

Toolbox Talk / Note – Slips Trips and Falls (Non-patient)

Local Managers should communicate these key safety messages to their staff at handovers, staff meetings, huddles etc. They are developed in response to events that have occurred or identified hazards.

Introduction

Slips, trips and falls can have a serious impact on people's lives. Falls account for a significant number of reported incidents among employees as well as healthcare service users who can be particularly vulnerable to falls. Many factors can cause a slip, trip and fall many of which are preventable. **We all have a part to play.**

Employers have legal duties as do employees, who must not put them selves or others at risk. You must use any safety equipment / safe system of work provided

What is a fall?

A fall is generally accepted as an event which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level with or without loss of consciousness.

We must control risks

The prevention of falls within healthcare, starts with practical controls which will vary according to the risk assessment but the practical measures you take in these situations; can make a difference.

Ensure NHS grounds and common areas within buildings are inspected and findings acted on. That indoor flooring is suitable and in good condition with adequate matting placed at main entrances.

We all have a responsibility and we all have it within use to make that difference. **If you see a slip or trip hazard, or if you make one yourself, sort it out or tell someone who will.**

Factors to consider

- Slippery dry surfaces to include ladders caused by contamination. (e.g. dust, lint, talcum powder, deodorant and hair sprays)
- Slippery wet surfaces caused by spillages, leaks in machinery, splashing from pot washing and / or other fluids. (e.g. oil, residue left after cleaning, foodstuff on floors, water dripping from umbrellas)
- Completely dry up spillages promptly (Not spreading) and remove caution signs when cleaning is completed and floor is dry.

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- Warn staff about the risks of using mobile devices while on stairs and while walking around the workplace. (Use the hand rails provided on stairs and not the mobile phone)
- Obstructions, both temporary and permanent can create trip hazard (e.g. equipment left in corridors, trailing cables, items not stored away, build up of leaves or debris on foot paths and external stairs)
- Uneven surfaces and changes of level (e.g. unmarked ramps, stairs, loading bays.
- Lighting levels (e.g. Ensure lighting is adequate and on when required)
- Ensure footwear is in line with the NHS uniform policy / risk assessment and suitable for the type of tasks being carried out in your area (e.g. non-slip or safety shoes, tied laces, enclosed toes)
- Remember wet soles can be slippery on a dry surface
- Always use the designated walkways / pavements provided
- In icy and / or snow weather conditions always watch where you are stepping and wear appropriate outdoor footwear. The surface may be gritted but there can still be slippery patches. A risk assessment should be undertaken for extreme weather conditions
- Encourage the reporting of worn or damaged surfaces and ensure employees are encouraged to have their input into working procedures

For Further Advice or Support contact the Health & Safety Service via HR Connect.

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