



YOU MATTER!

The Newsletter
keeping you informed
of what's going on in
Occupational Health

Issue No. 14 ~ March/April 2003

Complying with Health & Safety is mainly common sense and does not have to be onerous!

Within your Practice, perhaps Health & Safety sits fairly far down on the list of "must do sometime, if I ever get a spare minute." You may feel daunted by the phrase 'Risk Assessment' or feel you do not have the knowledge or skills to undertake this.

It doesn't have to be this way!

Health & Safety law is actually basic common sense. The phrase "as far as is reasonably practicable" features heavily, i.e. you can balance the cost of taking action to make something safer, (in terms of time and inconvenience as well as money), against the risk that is being considered.

You have at your disposal an **Occupational Health and Safety** service – we can help!

We have the qualifications, skills and knowledge to advise you on matters of Health & Safety, so please use us.

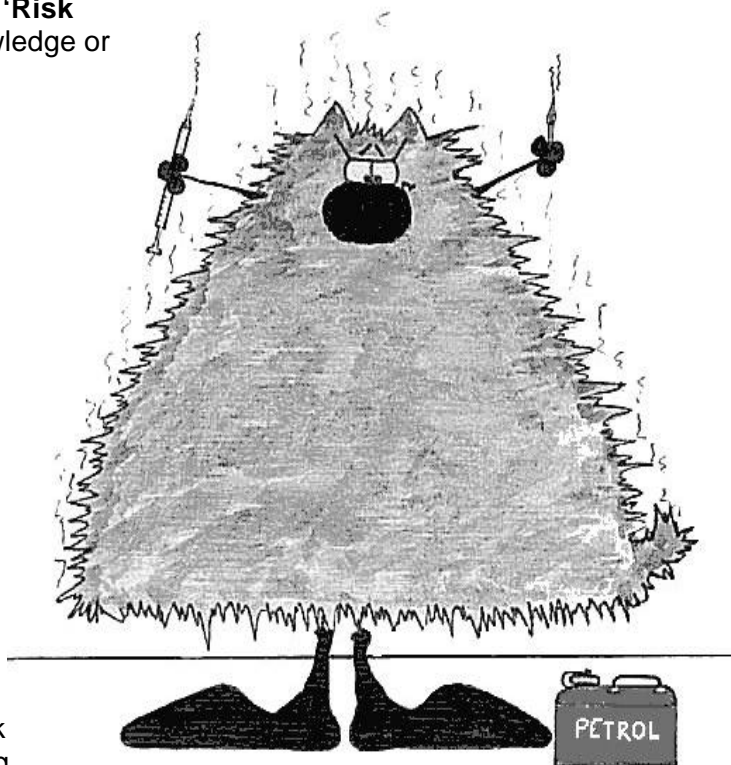
You will see overleaf some details on the Risk Management Guidelines that we are making available to all Practices. This is a practical route via which you can start some proactive Health & Safety work in your Practice - with our assistance if you would like.

Take our word for it - by addressing aspects of Health & Safety you will find yourselves able to satisfy a multitude of other stipulations and requirements that have been imposed upon you and the Practice.

Tick tons of boxes and keep your paymasters happy!

But more importantly.....

Look at what you do and how you do it. Make your Practice a more efficient, more pleasant and safer place to work in.



IT WAS SHORTLY AFTER BARRY'S
PETROL, SYRINGE AND MATCH DEMONSTRATION
THAT RISK MANAGEMENT ENTERED A NEW DIMENSION. ©



Some Topical Health & Safety Suggestions

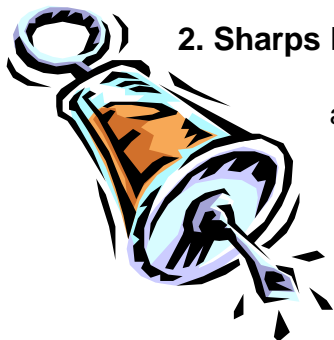
1. Toy Boxes

- a. Keep washable, simple new toys only.
- b. Consider fixed toys so that they are not scattered all over the floor.



2. Sharps Bins

- a. Beware – they tend to look like Lego boxes! It is advisable to keep them in a position, which is out of the reach of children and move to wherever needles are being used.
- b. Keep small ones in resuscitation kits.
- c. Do not allow them to become over full.



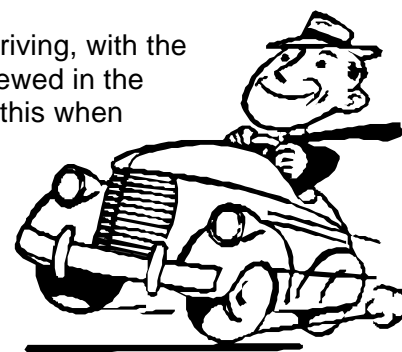
3. The 'Toddler Test'

- a. Accidents can happen when everyone is distracted. Consider a situation where the mother collapses whilst with a doctor/nurse. What happens to the 3-year-old whilst the doctor/nurse is dealing with mum?
- b. Go down on your knees and see the world through the eyes of a 3-year-old.
- c. What can they reach/pull/climb on?
- d. Safety is especially important in treatment rooms. Can you anticipate incidents and make things safer?

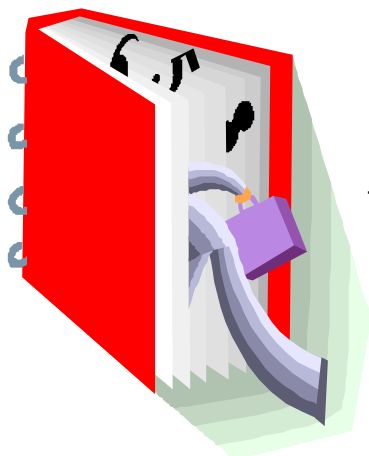


4. Driving

- a. There has been much publicity recently about tiredness and driving, with the Courts indicating that driving whilst excessively tired will be viewed in the same way as driving under the influence of alcohol. Consider this when deciding if you should work after a night on call.
- b. Doctors' and nurses' cars are NOT rapid response vehicles. We are not trained and nor do our cars have any warnings (green flashing lights are viewed in the same way as orange ones). Use ambulances for rapid responses – with doctors and nurses providing a dual response as necessary at NORMAL speeds.



When you deal with any 'Health & Safety' issue take a minute to record what you have done. (This is a legal requirement). Just saying that you are doing it is not enough – it is wise to be able to demonstrate that you have done it.



New inserts for your OH&S Manual

Two new inserts will shortly be winging their way towards you

- **Guidelines on Occupational Immunisation**

By the popular request of many Practice Managers and Practice Nurses. This also includes a proforma for taking immunisation history and a record sheet.

We hope this meets your needs. Do let us have any constructive comments!

- **Guidelines on Risk Management**

Some of you may already be familiar with this document, which is a fairly comprehensive Health and Safety Assessment Form to lead you steadily through most of the hazards and risks associated with Primary Care. It will help you to meet the legal obligation to conduct risk assessment in the Practice.

It comes with a warning message! – Unless you have unlimited time (now there's a joke!) do not attempt to complete in one attempt. The form is designed so that you can tackle one issue at a time.

Feeling daunted? – You do not have to do this alone! Contact the Helpline and we will arrange for one of us to come and spend some time with you to kickstart the process. If you do tackle it unaided, do feel free to discuss the outcomes and implementation issues with us. We are happy to help!

Reminder

Please forward
Pre-Employment Health Assessment forms
to **Georgina's new address**

Occupational Health
Meridian House
Heron Way,
Truro
TR1 2XN

Using the old address will seriously delay the screening process.

Please would you also ensure that you complete and enclose the Risk Assessment form so that Georgina can assess the health status in relation to the requirements of the post. Thank you.

Coming soon!

Our OH&S Website will shortly be accessible.

www.youmatter.org.uk

Counselling Service

Did you know.....?

The OH service has a network of counsellors throughout S&W Devon and Cornwall.

This service is available to all staff and offers up to 6 counselling sessions.

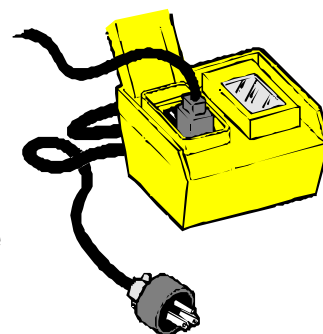
You can access this service, in confidence, by contacting the Helpline (contact details below). We will put you in touch with a local counsellor. From then on liaison is entirely between you and the counsellor.

Spreading the Word

Recent Health and Safety Queries answered

1. How often do we need to get electrical appliances tested?

Portable Electrical Appliances have to be tested annually (commonly known as PAT testing) and each appliance marked accordingly. Tests have to be conducted by a 'competent person' ie an electrician.



2. Do the paper towels used by staff to dry their hands count as contaminated waste?

This is not necessary. Make sure you keep them separate from contaminated waste otherwise you will be paying a higher price than you need for disposal of contaminated waste.



3. Do reception staff who handle specimens need to be protected by occupational vaccinations?

No, not necessarily. It is much better to have in place a 'safe system' which ensures that they do not directly handle specimens and there is therefore little chance of exposure (eg receptionist holds the bag open and asks the patient to drop in the labelled container). **See Guidelines for Occupational Immunisations** in

our latest OH&S Manual release.

Sue and Lesley's contact details remain the same

Contact Details	
	0117 923 2381 any Wednesday from 9:00am – 5:00pm
	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 lesley@abbottburke.co.uk or georgina@abbottburke.co.uk
	Sue Burke/Lesley Abbott postal address: 33 Logan Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8DS
	Georgina Wingfield can be contacted via Meridian House, Heron Way, Truro R1 2XN Telephone No: 01872 274374 - Fax No: 01872 274378