



POLICY ON THE PROVISION & USE OF WORK EQUIPMENT

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1. Policy Statement

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde attaches the greatest importance to the health, safety and well-being of its employees and all other persons liable to be affected by its activities.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of all employees working with all types of equipment as well as to ensure the safety of others who may be affected by existing and new equipment. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will seek to liaise with suppliers to ensure that any new equipment is designed and supplied to work in a safe manner, and will seek to inform and train employees to implement this Policy.

If employees have any problems relating to equipment safety, they should immediately inform their Head of Department or Ward so that steps can be taken to promptly remedy the situation.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will, in consultation with the operators and their representatives:

- a) assess the operation of the equipment which will include the assessment of its controls, the visibility of any operating parts that need to be seen and the accessibility of all parts that need to be adjusted or changed.
- b) carry out an assessment of how the use of the equipment affects its environment, including the layout of the equipment and any barriers that are needed to prevent persons coming within the danger zone.
- c) carry out an assessment of all guards, all isolation procedures of any part of the equipment and all emergency procedures.
- d) carry out an assessment of any chemicals involved with the equipment and its use, maintenance or cleaning (in compliance with COSHH).
- e) take all reasonable steps to minimise all the risks found from these assessments.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will assess the methods by which any adjustments or tool changes made on the equipment so that tools are fitted and carried safely. Equipment guards must be suitable and should be removed and replaced safely.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will give information, instruction and training necessary to ensure the health and safety of all operators and any others affected by equipment. Heads of Department responsible for supervising the operation of equipment will be appropriately trained.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will ensure that equipment is safely and securely positioned and ensure compliance with the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 as amended.

Where young persons are employed, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, appropriate risk assessments need to be carried out for certain equipment or materials where they are at a greater risk than adults. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde will ensure that all such requirements are complied with.

2. Scope of Policy Implementation

This policy is written in support of the general statements and principles as set out in the [NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health and Safety Policy](#).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The framework of accountability and responsibility for managers and staff on the implementation of this policy follow that laid out within the Health and Safety Policy.

It is Local Managers and Head of Departments responsibility to ensure that actions are in place to ensure the implementation of the policy. In instances where local managers or heads of department do not directly organise the planned preventative maintenance (PPM) of equipment within their area of responsibility, i.e. where this is done via local estates or by external contractor, the manager and/or head of department is responsible for satisfying themselves that such systems are being adhered to.

Specific Actions

1. Equipment must be suitable for the ways in which it will be used (by design, construction or adaptation) and used only for that purpose.
2. Equipment must be selected to suit work conditions. This would include understanding of how equipment can be cleaned after use.
3. Equipment must be maintained in efficient working order and in good repair. When equipment is identified as not being in good working order it must be removed from use and suitably marked indicating that it should not be used until repaired.
4. Employees must only be allowed to use equipment when the need for training has been assessed and adequate information, instruction, training and supervision provided. This should be identified via KSF and PDP processes and appropriately recorded. Any necessary update refresher training should be handled in a similar fashion.
5. Dangerous equipment must be effectively guarded.
6. Dangers arising from the following hazards must be prevented or where that is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. The hazards are:-
 - a) material falling from equipment (e.g. laundry from a conveyor);
 - b) material held in the equipment being unexpectedly thrown out;
 - c) parts of the equipment breaking off and being thrown out eg need example;
 - d) part of the equipment coming apart e.g. collapse of a scaffold;
 - e) overheating or fire;
 - f) explosion of equipment;
 - g) high or very low temperatures.

7. Controls must be clearly visible and readily identifiable
8. Equipment must be stabilised when necessary.
9. Suitable and effective lighting must be provided.
10. All markings and warnings should be clear and easily understood.

Information related to national or local equipment issues e.g. recalls, modifications, hazards related to use, may be circulated via the **Safety Action Notices / Hazard Notices** Policy system.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde operates a centrally controlled distribution network for Safety Action and Hazard Notices. Key posts have been identified within the organisation to receive the notices and to decide on further local actions as required. Managers are responsible for ensuring such Notices are actioned as required.

For further information refer to the [Safety Notice Policy](#).

4. Guidelines on the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

This policy has been produced in order that there is a standard approach to the application of the Regulations throughout NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER 98) became law in Great Britain on 5 December 1998.

The Regulations will overlap many existing requirements but where this occurs compliance with the existing requirement should normally be sufficient to comply with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations. **For example, the requirement concerning isolation from sources of energy is, so far as electricity is concerned, dealt with by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.**

The Regulations cannot be considered in isolation. They require to be looked at together with the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**. These Regulations require employers to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees whilst at work.

The Regulations define who has duties, i.e. the employer, persons in control and the self-employed.

There are general duties covering the selection of suitable equipment, maintenance, information and instruction, training, etc.

There is a need for equipment to have in built safety features to prevent and minimise hazards, for example contact with dangerous parts of equipment, the risk of fire and explosion, disintegration, contact with hot and cold surfaces, instability, etc.

They amplify and make more explicit the general duties on employers, the self-employed and persons in control, to provide safe plant and equipment. Virtually all the requirements

already exist somewhere in the law or constitute good practice. These Regulations bring together these requirements and apply them across all industrial, commercial and service sectors. Definitions of certain terms are important to the understanding of these Regulations, as follows;

USE - This includes all activities involving the work equipment such as stopping or starting the equipment, repair, modification, maintenance and servicing. In addition to operations normally considered as use, cleaning and transport of the equipment are also included. In this context 'transport' means, for example, using a lift truck to carry goods around a store.

WORK EQUIPMENT - This includes all equipment provided for and used at work with either a clinical or non-clinical application. In addition to individual items of work equipment, any assembly arranged and controlled to function as a whole is included.

Motor vehicles which are not privately owned fall within the scope of the Regulations. However, the more specific Road Traffic legislation will take precedence when these vehicles are used on public roads. When such vehicles are used off the public highway these Regulations and the Health and Safety at Work etc Act would normally take precedence.

5. The requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations.

It is the employers responsibility to:-

1. Ensure that items of work equipment provided to their employees and the self-employed working for them comply with these Regulations.
2. Ensure that the work equipment provided is suitable, and properly maintained.

The self-employed must comply with the same duties in respect of work equipment they use at work. Persons in control of non-domestic premises who provide items of work equipment which is used by other people at work must also comply with the Regulations.

The Regulations cover not only the normal situation where employers provide work equipment for their employees, but also cover the situation where employers choose to allow their employees to provide their own work equipment.

There are no separate duties on employees in these Regulations, these are covered in other legislation particularly Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act and Regulation 14 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Note

This policy does not cover electrical safety and the requirements regarding portable appliance testing. This is separately addressed via Electrical Safety Policy and Guidelines.

End of policy.