



Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

The aims of this Health and Safety Policy are;

- to demonstrate the Agency's commitment to Health and Safety at work
- to ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation
- to adopt best practice in health and safety management
- to ensure systems are in place for the identification and delivery of health and safety training needs
- to manage health and safety by the process of risk assessment and put in place appropriate measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level
- to provide employees with the information, instruction and training they need to work safely and efficiently and to develop safety awareness among employees
- to make employees aware of their individual responsibility to take all reasonable care for the safety of themselves and others and co-operate with management in matters of health and safety
- to minimise the incidence and severity of accidents, injuries and work related ill health
- to ensure employee welfare and provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment

Policy Influences

This policy has been influenced by:

- Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978
- Control of substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (NI) 2003
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (NI) 1996
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (NI) 1992
- Electricity at Work Regulations (NI) 1991
- Employer's Liability (Defective Equipment and Compulsory Insurance) (NI) Order 1972
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI)1999
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations (NI) 1992
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (NI) 1999
- Manual Handling Policy
- Waste Management Policy

Policies Impacted

The following policies may be impacted by a change to this document:

- Manual Handling Policy
- Waste Management Policy

Policy

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency recognises and accepts its legal responsibilities for Health and Safety. It is the policy of the Agency to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, and to provide adequate information, training and supervision as needed for this purpose. The Agency is committed to the adoption of best practice in health and safety management and to continual improvement in standards of health and safety.

Under the Health and Safety at Work NI Order (1978) there are statutory responsibilities for both employees and employers:

Employer

Article 4 (1) of the order dictates that 'It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees.'

Employee

Article (8) 'It shall be the duty of every employee while at work 'to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work'.

This statement of intent is signed by the Chief Executive. The policy will be reviewed in the light of any change in health and safety legislation.

Signed:Chief Executive

Date:

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

2.1 The Agency Board through the Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Agency's health and safety policy.

The Agency shall endeavour to work towards the following objectives:

- Comply with relevant health and safety legislation
- Provide for the setting and achievement of health and safety objectives and targets for the organisation
- Ensure that staff receive appropriate information, instruction and training
- Make the health and safety policy widely accessible by inclusion in the staff handbook and intranet
- Facilitate communication with all stakeholders regarding the Agency's health and safety policy and associated objectives, targets and performance against these.

2.2 The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility and accountability for health and safety and will ensure that, through effective policies and procedures, NIMDTA is compliant with all legal and statutory responsibilities and directives issued by the DHSSPS.

2.3 The Administrative Director is the appointed Executive Director with special responsibility for health and safety arrangements. She will ensure that risk assessments are undertaken and action is taken to minimise the risks identified.

2.4 This authority is further delegated to the Human Resources Manager who is responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff are compliant with this policy and are trained to carry out the duties associated with health and safety management

- Guidance is issued to staff with regard to the Agency's health and safety arrangements
- Incident reporting and investigation procedures are carried out where appropriate
- Domestic services staff are aware of the Agency's Health and Safety requirements
- Relevant information is shared with the Health and Safety Committee
- An up-to-date library of health and safety legislation is maintained
- Health and safety training is provided for staff

2.5 All Senior Managers shall ensure that:

- staff and others that work within their department are aware of, and understand the Agency's health and safety policy and procedures.
- Personal protection and basic hygiene precautions are adhered to

2.6 Each member of staff has a personal responsibility for ensuring adherence to health and safety procedures. Staff should:

- be familiar with the policies and procedures relating to health and safety
- report any breach of health and safety regulations to their line manager and take corrective action where possible
- assist with completion of the adverse incident report form in accordance with NIMDTA's procedure for recording and reporting incidents
- ensure that personal protection and basic hygiene precautions are adhered to

- 2.7 Any employee who wilfully disregards NIMDTA's Health and Safety Policy will be subject to disciplinary procedure.

3. COMMUNICATION OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

- 3.1 The policy is available on the Agency's intranet and a dedicated health and safety section is included in the Staff Handbook. Any health and safety issues raised will be communicated to staff via email and posted on the staff notice board.
- 3.2 Relevant information is also available in the HR Department and the HR Manager is available for help and guidance on health and safety issues. Team Leaders are tasked with passing on relevant information to their staff and act on any feedback that may arise from this communication.
- 3.3 All new employees will be inducted on health and safety matters in accordance with Agency procedures

4. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 4.1 The Director with responsibility for health and safety will make an annual report to the Board and will ensure that health and safety matters are considered at appropriate Board meetings held throughout the year.
- 4.2 The Health and Safety Committee will be responsible for dealing with all health and safety issues and will play a significant role in monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the system. The Health and Safety Committee will be responsible for ensuring that systems are in place for the identification and delivery of health and safety training needs and will ensure that the health and safety of staff is subject to regular review.

- 4.3 The Health and Safety Committee will meet at least twice a year and report directly to the Audit Committee. The terms of reference are attached in Appendix 5.
- 4.4 A Health and Safety Risk assessment will be conducted on an annual basis by the Properties Division of the Department of Finance and Personnel.
- 4.5 A report will be produced at the end of the inspection and managers and staff will be expected to action the points raised.
- 4.6 The Administrative Director will report findings of the risk assessment and the resulting action plans to the Agency Board.
- 4.7 Any health and safety risks will be recorded in the Agency's Risk Register
- 4.8 This policy will be subject to review every two years and will be revised in line with changes to legislation or Departmental policy.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Agency's fire safety, waste management, and security policies and the Agency's Business Continuity Plan.

APPENDIX 1

GUIDANCE FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. General Safety Rules

- Do not run
- Do not leave cables trailing on the floor
- Do not attempt to interfere with or repair any equipment unless you are authorised and competent to do so
- Report all defects, damage or dangerous conditions or system of work
- Dispose of rubbish and refuse promptly and in accordance with approved practice
- Use appropriate step ladders to gain access to heights
- Do not move any load liable to cause injury
- Do not obstruct fire exits or gangways
- Observe all signs
- On leaving work ensure it is left in a tidy and clean state and ensure that materials are stored away appropriately
- Follow approved procedures, instruction and training at all times
- Do not interfere with any device or sign provided in the interest of Health and Safety

2. Housekeeping and Premises

Cleanliness: the offices of the Agency will be kept clean and waste will be disposed of on a daily basis.

Safe stacking & storage: all goods, which are delivered to the Agency, will be taken to storage immediately.

Clear gangways: all exits have been marked by a lighted sign and will be clear kept free from clutter and obstruction.

Electrical equipment: Portable Appliance Testing will take place every two years.

Dangerous substances: all cleaning materials are located in the kitchen and are labelled and will be used according to instruction.

1. Accidents

All accidents, even those considered as minor, must be reported to the HR Manager and recorded in the Accident Record Book. The HR Manager is responsible for investigating accidents (see Appendix 1).

2. Fire

In the event of a fire staff must adhere to the Agency's fire safety procedures (see Appendix 3)

3. Display Screen Equipment

The risks associated with display screen equipment work are identified in Appendix 4.

APPENDIX 2

IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT

All accidents must be reported to the HR Manager who is responsible for recording and investigating accidents. The Accident Record Book is located in Reception.

In the event of an accident, basic first aid may be given in an emergency if a doctor is on site.

A first aid box is also located in Reception. The appointed person responsible for the upkeep of the box is Lyn Bickerstaff. There is no mandatory list of items that should be included in a first aid box, but for a workplace with no special risks the following should be available:

- a basic advice leaflet on first aid
- 20 individual wrapped sterile adhesive dressings, appropriate to the type of wound.
- 2 sterile eye pads
- 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages
- 6 safety pins
- 6 medium sized individually wrapped sterile un-medicated wound dressings - approximately 12 cm x 12 cm
- 2 large sterile individually wrapped un-medicated wound dressings - approximately 18 cm x 18 cm
- 1 pair of disposable gloves

NB: Tablets and medication will not be kept in the first aid box.

APPENDIX 3

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

In the event of a fire it is imperative that all staff know how to respond promptly and effectively to a fire situation.

On discovering a fire the following action should be taken:

- Raise the alarm (nearest breakglass point). Evacuate the immediate danger area and continue evacuation as required under the direction of the Fire Safety Officer and the nominated deputies (see Appendix 4). Fight the fire only if it is safe to do so using the appliances provided
- On hearing the fire alarm staff should leave their desk immediately and proceed to the nearest exit route. Staff should not take any of their personal possessions and should assemble in the lower car park. Continue evacuation of the premises as required under the direction of the Fire Safety Officer and the nominated deputies.
- The Fire Safety Officer must ensure that any disabled member of staff or visitor to the premises is assisted in evacuating the premises

Escape Routes

The 2 Escape routes (at main entrance door and back door beside hospital training open plan section) are well sign-posted and will be kept clear at all times.

Fire Fighting Equipment

The following fire fighting equipment is located on the premises:

Back wall at hospital training open plan section

- CO2 and water extinguishers
- Break glass

Opposite Dental Training Co-Ordinator's Office

- CO2 and water extinguishers
- Break glass

Kitchen

- Fire Blanket

Opposite store room

- CO2 and water extinguishers
- Break glass

Entrance porch

- CO2 and water extinguishers
- Break glass

Outside disabled toilet

- CO2 and water extinguishers
- Break glass

Action required at a Fire Drill

The effectiveness of emergency procedures for dealing with a fire incident must be tested by means of practical fire drills. A fire drill will be carried out on an annual basis.

On hearing the fire alarm staff should leave their desk immediately and proceed to the nearest exit route. Staff should not take any of their personal possessions and should assemble in the lower car park.

APPENDIX 4

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

H & S (Display screen equipment) 1992 regulation came into force on 1 January 1993.

Possible risks, which have been associated with display screen equipment work include;

Upper body

A range of conditions of the arm, hand and shoulder areas due to prolonged static posture are rare but can happen if the work-station is not suited to the requirements of the user.

Postural problems may be overcome by simple adjustments to the workstation such as repositioning equipment or adjusting the chair.

Eyesight

Medical evidence shows that using display screen equipment is not associated with damage to eyes or eyesight; nor does it make existing defects worse. But some workers may experience temporary visual fatigue, leading to a range of symptoms such as impaired visual performance, red or sore eyes and headaches, or the adoption of awkward posture, which can cause further discomfort to limbs. These may be caused by:

- staying in the same position and concentrating for a long time;
- poor positioning of the display screen equipment;
- poor legibility of the screen or source documents;
- poor lighting, including glare and reflections;
- a flickering image on the screen

Visual problems may be overcome by repositioning the equipment, moving the screen and keeping the screen clean and free from dust.

Whenever possible, jobs at display screens should be designed to consist of a mix of screen-based and non screen-based work to prevent fatigue and to vary visual and mental demands. Where the job unavoidably contains long spells of intensive display screen work these should be broken up by periods of non-intensive, non-display screen work. Where this cannot be accommodated deliberate breaks or pauses must be introduced.

Breaks must allow users to vary their posture. Exercise routines, which include blinking, stretching and focusing eyes on distant objects.

Breaks should be taken before the onset of fatigue, not in order to recuperate and when performance is at a maximum, before productivity reduces. The timing of the break is more important than its length.

Breaks or changes of activity should be **included** in working time. **Short, frequent breaks** are more satisfactory than occasional, longer breaks: eg, a 5 -10 minute break after 50 - 60 minutes continuous screen and or keyboard work is likely to be better than a 15 minute break every 2 hours

If possible breaks should be **taken away** from the screen

Informal breaks, that is time spent not viewing the screen, appear from study evidence to be more effective in relieving visual fatigue than formal rest breaks

The Agency will ensure that all employees are provided at his/her request with an appropriate eye test. Vision screening should be provided as soon as is practicable after a request has been received.

The eye test is to decide whether the user has any defect of sight, which requires **correction when working with a display screen**. The Optometrist

will need to make a report to the employer, copied to the employee, stating clearly whether or not a corrective appliance is needed for display screen work.

Special corrective appliances (ie spectacles) must be provided by the employer if the vision test illustrates that they are necessary to correct vision defects at a viewing distance used specifically for display screen work.

Normal corrective appliances are spectacles used for any other purpose not associated with display screen equipment, and therefore are **not** the responsibility of the employer. Research has shown that only 10% of employees will need special corrective appliances for display screen work.

The provision of eye and eyesight tests must be at the expense of the employer. Users needing **special corrective** appliances for display screen work must also be funded by the employer. An employers' liability for costs is restricted to payment of the cost of a basic appliance. If users wish to choose more costly appliances the employer is not obliged to pay for these. Employers may either provide a basic appliance, or may opt to contribute a portion of the total cost of a luxury appliance equal to the cost of the basic appliance. The Agency will pay up to £47 towards this cost.

Normal corrective appliances ie, spectacles required for any other purpose than work with display screen equipment are to be purchased at the users own expense.

APPENDIX 5

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Health and Safety Committee is representative of both management and staff side and reports directly to the Audit Committee.

Composition and Membership

Dr Terry McMurray	Chief Executive
Miss Margot Roberts	Administrative Director
Miss Roisin Campbell	HR Manager (Fire Safety Officer)
Mrs Gillian Dennison	Fire Officer
Mrs Lyn Bickerstaff	Fire Officer

Terms of Reference

- To agree arrangements for devolving responsibility for health and safety, fire safety, environmental matters, waste management and security across the organisation
- To monitor the adequacy of health and safety communication and awareness to include fire safety, waste and environmental management, and security arrangements within the workplace
- To appraise the effectiveness of health and safety training to include fire safety, environmental awareness and waste management training

- To agree the arrangements for the identification and management of all health and safety risks
- To ensure that risk assessments in relation to all health and safety issues are completed and are reviewed at least annually and remedial action taken as appropriate
- To consider health and safety inspection reports both internal and from external authorities
- To consider notifiable RIDDOR events and accident statistics and make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To assist in the development of health and safety codes of practice and safe systems of work
- To produce an Annual Report for submission to the Board for the purpose of demonstrating improvements that have taken place

Policy Proforma

Subject of Document: Health and Safety Policy

Producer: Margot Roberts

Date Agreed: July 2003

Approved by the Board: 4 December 2008

Date of Next Review: August 2010

Copy Obtainable: CETIS and F drive

Amendment Form

Version	Date	Pages	Comments	Actioned
1.0	July 2003		Ratified by Senior Management	
2.0 (draft)	28 January 2008		Revised for re-consideration by Health and Safety Committee	Margot Roberts
2.0 (draft)	12 May 2008		Approved by Senior Management	
3.0 (draft)	June 2008		Further revisions made following audit	Margot Roberts
3.0 (draft)	11 November 2008		Reviewed by Health and Safety Committee and revisions made, taking account of the risk assessment by WYG	Health and Safety Committee
3.0 (draft)	4 December 2008		Ratified by the Agency Board for ratification	
3.0	February 2009		Issued to staff	