

Work Equipment Guidance

Introduction:

This guidance provides information about the legal requirements that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) has in relation to the use of work equipment.

The **Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)** provides a legal framework to help employers protect staff and others from the hazards arising from the use of equipment in the workplace.

The **Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998** make specific requirements with regards to lifting equipment, including equipment used to lift people, e.g. hoists or lifts.

NHSGGC recognises its duties under PUWER, LOLER and also the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999).

The NHSGGC policies relating to work equipment can be viewed here:

http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/INFO%20CENTRE/HEALTH%20AND%20SAFETY/CORPORATE%20HEALTH%20AND%20SAFETY/Pages/HSC_Policies_KW_230909.aspx

What is Work Equipment?

The Regulations cover all work equipment, provided for use at work whether new, second-hand, leased or hired, (including mobile and lifting equipment), where the 'Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974' applies. Examples include: hand tools, scalpels, syringe drivers, saws; portable power tools, floor polishing machines, power presses, circular saws, motor vehicles; lifting equipment, such as fork-lift trucks, lifting slings, patient hoists; Other equipment, such as laboratory equipment, gas cylinders ladders, kick stools, photocopiers, cookers.

Provision & Use:

This covers all activities and aspects of the work equipment, including identifying and purchasing the equipment through its normal use, cleaning, maintenance, modification or repair.

Managing the Risk:

Everyone uses work equipment to a greater or lesser degree as part of their work; therefore it is imperative that the risks associated with the use of work equipment are managed.

By selecting suitable equipment, maintaining it properly, and training people to use the equipment correctly, risks to employees and others can be minimised.

It may be necessary to undertake a Risk Assessment in order to identify any control measures needed to eliminate or adequately control the risks relating to the installation, use, maintenance etc of work equipment.

Wherever possible, these risk assessments should be part of the purchasing process at the earliest possible stage.

In addition to the equipment, the work and the people who will be carrying it out; the risk assessment process should also consider the working environment, location, local site conditions and how the work equipment is likely to be used.

A combination of control measures may be necessary depending on the circumstances and how practicable the control measures are.

Health & Safety Management Manual

Examples may include suitable guarding on equipment, protection or warning devices, markings, system controls (Emergency Cut Offs), safe systems of work, training and personal protective equipment.

Selecting Work Equipment:

The process of selecting work equipment should also take account of Ergonomic risks. Work equipment must be suitable for its intended purpose and the conditions that it will be used. It is important to note that items suitable for home may be unsuitable for use as work equipment.

Correct selection of equipment will reduce the likelihood of incidents resulting in injury, damage or loss.

Maintenance & Inspection:

Work equipment should be maintained in a safe condition. This includes any routine / preventative maintenance or repairs undertaken.

Equipment should also be inspected to ensure that it is safe for use.

Maintenance and Inspection should be undertaken by a competent person and records of any maintenance or inspection should be kept.

Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of local management to ensure that maintenance and inspection regimes are in place and adhered to.

Where equipment is shared, agreement must be reached on who will take responsibility.

Employees using work equipment must have received adequate information, instruction and training in its use.

In many instances this may only involve a simple demonstration or verbal instruction. For other equipment however, it may be necessary to provide instructions in writing (SOP safe operating procedures/ SWS safe working systems) and / or attend specific training.

Further consideration should also be given to certain groups, e.g. young people, new or expectant mothers.

Refresher training and / or supervision may also be required to ensure that the users are using the equipment as they were originally trained to do so. as per NHSGGC PUWER Policy.

Reference & Further Information:

Simple Guide to the Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulation 1998:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg291.pdf>

Using Work Equipment Safely:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg229.pdf>

Buying New Machinery a Short Guide

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg271.pdf>

Personnel Protective Equipment

<http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Info%20Centre/Health%20and%20Safety/Corporate%20Health%20and%20Safety/Documents/Policies/PPE%20Policy.pdf>