



GP REGISTRARS – YOUR HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING:

Generic risk assessment

Welcome to the GP registrar training programme. This note is about looking after your health and safety. It is offered partly out of altruism, partly because you are an expensive asset, and partly as compliance with health & safety legislation. It identifies some of the hazards to which you may be exposed in your work, and comments on some risk reduction measures. As such, it forms a generic risk assessment.

Discuss this note with your GP trainer, practice manager and team etc. It gives food for thought, and some of the answers – but you may find it helpful to attend a short health & safety course as part of your GP training; one day, you may be an employer responsible for the health & safety of your staff!

Ask about the practice's health and safety policy, know to whom you should report any accidents and how to raise any concerns. Have a look at the occupational health manual, and our website www.youmatter.org.uk. Our contact details are at the back of this leaflet.

Physical Hazards

Slips, trips and falls are a common cause of work place accident – familiarise yourself with your work place, and report any obvious hazards to your trainer. Out at night? Use a torch!

Violence and aggression - towards health care staff is still a reality – try and know your patients, learn about defusing, and walking away. If appropriate, learn about breakaway - contact your local PCT for information on suitable training or speak to neighbouring practices to establish what they are doing. In a practice, know how to summon help. Working or visiting alone? Let someone know where you are!

Manual Handling - (lifting patients, heavy equipment or medical bags etc.) – don't hurt your back; learn safer techniques. Specific manual handling training is available for practice staff from the Occupational Health Service - give us a call.

Ergonomics. - Painful back/neck from poor seating or hours at a computer keyboard? Advice is available from the Occupational Health Service.

Equipment and electrical safety etc. - Make sure you know how it works. Don't fiddle and perhaps damage expensive equipment - let alone yourself.

Chemical Hazards:

- **Latex gloves** are commonly a cause of skin irritation or even anaphylactic reactions. Nitrile or non-latex gloves should be worn when handling blood / body fluids / cytotoxic drugs and other high-risk substances. Advice is available from the OHS, HSE or medical union bodies.

- **Liquid Nitrogen (N²)** - acts as an asphyxiant as well as causing severe burns/frost bite. One volume of N² gives approx. 700 volumes of gas at ambient conditions i.e. expands big time! Be aware of hazards/risks. If you carry N² in your car, make sure that you are insured to do so and that you display the appropriate warning label (Non flammable, non toxic gas) AND a hazard data sheet. Avoid transportation if possible.
- **Drugs** - Be aware of any special precautions needed to administer certain drugs e.g. cytotoxic. **Always** read the data sheet and ask the Practice pharmacist as some drugs can cause problems to the administrator.

Biological Hazards:

- **Blood etc** - Know the “needlestick procedure;” and safe use/disposal arrangements for sharps. **Always** wear gloves when handling blood/body fluids. Carry a small sharps bin with you in your medical bag. If you have a needlestick or contamination incident – call us immediately on 01752 762116
- **Bugs** - Make sure your immunisations are up to date. Know how to care for infectious patients without catching the disease yourself. NICE guidelines suggest an annual reminder of TB symptoms. Ref: Nice Clinical Guidelines 33 TB March 06 (quick reference guide) www.nice.org.uk

Psychological hazards:

- **Stress** - Can happen to anyone. Think about work life balance. Consider workload, in control or feeling controlled by others, relationships (home and work), be clear about what you should be doing, the support that is available to you, time management, knowing how to handle change, feeling in touch/communication within the team etc. Mentoring, counselling and specialist support services are all available to you. Please contact the OHS for further details or use your 'green card'.

General





- Think, or find out, about general topics such as Fire and major incident procedures; basic personal safety and security advice. Health & safety training are available from the OHS.
 - Please ensure you are registered with a GP but not in the Practice where you work – no self-prescribing or using of returned drugs or those in your medical bag!
 - Without our being paternalistic, don't forget the old favourites: diet, smoking, drugs and alcohol, exercise.
 - If it's getting tough, speak early to your trainer or us. Don't forget the Deanery has many schemes such as flexible training etc.
 - If you do get ill or hurt because of your work, or health is causing you difficulties with your work – tell someone or contact the OHS.
- Financial health & safety - remember to manage your finances now. This will help throughout your working life and help your overall well being.
 - Work/life balance - Extremely important. You need days off/annual leave to recharge, rest, recover. Important for your long term 'sanity'.
 - Finally, if you ask someone to do something you are in fact responsible for their health & safety as they carry out your instructions. Think about finding out a bit more about health & safety, it can be moderately interesting. Contact the OH for Primary Care Service:

Useful contacts/links:

Devon LMC: 01392 834020
Cornwall LMC: 01726 627978

Plymouth PCT: 01752 315315
Torbay PCT: 01803 210500
Devon PCT : 01392 205205
Cornwall and I.O.S. PCT: 0845 170 8000

NICE: www.nice.org.uk

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	You can fax us at any time on: 01752 762117
	You can email us any time at: sue@abbottburke.co.uk / lesley@abbottburke.co.uk / suebond@abbottburke.co.uk
	www.youmatter.org.uk
	Our postal address is: Sue Bond – Occupational Health Nurse Occupational Health for Primary Care, Room N25, Tamar Science Park, 1Davy Road, Derriford, Plymouth PL6 8BX