

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

About the policy

We prioritise the health and safety of our staff and all individuals affected by our business activities. It is our responsibility to provide a safe and suitable working environment for all those involved.

The purpose of this policy is to outline our procedures related to:

- Assessing and managing health and safety risks resulting from work activities.
- Preventing accidents and work-related health problems.
- Consulting with employees on matters that impact their health and safety.
- Providing and maintaining a secure workplace and equipment.
- Offering information, instructions, training, and supervision on safe working practices and procedures.

(f) Outlining emergency procedures in the event of a fire or other major incident.

Please note that this policy is not a part of any employment contract or service agreement, and we reserve the right to modify it at any time.

Who the policy applies to

All individuals employed by the organization, including but not limited to employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers, and interns, are subject to this policy.

Responsibility for the policy

The effective operation of this policy and its implementation are under the overall responsibility of the director of Integrated care Support Services. If you have any suggestions for changes to this policy, you should report them to the director of Integrated care Support Services whose contact details can be found at the end of this document. For any questions about the day-to-day application of this policy, you should first refer to your line manager. This policy undergoes an annual review.

2. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the shared responsibility of all staff members to ensure safe working conditions. As an individual, you are accountable for your own health and safety as well as that of others. This entails adhering to relevant safety regulations and following instructions for the safe use of equipment.

If you have any health and safety concerns, you must promptly report them to either your line manager. You must cooperate with managers in matters pertaining to health and safety, including the investigation of any incidents. Non-compliance with this policy may be regarded as misconduct.

3. TRAINING

To ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all employees, we require all staff to complete the Health, Safety, and Welfare Level 1 course provided by E-Learning for Health (e-lfh).

The course covers fundamental health and safety principles, including risk assessments, hazard identification, and control measures. It also focuses on promoting the welfare of individuals in the workplace and maintaining a safe work environment.

4. EQUIPMENT

It is imperative that you utilise equipment strictly in accordance with the instructions provided to you. Any instances of equipment malfunction or damage must be reported to your line manager.

It is prohibited for any member of staff to attempt to repair equipment unless they have received appropriate training to do so. This is to ensure that equipment is not further damaged or compromised, and to maintain the safety and well-being of all staff members.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding equipment use or maintenance, please consult with your line manager or the relevant department.

5. ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for investigating any work-related injuries or illnesses that occur in the work environment. They are also responsible for maintaining accurate accident records and submitting reports to the relevant authorities if required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/1471) (RIDDOR).

As our virtual work environment presents unique challenges, it is crucial that any incidents or accidents are thoroughly investigated to prevent their recurrence and ensure the safety of all employees. The Health and Safety Officer will work closely with all relevant parties to identify the cause of the incident, take appropriate remedial action, and record the details of the incident in accordance with regulatory requirements.

In the event of an incident or accident, please report it to the Health and Safety Officer immediately.

In the event of an incident or accident taking place at another organisation while carrying out work on behalf of Integrated care Support Services, the Health and Safety Officer will work closely with the host company's Health and Safety Officer or designated representative to conduct a thorough investigation and provide guidance on any necessary next steps. Our Health and Safety Officer will also ensure that accurate accident records are kept and that reports are submitted to the relevant authorities if required.

6. NATIONAL HEALTH ALERTS

If an epidemic or pandemic alert occurs, we will take appropriate measures to organise our business operations and provide guidance to staff on steps that can be taken to minimise the risk of infection at work, in accordance with official guidelines. If you have any questions regarding the measures to be taken, please refer to your line manager. Our top priority is to ensure the health and safety of our employees.

7. FIRE SAFETY

As virtual workers do not physically attend the workplace, the risks associated with fire are reduced. However, it is still important for virtual workers to be aware of fire safety protocols and to take steps to minimise the risk of fire in their home offices. To this end, we recommend the following fire safety measures for virtual workers:

- Ensure that your home office has working smoke detectors installed.
- Keep a fire extinguisher readily accessible in your home office.
- Avoid using multiple extension cords or power strips, which can overload electrical circuits and increase the risk of fire.
- Keep flammable materials, such as paper, away from heat sources and electrical equipment.
- Follow safe practices when using electrical equipment, such as turning off equipment when not in use and unplugging equipment when leaving the home office.
- Have a clear plan in place for evacuating your home office in the event of a fire, including identifying exit routes and a designated meeting place outside.

If staff are required to visit another organisation's workplace, they should familiarise themselves with that organisation's fire safety policy and protocols.

8. RISK ASSESSMENTS

All employees are responsible for conducting regular self risk assessments to identify potential hazards and to take appropriate steps to mitigate the risk of accidents and injuries. Self risk assessments should be conducted at least once a year, or more frequently if circumstances require it.

The self risk assessment should cover the following areas:

- Physical hazards, such as trip hazards or electrical hazards
- Environmental hazards, such as poor lighting or extreme temperatures
- Ergonomic hazards, such as incorrect posture or inadequate workspace setup
- Psychological hazards, such as stress or burnout

If necessary, the company will provide training and support to employees to help them mitigate risks and improve their working conditions.

9. COMPUTERS AND DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

To ensure safe and comfortable work conditions for virtual workers operating from a home office, staff must take responsibility for minimising the risk of injury or ill health that may result from the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE). This includes conducting a self-assessment to identify potential risks associated with their work environment and taking appropriate measures to address them. It is also important that the work area is properly set up and that DSE is used in accordance with any training or guidance provided. In addition, staff should take regular breaks from using DSE; this may include taking short breaks every hour, and longer breaks every two hours.

The company will provide home workers with appropriate DSE equipment, where this is necessary for them to carry out their work. This may include a computer, laptop, monitor, keyboard, mouse, and other peripherals. All DSE provided by the company will meet relevant health and safety standards, including ergonomic standards.

Home workers are responsible for ensuring that any DSE provided by the company is kept in good working order, and for reporting any faults or damage to their line manager as soon as possible.

10. CONTACT US

Questions, comments and requests regarding this health and safety policy are welcomed and should be addressed to Integrated care Support Services inbox at swlicb.training@nhs.net.