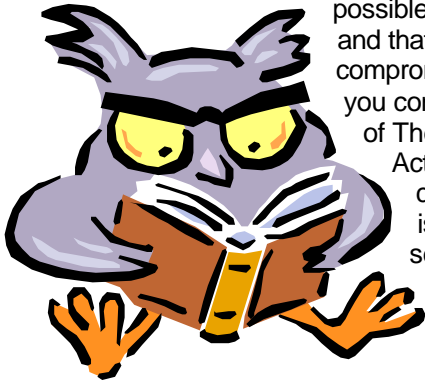


Are you using your Occupational Health Manual?

We know life is hectic but there is **HELP** inside the manual!



Pre-employment screening - make sure as far as possible that staff are fit for work and that their health will not be compromised by work (and that you comply with the requirements of The Disability Discrimination Act 1995). All the paperwork complete with instructions is in the Manual. This service is **FREE** to all Practices in South and West Devon - do use it!

Referral for Independent Medical opinion - health affecting work or vice versa? Contact us if you are experiencing problems.

Health & Safety Policy
There is a draft policy in the Manual - all you need to do is to read it and make sure it fits in with the workings of your Practice. Feel free to 'tweak' it if necessary - **make it your own.**

Help with Risk Assessment!
Guidance notes are included to help you with the process.

If you want further advice regarding any of the policies in the Manual, please get in touch – contact numbers on back page.

Very shortly you will be receiving further inserts for the Manual on Display Screen Equipment (VDU work), and action in the event of a Needlestick or contamination incident.

DSE Competent Person Course

Congratulations to the first brood of DSE Competent Persons that hatched out from the recently held course run by the OH Service at Kingsteignton Medical Practice.

Good luck to you all in continuing the good work of risk assessment in your Practices. Don't forget that we are here to assist you at any time if you would like help or advice.

Also, many thanks to Mark Procter and his staff at Kingsteignton for hosting the course so efficiently.

The next course will be held courtesy of Kirkham Medical Practice, Babbacombe, on Thursday 26 April (Full-day) and Friday 18 May (half-day) – both sessions must be attended.

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Contact Sue/Lesley (details on back of newsletter).

COST £70 per person (provided all ten places are filled). Sandwich lunch/coffee provided.



Marilyn Brookes (Kingsteignton), Suzanne Underhill (Kingsteignton), Angela Harris (Dartmouth), Pam Smith (Yelverton), John Green (Albany, Newton Abbot), Linda Tritschler (Kingkerswell), Sara Weymouth (South Brent), Loraine Stacey (Leatside, Totnes), Jill Little (Ashburton), Christine Veale (Devon Square, Newton Abbot).



Have You a Robust System for Significant Event Reporting... and Follow Up ?

All the practices we have visited in the last few months have a system in place for reporting significant events in line with the requirements of Clinical Governance.

These have ranged from a book, in which any member of staff may report an event (sometimes anonymously), or similar electronic system, to formal report forms.

In some practices the reports relate purely to clinical practice, however we would suggest that the system could be extended to include occupational health and safety events.

Importantly the system should allow reporting of 'near misses' – those moments where there was the potential for something awful to happen but quite by chance, on this occasion, nothing did.

By careful investigation and examination of the facts, plus a little lateral thinking, systems can be developed to prevent something similar (perhaps with more dire consequences) happening again.

A 'systems' approach, where all the 'what ifs' are considered, will help establish a blame free culture where staff feel able to report without the fear of being blamed. The outcome of the investigation should be recorded as evidence of your risk assessment.

The following article demonstrates how a 'systems' approach has reduced risk to staff in one Devon Practice.

From Significant Event to System - An Example.

In our practice a Practice Nurse used significant event recording to describe how she had been threatened by a patient who had recently been discharged from a psychiatric unit. As a result we have set up a system to attempt to minimise risk.

When a patient is identified as being at risk of behaving violently or abusively his/her notes and the computer record are tagged "two person consultation only".

An entry is made in the notes giving the reasons for this and giving a review time. The computer tagging appears whenever the name is entered, thus alerting reception staff at the time the appointment is made. It is our intention to tell the patient, where appropriate, that this has been done and the reasons for it.

We have also discovered that our Mental Health Service carries out a routine 'risk assessment of violence to others' on all new patients. It is hoped that in

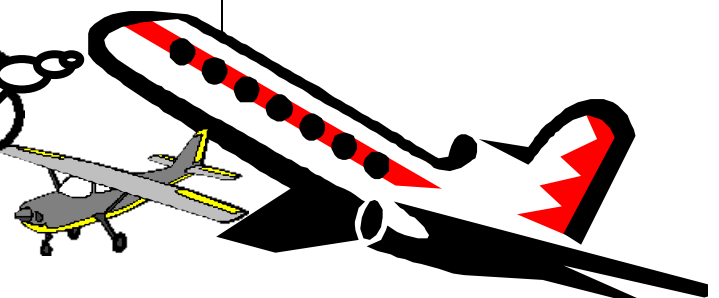
future such assessments will be shared with us.

This small system does not replace the need for staff to make their own common sense decisions concerning the risk of violence. It does, however, supplement it and more importantly suggests a need for inter-agency sharing of information, in a respectful and effective way.

Significant Event Audit

Dr Jonathan Stead ~ RDSU
at the University of Exeter
<http://latis.ex.ac.uk/sigevent/>

*Whoops!
Sorry didn't
see you....*



Disability - What Does it Mean to You?

Working as we do within the NHS, many aspects of disability are familiar to us and in that sense perhaps we are fairly well informed. But are we?

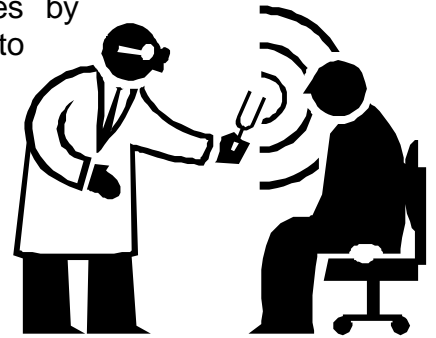
Here are some facts about disability that may surprise you:



- In a city the size of Plymouth, only 4.7% of people with a disability are wheelchair users.
- In 100 people with a disability affecting sight, only 5 are totally blind.
- A study in 1992 found that people with a disability were 6 times more likely to be rejected when applying for jobs than peers with identical experience and qualifications.
- 7 out of 10 people with a disability have acquired the disability since birth (i.e. they are likely to have received education and training and are therefore skilled and employable).

The Government has attempted to address these inequalities by providing funding to help people with disabilities to find jobs and to stay in them.

What this means to you in General Practice is that if you employ someone with a disability or a member of your staff develops a disability while working for you, there is significant funding to help you make adjustments which will keep the individual in work.



This funding has to be approved but is in the order of the following:

A current employee who develops a disability can be awarded 80% of the cost of adjustments over £300 and under £10,000, but 100% of the cost over £10,000. Grants for new employees are more generous and usually cover 100% of the cost.

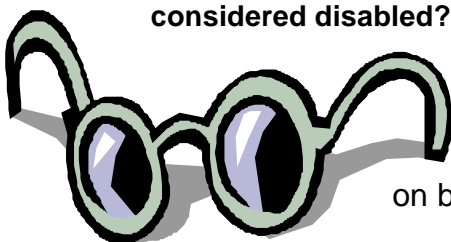
Adjustments can include a wide variety of things:

- ❖ Special equipment or adaptations to existing equipment
- ❖ Alterations to premises
- ❖ Travel to work costs
- ❖ A support worker (to do elements of a job that the disability makes impossible).

In reality, adjustments are often very simple and most definitely cost effective.

Ask yourself this question:

“30% of the UK population wear corrective spectacles, without them would they be considered disabled?”



If you want to find out more information about disability or about the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 contact the OH Team - we are happy to help. (Contact details on back page).



Taking the Initiative

The 5th Annual South Devon Primary Care Conference

Come and meet the OH Team at the 5th Annual South Devon Primary Care Conference Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd March

The OH Team will be running a workshop on Thursday entitled 'You Matter – so what next?'

We hope to generate lots of lively discussion on the issues that affect you most in Primary Care.

You can expect to come away with some solutions and ideas that will make a difference in your Practice. We look forward to seeing you there.

All delegates at the Conference will be encouraged to contribute to these workshops and in so doing will be entered for a free-prize draw.



WIN ! - Murder Mystery on the Moors – for those who dare!

An exciting overnight stay for two people with a 'whodunit' theme to include a sumptuous four-course dinner and full English breakfast the next morning - if you survive!!!!





Stay at either The Two Bridges Hotel, Dartmoor or The Bedford Hotel, Tavistock!

Make 2001 the year you get (and keep) fit!

Discount for Primary Care Staff in Plymouth at "The Devonshire Health and Racquet Club" (opposite Derriford Hospital), who will waive the standard joining fee for GPs and their staff. The Club can be contacted on 01752 – 796222.

If there is another gym or health club in your area and you would like us to negotiate a discount, please contact the team.

Contact Details for the OH Team

	0117 923 2381 any Wednesday morning from 09:00 – 12:30hrs
	You can fax us at any time on: 0117 923 2382 or 01530 224 762
	You can email us any time at: sue@abbottburke.co.uk or lesley@abbottburke.co.uk
	Our postal address is: 33 Logan Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8DS

If you are not certain that your query or concern is related to Occupational Health, do not let this stop you – we will do our best to help.

All enquiries will be treated in confidence.



MEDICAL SICKNESS SOCIETY
PART OF THE WESLEYAN ASSURANCE SOCIETY

