind**, except dust which is a substance as described in descriptions 1 and 2, when present at a concentration in air equal to or greater than 10 mg/m<sup>3</sup> as a time weighted average over an 8 hour period of inhalable dust or 4mg/m<sup>3</sup> as a time weighted average over an 8 hour period of respirable dust.
- a substance falling within 1 - 4, because of its **chemical or toxicological** properties and the way it is used or is present at the workplace **creates a risk to health**.

## Chemicals and Hazardous Substances

### How are chemicals & hazardous substances managed at RBCH?

To prevent chemical and hazardous substance accidents in the Trust you **must**:

- follow the procedures for preventing them (Standard precautions policy, Sharps & contaminations policy, COSHH policy)
- follow your local procedures and as trained in your local arrangements
- wear personal protective equipment (as per the Standard precautions policy or as trained in your local arrangements for chemicals)
- report incidents and discuss risk assessments with your manager.

## VDU, Workstations & Work Environments

There are some common causes for work environment accidents that involve VDU (Visual Display Units) and workstations. VDU and DSE (Display Screen Equipment) describe the same objects.

Users may experience fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache from overuse or improper use of DSE. These problems can also be experienced by poorly designed workstations or work environments.

The causes may not always be obvious and can be due to a combination of factors.

## VDU, Workstations & Work Environments

### How are VDU, Workstations and Working Environments managed at RBCH?

You **must** attempt to prevent VDU, workstation and work environment accidents by:

- following the procedure for setting up your VDU, workstation and work environment correctly (this can be found in the DSE eLearning programme or DSE Policy)
- reporting any concerns to your manager
- reviewing your Working Environment if it changes.

## Speed Limits

The speed limit for motor vehicles on the RBCH site is set at a speed of **10** miles per hour, which is equivalent to 16 kilometres per hour. This speed limit is indicated by various signs and is in place to ensure the safety of staff and patients.

The speed limits **must** be adhered to by all staff and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action

## Promoting Safety

### How can you apply and promote safe working practices specific to your job role?

- take a sensible approach to working safely
- co-operate with managers
- follow the safe procedures and protocols in place to help keep everybody safe.

### Think about...

- what caused the accident?
- how can we prevent it in the future?

**Investigating the cause of an accident is the only way to make sure that the problem is solved properly and to reduce risk of recurrence.**

## Reporting Health and Safety Concerns

### Why is it important to report health and safety concerns?

- to make a safer work environment
- to investigate the causes of any incident, ill-health and near miss so that they can be prevented from happening again
- to collect information for the enforcing authorities - the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- to collect information for insurance purposes
- to determine the cost of any accidents
- to prevent further business losses from disruption, down-time and lost business
- to improve staff morale.

## Reporting Defects

### What is the reporting process for defects and maintenance?

#### In-hours (8-4)

Contact Estates Docketline via the intranet or by dialling extension '4287' for an electrician or plumber to fix the problem.

#### Out of hours

Contact Clinical Site via the switchboard by dialling '0' and Clinical Site will contact the on-call electrician or plumber to fix the problem.

## Emergencies

### What is the reporting process for an Emergency?

What is the telephone number to dial if you need the emergency services or an ambulance?

#### Dial extension 2222

You also need to know if any emergency procedures exist in your department (i.e. emergency spillage procedures etc.) and what part you may play in relation to your role.

**Speak to your manager for clarification.**

## Adverse Incidents

### What is the reporting process for any adverse events or near misses?

you **must** report Adverse Incidents using an **AIR** (Adverse Incident Report) form which is completed on the intranet by a member of staff. AIR forms are received by the Risk Management department and logged

## Responsibility

You are responsible for working in line with Trust policies and procedures and **must**:

- take care of yourselves and of others at work
- co-operate with your supervisors to enable them to carry out their duties
- use machinery, plant or equipment as instructed
- attend mandatory training
- report any hazard, defect, near miss, incident or accident to your supervisor immediately.

Managers are responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees by providing; training and instruction, information and supervision, equipment and materials, access and egress and welfare arrangements.

## HSE Website

Learn more via the **Health and Safety Executive** website.

## Summary

That completes this module on:

### **Health, Safety and Welfare**

Please complete the knowledge quiz and forward to your Volunteer Coordinator