HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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HEALTH AND SAFETY

POLICY

Chief Executive’s Statement

The Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust believes that maintaining a healthy workforce within a safe working environment is a key priority. The Trust believes that improved health for staff has a direct impact on its ability to provide high quality health care for patients.

The Trust recognises its statutory duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, clients, volunteers and other visitors to the Trust's premises, as specified in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Resources are allocated by the Trust to maintaining and improving standards of health and safety. In addition, every manager and member of staff is personally responsible for providing and safeguarding health and safety, in so far as they are reasonably able to do so.

The following Policy outlines the Trust's approach to health and safety, which will be regularly monitored by the Board.

Mrs Angela Pedder
Chief Executive
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy outlines how the Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust (referred to hereafter as the Trust) discharges its duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Under Section 2 of this Act, the responsibilities of the Trust as an employer are to:-

· provide and maintain plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
· make arrangements to ensure that substances and articles can be used, handled, stored and transported safely;
· provide information, instruction, training and supervision, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees;
· maintain the place of work in a safe condition, without risk to health
· ensure safe means of access and egress;
· provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment with the provision of adequate welfare facilities.

1.2 The Trust also recognises its responsibilities under Sections 3 and 5 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to protect non-employed persons from being exposed to the risks of its activities, and its responsibility under Section 4 of the Act to other users of its premises.

1.3 The Trust aims to ensure that all employees are made aware of and understand their duties under Sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 prior to commencing normal working duties (see section 2.6).

1.4 In addition to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Trust recognises all legal and statutory health and safety requirements that apply to its activities and the need for these to be met at all times.

1.5 The policies and procedures in the Trust Health and Safety Manual (found on the Trust intranet) specify the corporate arrangements for the management of health and safety. Responsibility for developing policies and procedures has been delegated to the Risk Management department from the Governance Committee.

1.6 Other Trust manuals also contain important health and safety information, notably the Nursing Policies, the Infection Control Manual, Personnel Policies, Risk Management Strategy and Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and Procedure.
2 SCOPE

2.1 The Trust’s Health and Safety Policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the Trust, working on Trust premises.
- All staff employed by the Trust, working in people’s homes, or in other organisation’s premises.
- All visitors to the Trust premises including Patients, Visitors, Contractors and Volunteers.

3 ORGANISATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1 The Trust Board

3.1.1 The Trust Board is responsible for demonstrating the commitment of the Trust to all matters relating to health and safety and for driving the health and safety agenda.

3.1.2 The Board Member accountable for Health and Safety is the Director of Human Resources.

3.1.3 The Board will be presented with an annual Health and Safety report, which will form part of the Trust’s Governance Annual report.

3.1.4 The Trust will monitor incidents to staff, patients and visitors.

3.1.5 The Trust is responsible for committing resources as an investment to improve health, safe systems of work, and a safe working environment and subsequently monitoring the impact of committing resources.

3.2 Governance Committee

3.2.1 It is the responsibility of the Governance Committee to ensure that the organisation understands the process of risk management and how it can be effectively utilised to address risk issues.

3.2.2 This is developed using both policies i.e. the creation of policies, procedures and protocols and the education of personnel within the organisation to take ownership of risk at a local and personal level.

3.3 Health and Safety Committee

3.3.1 The Committee provides a forum for the Trust and its employees to co-operate effectively in instigating, promoting and developing
measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, clients and other visitors to the Trust.

3.4 **Competent Persons**

3.4.1 The nominated competent person to fulfill the requirements of Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety Regulations is the Risk Manager. The Risk Manager co-ordinates the health and safety programme in an advisory capacity, through the organisational structure described below, with further help available from experts within the Trust e.g.;

- Governance Manager
- Deputy Director of Infection Control
- Occupational Health Consultant
- Fire Advisor
- Radiation Protection Advisor
- Manual Handling Advisor
- Facilities Management Team

4 **ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY**

4.1 The fundamental tool for ensuring compliance with Health and Safety legislation will be the process of Risk Assessment.

4.2 **Risk Assessment**

4.2.1 In order to comply with Health and Safety legislation it is essential that Risk Assessments are carried out on an annual basis or earlier where major changes have taken place.

4.2.2 To fulfil this requirement each Directorate/Ward/Department Manager will identify a named person to undergo training provided by Risk Management. The training will cover identifying hazards, assessing, controlling and reviewing the risks. On completion of training the person will be a Risk Officer.

4.2.3 Directorates will hold details of risk assessments in Directorate Risk Registers.

4.2.4 All risks which have a Risk Rating Number of >16 will be held on the Trust Risk Register.

4.2.5 The Trust Board will be responsible for reviewing the Risk Register on a quarterly basis.
4.3 Management Responsibilities

4.3 Risk Management Department

4.3.1 The Risk Management Department is responsible for:

- Managing and maintaining Risk Management systems e.g. Datix;
- Provision of Risk Management training
- The provision of a Competent Person for Health and Safety as required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

4.4 Directorate Managers

4.4.1 Directorate Managers are responsible for:

- Monitoring and investigation of incidents, as necessary, to staff, patients and visitors;
- Taking corrective action to prevent recurrence of incidents;
- Ensuring programmes of Risk Assessment are carried out within the specified timetable;
- Taking corrective action when a Risk Assessment Report reveals higher levels of risk than anticipated;
- Ensuring adequate training is in place to maintain safe systems of work;
- Identifying to Directors any areas where the organisation needs to commit additional resources to ensure health and safety is maintained or improved;
- Produce and manage Directorate risk registers informing the Governance manager of all risk Rating Numbers >16;

4.4.2 Heads of Departments/Senior Nurses are responsible for;

- Ensuring all staff report all incidents/near misses occurring to staff, patients and visitors;
- Taking corrective action whenever this is required to prevent recurrence of incidents and absence from work;
- Ensuring all staff attend mandatory training;
• Monitoring that all Health and Safety policies are being adhered to;

• Highlighting any areas where there are felt to be inadequate policies to deal with any Health and Safety issue;

• Co-operating fully with all Risk Assessment programmes;

• Identifying to Directorate Managers any areas where additional resources are needed to ensure Health and Safety is maintained or improved;

4.4.3 Risk Officers are expected to:

• undertake the three day Risk Management training programme, together with updates as required;

• hold a position of managerial responsibility (ideally ward sister/charge nurse or not below E grade, or equivalent) and devote necessary time and energy to the task;

• have a clear reporting line to a Senior Nurse/Directorate Manager/Line Manager (if their line manager is not one themselves);

• feed irresolvable issues to managers and ultimately to Risk Management;

• communicate health and safety and risk issues to all staff in the ward/department, ensure that they receive necessary training and that all incidents in the area are promptly and properly recorded;

• undertake risk assessments (including COSHH, DSE and Manual Handling);

• undertake other miscellaneous duties e.g. device alerts.

4.5 Health and Safety Representatives

4.5.1 The role of Health and Safety accredited Representatives is to assist in the process of inspection and risk assessment and to assist in representing the views of staff on any issues associated with health and safety. Health and Safety accredited Representatives also have the right to carry out independent inspections and to represent their findings, on behalf of staff, to managers.
4.5.2 The Trust is committed to effective consultation with employees and the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee provides a forum for this. Further information on the role of this Committee and other means of consultation is outlined in the Trust’s Safety Representatives: Consultation with Employees Policy Statement.

4.6 Employee Responsibilities

4.6.1 Employees have to take reasonable care to ensure that they do not endanger themselves or anyone else who might be affected by their work activities. To safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all staff working within the Trust, and visitors to the Trust premises, as far as is reasonably practicable.

4.6.2 More specifically staff must:

- comply with all rules relating to the use of equipment, dangerous substances, systems of work and safety devices
- to report to their Manager any shortcomings in safe systems of work;
- attend mandatory training when nominated.
- report incidents and near misses.

4.7 Directorate of Facilities

4.7.1 Facilities Management implement/action the statutory requirements on behalf of the Trust, and alert relevant senior managers, with a copy of the policies which apply, for the following:

- Fire Code (includes fire training and precautions)
- Fire Precautions Act 1971
- Fire Precaution (Workplace) Regulations 1997
- Legionnella
- Hot water temperature control
- Asbestos
- Insurance Inspections (lifts and pressure vessels)
- Medical Gases (including waste anaesthetic gas system)
- Pressure Systems Regulations
- Gas Safety Regulations
- Security
- Sterilisers
- Electricity at Work Regulations
- Boiler Houses
- Kitchens
- Workshops
4.8 Training and Communication

4.8.1 All new members of staff must attend a Trust induction, which includes a session about health and safety and be made aware of the health and safety procedures that apply within their own department before they begin normal working duties. They must also receive corporate ‘refresher’ training on health and safety on a regular basis.

4.8.2 The importance of good communication about health and safety matters cannot be overstated. Whilst it is essential for certain information to be written down, this is no substitute for verbal discussion and relevant practical demonstrations. Information should be readily available, comprehensive and presented in a form that is easily understood by all staff.

4.9 Other Parties

4.9.1 Where members of staff are working on premises which are owned and/or managed by a third party, the Trust will ensure that the other party understands and accepts the respective responsibilities of the Trust, the employees of the Trust, and the third party in respect of health and safety. To ensure this is carried out ALL risk assessments, whether in the environment, or the assessment of risk in working practices, will be carried out JOINTLY by the Trust and the third party. The manager directly responsible for activity within the premises owned by a third party will therefore be responsible for acting on the findings of the joint risk assessors.

4.9.2 Specific discrete responsibilities however, are defined as follows:

- The Trust and the third party will jointly agree the details of the local Unit/Department Health and Safety Guidelines.

- The Trust will ensure the staff are suitably trained in adopting safe systems of work.

- Employees are responsible for practising safe systems of work as instructed by the Trust, or through their professional training.

- For any work related activities undertaken outside the premises owned/managed by a third party, the Trust, as direct employers of the staff will ultimately be accountable for ensuring those activities are carried out safely through
application of safe systems of work, and/or professional standards.

- The third party will be responsible for ensuring the environment in which the employee is working is safe.

- Where the third party is responsible for managing the work, on a day-to-day basis, the Trust and third party are responsible for independently monitoring accidents, jointly assessing risks, and auditing systems of work. The third party will be responsible for taking management action to correct any shortfalls in the first instance, only referring to the Trust if such shortfalls are not adequately addressed within the time specified.

- Where such management action fails to result in improvements to health and safety within a reasonable time period, the third party must inform the Trust, so that the Trust can take whatever action is appropriate, as the employer of the staff, to ensure safe systems of work are practised and maintained.

4.10 Audit and Review

4.10.1 As a minimum the Risk Assessment programme will be updated annually.

4.10.2 The Health and Safety Policy will likewise be reviewed annually, or sooner, should any new legislation or organisational change make it a requirement to do so at an earlier stage.