

**GENEVA HEALTH INTERNATIONAL (UK)**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY & PLAN**  
**2010/2011**

**DATE FOR ANNUAL REVIEW: May 2010**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND PLAN, 2009/2010**

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

This is the Health and Safety Policy and Statement of Intent of Geneva Health International (UK) Limited and its registered services: Geneva Homecare, Geneva Community Support Service and Geneva Nursing Service. Geneva Health International (UK) Limited and its registered services understands the importance of health, safety and welfare for its entire staff at all locations of work and acknowledges its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy working environment. This duty also extends to service users, contractors, visitors and self-employed persons who may be affected by the activities of the Company. Geneva Health International (UK) Limited will, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide a suitable environment to fulfil this duty. Geneva Health International is committed to ensuring high standards of health and safety in the workplace for all staff and visitors. Geneva Health International will comply with all relevant legislation including the Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1974.

The following responsibilities are essential to the success of this policy:

- To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities.
- To consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- To ensure safe handling and use of substances.
- To provide information, instruction and supervision for employees.
- To ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training where necessary.
- To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions and review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

In order to reach an appropriate level of statutory compliance, the Company will therefore ensure that:

- An updated assessment of the Health and Safety risks associated with work activities and premises is conducted and that appropriate measures are taken to eliminate or reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Safe systems of work are utilised as required and that a suitable level of supervision is accessible at all times.
- Every employee is given suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training to undertake their work activities safely.
- Sufficient numbers of competent persons are appointed to enable the Company to meet its duties.
- Full co-operation with other employers and sites controlled by other organisations is co-ordinated to ensure the safety and well-being of staff.
- A suitable system is available for reporting and dealing with serious and imminent danger, including provisions for fire and accidents.
- Suitable and sufficient resources are available to enable the facilitation of appropriate Health and Safety arrangements.

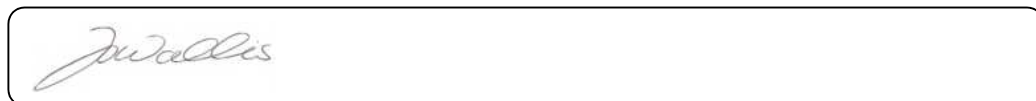
- Suitable safety standards are set and best practice is encouraged.
- Employees are made aware of all aspects of Health and Safety and are consulted on these by means of various committees and staff side representative groups.
- Each employee understands that they have a legal obligation to take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- All employees understand their duties under Health and Safety law and are aware of the potential consequences of any failure to comply.
- Suitable and relevant policies and procedures relating to Health and Safety are provided as required.
- A positive safety and 'risk aware' culture is promoted throughout the company.

The Health and Safety Policy therefore provides basic guidance on the key principles of Health and Safety, in a vital area of both staff welfare and regulatory compliance. It is not intended as a detailed information resource and will be supported by a selection of more detailed Policy documents covering mandatory and good practice requirements such as:

- Fire Safety
- Manual Handling
- Risk Assessment
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Lone Working
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Lone workers
- Health and Safety of service users

This list is not exhaustive and this Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually for Health and Safety Improvement and it is adopted as a fundamental business objective of our company.

Signed

A handwritten signature in cursive script, enclosed in a rounded rectangular box.

*Josephine Wallis*  
**Chief Executive**

03/06/2009

Date

02/06/2009

Next Review Date

## **2. Responsibilities**

### **2.1 The Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for the control of Health, Safety and Welfare matters in relation to the Company's activities and must delegate competent staff to carry out those duties to ensure not only the protection of those at risk but also to comply with Health and Safety legislations. The Chief Executive is accountable for Health and Safety matters, and is responsible for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- Suitable and sufficient resources in terms of time, money and manpower are made available to satisfactorily carry out those duties and to maintain a healthy and safe working environment.
- Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this Policy is put into practice is appropriately delegated.
- The organisation operates within the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and all other relevant statutory provisions, and that all employees are made aware of these requirements and arrangements.
- Policies and procedures are maintained and updated as required.
- All identified risks are notified to relevant parties and that appropriate corrective action is identified and monitored.
- Suitable consultation with employees takes place as per the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations, 1996.
- Arrangements are in place to effectively disseminate relevant information, monitor Health and Safety performance and maintain any records required to meet statutory compliance.

### **2.2 Delegated Responsibility for Health and Safety**

The Geneva Health International (UK) Limited Operations Services Manager has delegated responsibility for the delivery of Health, Safety and Welfare imperatives in all areas of business. Within this role, the Operations Services Manager will be required to operate in accordance with the relevant parts of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and all other relevant statutory provisions.

The Operations Services Manager is equally responsible for ensuring that all significant risks are brought to the attention of the Chief Executive and must ensure that suitable and sufficient resources and reporting processes are provided as required to facilitate this process. Relevant Health and Safety associated priorities include:

- Finance
- Training
- Supervision
- Information
- Instruction

The manager will further ensure that:

- The terms and agreed actions of this Policy are implemented throughout the Company to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive.
- Suitable 'competent person' advice is available to the Company to enable it to fully discharge its responsibilities.
- All Health and Safety issues are dealt with at a suitable level and that appropriate reporting systems are in place to facilitate the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff, clients, service users, contractors and all who use the services of Geneva Health and its CSCI registered care services.
- Required resources are identified and allocated to ensure the delivery of an appropriate level of Health and Safety.
- All reportable incidents, accidents and near misses are notified to the correct office in the required time frame and that all Serious Untoward Incidents are immediately reported to the Chief Executive and the relevant regulatory body.
- Suitable and adequate processes are in place for the investigation of incidents and for the formulation of robust action plans to prevent future recurrence and facilitate organisational learning.
- Related policies and procedures are maintained and updated as required.
- Consultation with employees takes place as per the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations, 1996.
- Suitable liaison arrangements exist with enforcement agencies and other bodies with a statutory or advisory role, such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the NHS, Commission for Social Care Inspection, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), Police and Fire Services, the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) and the Insurer of the Company.

### **2.3 Other Senior Managers/Team Leaders**

Other Managers/Team Leaders will ensure that all areas under their control operate within the systems, policies and procedures agreed by the Company. They will report all areas of non-compliance to the Operations Services Manager and ensure that no unsafe activities are carried out within areas for which they are directly responsible. They will further advise other senior staff and Heads of Service / Senior Managers of unsafe practices in areas outside their immediate control. They will lead by ownership of issues related to Health, Safety and Welfare within the Company and in particular, will ensure that:

- Local Health and Safety Policies are drafted and implemented for all areas within their control.
- Legal and good practice requirements are complied with in all areas of operation.
- All relevant issues relating to their area of responsibility are reported to the Health and Safety Committee.

- The implementation of related policies and procedures is appropriately initiated and monitored, and that suitable alternative arrangements are implemented to meet compliance with necessary legislation, subject to approval by the Chief Executive.
- The operational delivery of Health and Safety improvement is monitored via Line Managers/Team Leaders.
- Each area of responsibility has nominated and appropriately trained Health and Safety Co-ordinators and Risk Assessors who will ensure safe systems of work and will undertake refresher training as required.
- All risks identified via Risk Assessment are forwarded to the Operations Services Manager for entry onto the Risk Register whereby significant risks can be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive.
- All incidents occurring within the workplace are notified immediately to the Operations Services Manager and that staff within their control co-operate fully with any consequent investigation and learning processes.

#### **2.4 Assistant Leading on Health and Safety**

The Assistant Lead for Risk Management and Controls Assurance will assist the Operations Services Manager by providing day-to-day support in delivering the terms of the Health and Safety Policy and other associated requirements. Within this role, they will be required to operate in accordance with the relevant parts of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and all other applicable statutory provisions.

The Assistant to the Operations Services Manager is a member of the Health and Safety Committee and will ensure that consultation with employees takes place, as per the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations, 1996. Part of this role will be to facilitate the process of Health and Safety Audits or Risk Assessments and to monitor progress via the regular inspections of these services by the regulatory body, The Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The Assistant to the Operations Services Manager will liaise with external enforcement agencies or other bodies with a statutory or advisory role, including:

- The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- National Health Service Executive (NHSE)
- The NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency (PASA)
- Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)
- Metropolitan Police
- London Fire Brigade (LFB)

The Assistant will also ensure that adequate training provision is provided to fulfil the Company's obligations and that 'competent person' advice is available, either via

commercial contract, Service Level Agreement (SLA) or through external enforcement agencies, e.g. Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

## **2.5 Line Managers/Team Leaders (Consultants)**

These are essentially the operational management within the Company. Managers have a duty for the areas under their direct control, to ensure compliance with relevant Health and Safety requirements. Line Managers/Team Leaders (Consultants) are responsible for ensuring, via the line management structure, that all duties are conducted with regards to the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff and customers.

Line Managers/Team Leaders must ensure that suitable and sufficient training and supervision is provided to enable tasks to be carried out safely and competently. They are equally responsible for dealing with immediate operational risks and for bringing any areas of Health and Safety risk, which cannot be immediately resolved, to the attention of the relevant Manager.

Senior Managers provide a supervisory role within all working areas, including those directly owned by the company. Line Managers/Team Leaders have responsibility for the areas they control as regards the Health, Safety and Welfare needs of staff within those locations, for example when arranging training etc.

Line Managers/Team Leaders are equally responsible for raising risk and Health and Safety matters, which cannot be immediately resolved, with more senior management. They are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of Health, Safety and Welfare to enable full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and all other associated legislation.

### **Line Managers/Team Leaders must ensure that:**

- A suitable, sufficient and documented Risk Assessment has been carried out before a hazardous task or operation is undertaken and any actions or recommendations are acted upon, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- Safe systems of work are identified and used as required;
- All equipment is fit for purpose and complies with the directives governing it at the time of use, including CE marking, guarding etc and that suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used and adequately maintained.
- All portable equipment is tested in accordance with the agreed schedule.
- All employees are competent and that this is recorded as per the company's training procedures.
- Suitable Health and Safety training is, where identified by Risk Assessments, given as required.
  
- All accidents, incidents and near misses are reported in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.

- Office environments are kept free from potential hazards such as trailing cables, blocked access and egress routes etc.
- All fire exits and routes are clear at all times and fire doors are kept closed.
- Suppliers, sub-contractors and other outside parties are made aware of all risks identified in working areas controlled by the company.
- Ensure that all chemicals used have COSHH Data Sheets and where required an assessment is completed as per Section 6 of this Policy.
- Ensure that local safety procedures, where issued, are adhered to and up to date.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient training and supervision is provided to enable tasks to be carried out competently and safely.

## **2.6 Safety Representatives (e.g. manual handling trainers, clinical advisers and contracted advisers)**

- Trained Health and Safety Representatives must ensure that:
  - Any hazardous conditions, unsafe equipment / practices, incidents, personal injuries or near misses are reported to their supervisors immediately, in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.
  - Close co-operation and assistance is provided with any accident or incident investigations.
  - Safety inspections of the workplace are conducted on an agreed basis, ensuring that key risks are dealt with as soon as possible or referred to a more senior manager if immediate action is not possible.
  - They are aware of policies relating to all aspects of Health and Safety, with special reference to key areas within their control such as the handling and disposal of sharps etc.
  - They attend Health and Safety Committee meetings on a regular basis and disseminate information relating to Health, Safety and Welfare to facilitate compliance with the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations, 1996.
  - Safe working methods are actively encouraged in the work place.
  - They are aware of the emergency procedures for their particular workplace.
  - They assist in undertaking risk assessments under the Management of Work Regulations (Section 3) where trained to do so.

## **2.7 Trained Risk Assessors**

Trained Risk Assessors within the company must:

- Identify and record all significant hazards associated with relevant work tasks and the risks arising from those hazards.
- Identify all those who may be at risk from those hazards.
- Calculate and record the consequence and the likelihood of an injury occurring as a result of the uncontrolled risk.
- Evaluate the risk control measures in place as to adequacy and their ability to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Decide what actions are required to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
- Create an action plan where required and advise on the additional control measures required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Ensure that all risk assessments and updates are forwarded as soon as possible to the Operations Services Manager for inclusion onto the Risk Register.

## **2.8 All Employees**

- All employees will be expected to take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of themselves and others whom their actions or omissions may affect.
- They must never intentionally or recklessly misuse or interfere with any Health, Safety and Welfare provision.
- They are expected to co-operate with management and fellow staff in all matters relating to Health and Safety.
- They must report all accidents, incidents, hazards, near misses and dangerous occurrences in accordance with the company policy on accident reporting.
- They must comply with all relevant policies and procedures.

### **Working Alone In Safety**

Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations. Geneva Health International conducts meetings with employees prior to their working alone to discuss and identify potential hazards of the work and assess any risks involved; this includes putting measures in place to avoid or control any risks.

Employees working alone during out-of-office hours on the premises must adhere to the following:

- They must inform their line manager in writing if they have a medical condition that makes them unfit and unsuitable to work alone.
- They must adhere to instructions given on fire safety and evacuation, first aid advice and health and safety.
- When alone they must not let anyone else into the premises unless previously arranged.
- They must not use the lift, as lifts can at times breakdown.
- They must not use any substances hazardous to health (under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) COSHH).
- They must contact the out-of-office number provided during induction/training to state they have arrived home safely if finishing work late at night.

If a Lone Worker becomes ill, have an accident, or there is an emergency, they must firstly, contact the national emergency number 999. If able to do so, contact their supervisor on the number(s) provided during induction/training. In cases of other uncertainties, their supervisor should be contacted in the first instance. Other points of contacts are made available during induction/training and are regularly updated.

In addition to induction/orientation training, periodic site visits to observe employees working alone and checks on progress and quality of the work will be carried out, combined with discussions in which health and safety issues are raised. Regular contact will be made between the lone worker and their supervisor/team leader by use of either telephone or emails, or any other agreed method of communication.

In addition employees working alone within the community or homecare settings must adhere to the following:

- They must carry a mobile phone with them at all times and leave their contact number with the senior member of staff responsible during their shift.
- They must inform the senior member of staff responsible for their shift when they are expected to be finished work and inform them if there are any delays with this.
- They must find emergency exits at every site they visit before commencing their duties.

## **2.9 Contractors**

The responsibilities and duties of Contractors working on premises subject to the control of Geneva Health International (UK) Limited shall be specified in relevant contractual documentation and that relating to Service Level Agreements (SLA's).

As such, Contractors shall be required to specify their arrangements for ensuring compliance with appropriate Health and Safety legislation. All Contractors have a duty to carry out their work in a safe manner in respect of their own staff, those of the company, and members of the public. Overall responsibility for this remains with Geneva Health International (UK) Limited and staff who engage Contractors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that Contractors are competent to carry out their work.
- Ensuring that they are adequately informed as to the risks, which may be present in the work area concerned.
- Ensuring that, where necessary, induction is arranged with the Contractor prior to the commencement of the work and a Safety Plan or Method

Statement, which details how the work will be undertaken to ensure the Health, and Safety of all who might be affected support this.

- Monitoring as necessary, the activities being undertaken to ensure compliance with Health and Safety procedures.

### **3. The Risk Assessment Process**

Risk assessments have to be undertaken by all employers and they must be a suitable and sufficient assessment of foreseeable risks to employees whilst at work plus any risks to those not in the company's direct employment but who could be affected by its activities. Risk assessments should be carried out for hazardous job functions and, where necessary, a more specific assessment completed (e.g. for Display Screen Equipment or Young Persons at Work). The aim of risk assessment is to evaluate the level of risk to persons engaged in work activity or the risk to others in proximity to it. It should therefore be possible to understand the measures necessary to make all work operations as safe as possible.

All employers are expected to undertake risk assessments and to convey relevant findings to those concerned before a task is commenced. Geneva Health is required to retain assessments in writing or a recorded form, which is easily retrievable. Copies of all finished risk assessments will be retained by the Operations Services Manager and in the relevant workplace.

#### **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments will be carried out in all areas where a potential risk to safe working is identified. This will be recorded on the appropriate risk assessment proforma, with the required action noted and followed-up:

- Corrective actions required to remove or reduce significant risk will be monitored on a regular basis.
- Copies of all assessments will also be retained.

#### **Risk Assessments must:**

- Identify and record all significant hazards associated with the work task and the risk(s) arising from those hazards;
- Identify all those who may be at risk from hazard.
- Include a recorded calculation of the consequence and likelihood of an injury occurring as a result of that uncontrolled risk.
- Evaluate the risk reduction / control measures in place ensuring that they are sufficient to reduce the risk to an acceptable level;
- List any outstanding actions required to reduce risks to an acceptable level;
- Include an action plan describing the additional control measures required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

**Where young persons aged 16 to 18 are employed, a specific risk assessment will be required which will take into consideration the following points:**

- Whether the specified work is beyond their physical or mental capacity, taking account of any manual handling requirements.
- Any risk of exposure to harmful substances or agents.
- Any risk of exposure to ionising radiation.
- Any risk to health from extreme temperatures, noise or vibration.

Levels of experience, supervision and training must be evaluated as part of the assessment, together with the control measures required in making the job function safe for young persons to undertake. Further guidance on this area is available from the nominated lead for Risk Management and Controls Assurance.

The safety of new and expectant mothers in the workplace must now be risk assessed according to the Management Regulation updates of 1999 and require a specific assessment to ensure that they and the unborn child are not placed at risk. The Company's maternity policy is summarised in the staff handbook, and forms part of the induction process for all new staff and should be consulted prior to the commencement of any such assessment.

Specific risk assessments are also applicable for other areas of the work place such as:

- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments
- Fire Risk Assessments
- Manual Handling Assessments
- Specific Task Assessments
- First Aid Assessments
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Assessments;
- Work Experience (where the assessment must be carried out by the placing organisation).
- Customer / service user risk assessment and an assessment of their home environment that staff will be required to work within.

#### **4. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**

The Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations came into force in January 1993 and were updated in 2002. They include specific guidance on the risk assessment of computers and liquid crystal display equipment, with the exception of screens used for predominantly viewing television or film pictures. Other areas are also covered, such as microfiche and process control screens. DSE assessments will identify if staff are classified as a 'user' or not. The Company has a policy that users are entitled to an eyesight test and suitable corrective appliances in accordance with the DSE regulations.

Laptops are covered by the DSE Regulations if they are the main DSE work resource and are used as such on a daily basis.

Upper Limb Disorders (ULD's) can sometimes arise with the prolonged use of DSE. Any symptoms related to ULD's must be reported to the Occupational Health Department (via Geneva Health International staff or the Operations Services Manager) as soon as possible after discussion with the line manager. DSE and ULD

assessments are conducted upon induction and orientation training. Some typical points to note in order to avoid ULD's are as follows:

- Repetition
- Working posture
- Time
- Regular break
- Psychosocial factors

Display Screen Equipment assessments should be undertaken according to the following directives:

- The DSE Regulations, 1992 (as amended by miscellaneous regulations 2002) require that all users are identified and that a suitable and sufficient assessment of their role and environment is undertaken.
- All assessments must be actioned and then filed with an annual review date or as and when the operation is changed.
- A change in operation may involve moving to a new position within the office or to a completely different office and may also include the use of new software.
- All employees will be given or will have received DSE training to a level of competency for the job in hand.
- Identified users are entitled to a free eyesight test and a suitable pair of corrective lenses, if required, for DSE use only.

## 5. First Aid Arrangements

In accordance with the Health and Safety (First Aid at Work) Regulations 1981, there is a general duty placed on all employers to make adequate First Aid provision for employees if injured or taken ill in the workplace. Such provision includes ensuring that there are sufficient trained First Aid staff and First Aid equipment.

**'Suitable Persons' (First Aid Trained Staff)** – a First Aider is someone who has undergone a training course in administering First Aid at work and holds a current First Aid Certificate. The training must be approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Suitable Persons would include those practising as registered medical practitioners and practising nurses whose names are entered on Part 1, 2, 10 or 11 of the Single Professional Register maintained by the Nursing and Midwifery Board. Midwifery and Health Visiting staff may also be regarded as First Aiders for the purposes of the Approved Code of Conduct.

**'Appointed Persons'** – an appointed person is someone who is chosen to:

- Take charge when an individual is injured or falls ill, including calling an ambulance or transporting the patient as required.
- Look after First Aid equipment (i.e. oversee the re-stocking of First Aid boxes)

**Appointed persons should not attempt to give First Aid for which they have not been trained.**

Geneva Health International is required to ensure that a sufficient number of First Aid trained staff is available across all sites and that a sufficient number of stocked First Aid boxes are maintained in appropriate areas, which are regularly checked by Appointed Persons.

## **6. Manual Handling**

The Manual Handling Regulations, 1992 contain specific guidance on manual handling operations and their associated assessments.

All staff employed to work with patients and service users are required to have up to date, accredited, manual handling training. Staffs are offered annual training updates and an update forms part of the pre-employment induction prior to staff being able to work directly in care giving.

Tasks should be assessed for ergonomic considerations as well as other risk factors.

**Manual handling will be identified and assessments undertaken according to the following guidance:**

- The Manual Handling Regulations, 1992 require that all manual handling operations are identified and a suitable and sufficient assessment of their role and environment is undertaken.
- All assessments must be actioned and then filed with an annual review date or as and when the operation is changed.
- All employees must have received training to a level of competency for the required task;
- Leaflets and suitable training sessions will provide information regarding safe lifting techniques including the use of any specialised equipment where required. Under no circumstances should a manual handling operation be undertaken without an assessment having been completed.
  1. If a manual handling operation is required in the work environment, a risk assessment must be completed using the required Risk Assessment Form.
  2. All mechanical aids supplied must not be used if they have not been tested under Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and signed accordingly.
  3. Staff must not use equipment on which they have not been trained or deemed competent.
  4. Staff will undertake Manual Handling refresher training courses as required. This will take place every year in accordance with safety

guidelines for people handling and every three years for other handling operations.

5. All Health and Safety Representatives will conduct Manual Handling Assessments where trained to do so.

### **Training Methods:**

All employees must be suitably instructed to adopt and consistently use the correct techniques for lifting.

### **Employee Instructions:**

1. Staff must not attempt to lift anything that is beyond their own personal capability. They must always ask for help where required.
2. Staff must not attempt to retrieve any items from shelving / storage that is above shoulder height without using steps or mechanical assistance.

### **Geneva Health International Policy is:**

‘No person in our employment shall lift, carry or move any load so heavy as to be likely to cause injury or harm to that person’.

### **Geneva Health employees should always observe the following points when lifting:**

- Keep your back straight
- Keep your chin into your chest
- Keep your arms close to the body
- Place your feet slightly apart
- Bend your knees and lift with the legs
- Grip the object with the palm of your hands and not your fingers

### **General Safety Points:**

- Beware of slippery surfaces.
- Ensure that your walkway is clear.
- Assess the task before commencing and look out for jagged edges on the object to be moved and along the route that it has to be carried.
- If you are working in a team, one person must give clear instructions only.

The basic principles listed above must be observed at all times.

### **Unloading Materials:**

- Always try to unload heavy and awkward shaped objects by mechanical means.
- If unloading manually, try to use a platform to reduce the distance between the unloading area and the ground.

- Ramps are sometimes useful for unloading purposes. If they are to be used, ensure that they are strong enough, well supported and secured to prevent the possibility of slipping.
- Always ensure that there are enough persons available to do the job.

### **Moving People:**

Nursing, Health Care Assistants and Homecare staff work in circumstances where they will assist people with moving and handling and will be required to move patients. The following principles should therefore be observed:

- Ensure that a risk assessment of the task in hand has been undertaken and that the risks to both patient and employee have been identified.
- Consider if the task can be avoided.
- Consider the use of mechanical aids and whether suitable training has been provided to use it safely.

A complete guide to the more detailed principles of manual handling will be provided in a forthcoming Manual Handling Policy but, in the meantime, the overriding principle should remain 'If in doubt, ask for advice'

## **7. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations**

These Regulations cover the use, transportation and storage of chemicals within the workplace, covering everything from chemical fixers to domestic cleaning materials. These will include compounds, which have already been classified as:

- Very toxic
- Toxic
- Harmful
- Corrosive
- Sensitising
- Irritant

These categories appear under the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations (CHIPs). Should any material require health surveillance, the PCT shall ensure that all employees are notified who works with or near these substances.

### **Managers and Supervisors**

Managers and Supervisors must:

1. Identify all substances requiring a COSHH Assessment and will undertake such Assessments following suitable training.
2. Decide what precautions are needed before starting work with hazardous substances.

3. Ensure that all potentially affected employees are informed about relevant COSHH Assessments and that control measures are used and maintained properly and that safety procedures are followed.
4. Ensure that any new substances are assessed if required and that all relevant employees are made aware of the Assessment.
5. Ensure that COSHH Data Sheets and Assessments are circulated to the appropriate individuals, maintained in secure files and copied to the Health and Safety Advisor at Geneva Health International (or the Registered Manager in respect of Homecare and Home Nursing services)
6. Ensure that Assessments are reviewed as required.
7. Ensure that appropriate measures for dealing with spills are drafted and made available to all concerned.
8. Where practicable, Managers and Supervisors should consider the following control provisions in dealing with hazardous substances:
  - Elimination
  - Substitution
  - Controlled exposure by mechanical / engineering means
  - The use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is always the last resort and must be suitable and sufficient for the task.

## **8. Consultation with Employees**

1. In October 1996, the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations were introduced to enable all employees to discuss Health and Safety issues affecting their working environment with their employers.
2. The Health and Safety Committee will meet on a bi-monthly basis with representatives from each working area.
3. This membership will enable the Committee to function effectively and to respond on specific issues to the site-based Forums. These Forums should be constituted to enable the relevant representative to attend and then feed back to the main Committee on issues requiring specific resolution.
4. Where a specific issue or subject is not within the knowledge or skills of the Committee membership, attendees with specialist experience or knowledge may be nominated to attend and advise as required.
5. All employees have the right of access to the Chief Executive regarding any Health and Safety matters, providing the matter has first been brought to the attention of a line manager and, where possible, has been considered by the Health and Safety Committee.

Information within the company will include:

- Health and Safety Law Poster (with all relevant sections completed);
- Minutes and Agendas of Health and Safety Committee meetings and Forums;
- Membership lists for the Health and Safety Committees and Forums;
- Fire Action details and Fire Alarm Testing information;
- The Health and Safety Policy Statement;
- Details of where local Health and Safety information can be found, as well as generic details of site-specific safety issues;
- First Aiders or appointed persons denoted with extension numbers and locations;
- The latest Health and Safety training available and who to contact for further information.

#### **9. Accidents at Work and Related Ill Health (Including Violence at Work)**

1. All accidents, hazards and near misses, no matter how minor, must be reported on the Accident/Incident Report Form. This information must be forwarded to Manager within 24 hours of the event occurring (see 'Incident Reporting Procedure – a Guide to Reporting Incidents, Near Misses and Hazards', 2004)
2. All adverse incidents and risks must be reported as per the Incident Reporting Procedure and may, depending on severity, be subject to external reporting under the company's Serious Untoward Incidents Procedure.
3. All places of work must have a qualified First Aider or an appointed person and adequate provision must be made for the supply and maintenance of suitable First Aid equipment.
4. Locations of First Aid equipment and the identity of qualified First Aiders should be displayed on Health and Safety Notice Boards.
5. Compliance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 will be the responsibility of the Health and Safety Advisor. Notification of RIDDOR reportable incidents will arise via the standard Incident Reporting route. Such incidents include those involving death or serious injury, injuries requiring more than three days absence from work and any work-related disease. These categories may well include incidences of violence in the work place. Further guidance on this area is provided in the company's staff handbook. Staffs working in other locations are reminded of their requirement of adherence to that organisations own policy (see below).

6. Needle stick injuries should be reported immediately to your Geneva Consultant and the client where you are working at the time. All needle stick injuries will need to be followed up with occupational health and may require additional blood tests, vaccinations and prophylactic medication. An incident report from the place of work must be completed.

The following must be doing to assist with preventing needle stick injuries:

- Be aware of potential hazards such as linen and bed clothes, that may hide unsheathed used needles.
  - Never recap used needles
  - Carefully dispose of used needles and sharp items in authorized sharps disposal containers.
7. Slips, trips and falls must be reported to the client and to Geneva Health immediately and an incident form must be completed. Staff are responsible to try and prevent such incidents by ensuring floors round water coolers and kitchens are not wet, and cleaning up any spills immediately and by ensuring that the work place, including stairwells are well lit.

#### 8. Violence and Aggression in the Work Place

It has been recognised for some time that workers, particularly in a hospital setting, work within an environment where there is potential for threat, aggression or violence. Violence and aggression can be defined as including the following circumstances:

- Minor assault including situations where physical contact and/or injuries occur which require first aid treatment
- Threats with an offensive weapon without physical injury
- Aggravated assault resulting in injury requiring medical assistance
- Threatening behaviour which could include verbal abuse or threats and fear arising from damage to the physical environment
- Assault resulting in serious injury and/or death

Any violent, abusive (including physical, verbal, sexual or racial) or threatening behaviour is unacceptable.

You must report any incidents immediately to the client and also to your Manager at Geneva Health. The establishment where you are working the assignment will have policies for dealing with such incidents and an incident report form should be completed both at the place where you are working and at the Geneva Health Office. All staff members have an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to have regard for their own health, safety and welfare at work, and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Where staffs are employed on sites owned by organisations other than Geneva Health, any accident arising during the course of their employment should still be reported via the standard Incident Reporting route of Geneva Health International.

## Appendix 1

### Health and Safety Management Structure

