

Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Protocols

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Owner	Health and Safety Advisor	
Approval process		
Who has been consulted in the development of this policy?	The Health and Safety Working Group 5 th December 2023. Staff side, clinical leads, Associate Director of Estates, Health and Safety Manager.	
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1.0 Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health and safety of all staff, patients, visitors, and anyone affected by their work, so far as is reasonably practicable, which means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the risk in terms of money, time or trouble. This includes taking steps to control slip and trip risks.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to assess risks (including slip and trip risks) and, where necessary, take action to address them. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require floors to be suitable, in good condition and free from obstructions. Staff, Patients and Visitors should be able to move around safely. The Trust has statutory obligations to have in place arrangements and the provision of a safe environment to prevent slips and falls.

2.0 Background

The Trust recognises its responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation and the importance of providing a working environment that is safe and healthy for all service users, staff, contractors, voluntary workers, visitors, and members of the public.

The Trust is aware that slips, trips, and falls present a significant risk for staff, service users, and visitors and will endeavour to manage those risks whilst carrying out its business activities.

The Trust will endeavour to protect staff and other persons, to whom it has third party liability at law, from the effects of slips, trips, and fall hazards, by good management and risk assessment. 'Slip, trip or fall' is the collective term for a process, which has slipping and tripping being the near miss stage of a fall. The outcome of the event may result in harm or no harm.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff at the Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust (SCHT) including those on honorary contracts and volunteers. This policy also relates to members of the public, patients and visitors and applies to all premises under the control of the Trust.

4.0 Definitions

- Slip - To slide accidentally causing the person to lose their balance, this is either corrected or causes a person to fall.
- Trip - To stumble accidentally often over an obstacle causing the person to lose their balance, this is either corrected or causes a person to fall.
- Fall - A sudden, unintentional change in position causing an individual to land at a lower level, on an object, the floor, or the ground, other than a consequence of sudden onset of paralysis, epileptic seizure, or overwhelming event which results in

an individual or a body part of an individual coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or other surface lower than the individual, whether or not an injury is sustained.

- Working at Height - A place is 'at height' if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level.

5.0 Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and associated policies to ensure a safe working environment with relevant reasonably practicable control measures applied to minimise the risks from slips trips and falls.

Trust Secretary / Director of Governance

The Director of Governance has delegated executive responsibility for health and safety and is responsible for the effective implementation of this procedure and that any equipment procured by the Trust to eliminate the risk of slips, trips and falls, is safe for use/occupation, allocating sufficient funding to do so.

Ward, Department, Service and Locality Managers

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance for this policy and associated policies throughout their areas of responsibility
- Ensuring that thorough risk assessments, specifically focusing on slips trips and falls, are included within their Locality/Department risk assessment processes.
- Ensuring that the incidence of slips trips and falls are reviewed within their area of responsibility, alongside other performance indicators.
- Ensuring the appropriate provision of resources and training is made available to address the outcomes of assessments or incident investigations. The Trust will attach a high priority to supporting investments put forward as a result of the risk assessment process whilst recognising the financial constraints of the organisation.
- Managing the day-to-day activities within their areas of responsibility in order to minimise the risks of slips trips and falls.
- Ensuring that incidents resulting in slips trips and fall are appropriately recorded in accordance with the trust incident reporting system (DATIX).
- Ensuring that where incidents have occurred involving slips trips and falls that appropriate local investigations and carried out and lessons learnt are appropriately cascaded.
- Ensure that suitable risk assessments are conducted in their area of responsibility to maintain safe working environments and that action is taken to implement control measures to address slip, trip and fall hazards that have been identified.
- Ensure suitable risks assessments are carried out to identify and control any hazards realised by working at height.

Health and Safety Team

The Trust Health and Safety Team are responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed, updated as necessary and implemented.

The Health and Safety Team will provide advice on safe working in accordance with this policy and current legislation.

All Staff

Are responsible for:

- Carrying out their duties in such a manner to prevent or minimise slip, trip or falling risks.
- Clear up any spillages they observe or take necessary action to do so e.g., place warning signs and report on for domestic attention.
- Ensure that slips, trips and falls involving staff, patients, and visitors are notified to their manager in accordance with the trust incident reporting procedure.
- Wear suitable footwear (in accordance with the Trust Uniform Policy and Dress Code) for the environment and its risk particularly where specific personal protective equipment is specified and provided.
- Report near misses and accidents promptly to your employer
- If you see slip and trip risks, try to sort them out or inform your manager.
- Help to keep floors clean and dry.
- Clear up spillages straight away
- If you think of ways of preventing contamination (water, oils, cardboard, waste etc) from getting onto the floor, suggest them to your employer.
- Avoid causing trailing cables.
- Keep place of work clear of obstacles
- Ask your employer to mark slopes and changes of levels.
- If there isn't adequate lighting, report it.
- Follow all safety advice

6.0 Procedure

The requirement to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessment is a statutory obligation on all employers laid out in the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 focus on the requirements on employers to provide a safe working environment and in particular the condition of floors and traffic routes and the prevention of falls.

The Health and Safety Executive advise that the 4 main causes of slips and trips accidents in healthcare are:

1. Slippery/wet surfaces – caused by water and other fluids.
2. Slippery surfaces caused by dry or dusty floor contamination, such as plastic, lint or talcum powder.
3. Obstructions, both temporary and permanent
4. Uneven surfaces and changes of level, such as unmarked ramps.

Where a risk assessment indicates a concern with the slip resistance of a floor covering the matter must be referred to the Health and Safety Team who will arrange for a assessment of the surface slip resistance to take place. Please refer to the Trust Risk Assessment Policy for a copy of the Trust Risk Assessment Template form.

6.1 Factors to Consider

- Slippery DRY surfaces (to include ladders) caused by contamination. (e.g., dust, lint, talcum powder, deodorant and hair sprays)
- Slippery WET surfaces caused by spillages, leaks in machinery, splashing from pot washing and / or other fluids. (e.g., oil, residue left after cleaning, foodstuff on floors, water dripping from umbrellas)
- Completely dry up spillages promptly (Not spreading) and remove caution signs when cleaning is completed, and floor is dry.
- Warn staff about the risks of using mobile devices while on stairs and while walking around the workplace. (Use the handrails provided on stairs and not the mobile phone)
- Obstructions, both temporary and permanent can create trip hazard (e.g., equipment left in corridors, trailing cables, items not stored away, build-up of leaves or debris on foot paths and external stairs)
- Uneven surfaces and changes of level (e.g., unmarked ramps, stairs, loading bays.
- Lighting levels (e.g., Ensure lighting is adequate and on when required)
- Ensure footwear is in line with the Trust uniform policy / risk assessment and suitable for the type of tasks being carried out in your area (e.g., non-slip or safety shoes, tied laces, enclosed toes)
- Remember wet soles can be slippery on a dry surface.
- Always use the designated walkways / pavements provided.
- In icy and / or snow weather conditions always watch where you are stepping and wear appropriate outdoor footwear. The surface may be gritted but there can still be slippery patches. A risk assessment must be undertaken for extreme weather conditions.
- Encourage the reporting of worn or damaged surfaces.

6.3 Risk Assessment

Slips, trips and falls occur in the environment from many causes. Following the HSE five steps to risk assessment the first point is to identify a slip trip or fall hazard; this is the responsibility of all persons using the site.

Any hazard, so reported should be, if possible, immediately actioned to remove it from causing harm. If it is not possible to immediately remove/resolve a slip trip or fall hazard, the team manager will then be required to undertake a risk assessment to record and resource the actions required to remove or reduce the risk of the hazard.

In order to control hazards in the workplace and to reduce risk there is a requirement to undertake an appropriate proactive and reactive risk assessment for the prevention and management of slips, trips and falls. The five steps to Risk Assessment

STEP 1: Look for the hazards.

STEP 2: Decide who might be harmed and how.

STEP 3: Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.

STEP 4: Record your findings.

STEP 5: Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

7.0 Training

The Trust recognises that training of staff is fundamental to the effective operation of this policy. All staff will be given training commensurate with their role(s) together with regular refresher training in accordance with the Trust's Organisational Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

To ensure there is equity of access to all aspects of learning and development for all staff employed by the Trust, the Trust has developed a Learning and Development Policy. The training required for the management of slips, trips, and falls incidents is planned, delivered, and audited in accordance with the Trust Statutory and Mandatory policy and is delivered in accordance with the Learning and Development procedures document.

The policy and procedures documents describe how the training needs analysis is undertaken, training is advertised and how attendance at the required training will be monitored and followed up.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

The monitoring and implementation of the policy will be through the Health and Safety Working Group and Health and Safety Committee. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, as a minimum, or before as a result of any changes in either the level of risk, legislation, or Healthcare Facilities guidance.

9.0 References

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992