

RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. **The Objective of Risk Management – Why do a Risk Assessment?**

The main objective of risk management within DRH is to avoid harm, discomfort or distress to anyone arising from hazards associated with our activities or within the environment where those activities take place.

Risk management is about minimising the possibility of harmful outcomes whilst still allowing us to carry out our activities and succeed with our objectives. DRH seeks to provide support to all of our service users utilizing the Human Givens approach. This approach recognises that all human beings have the same basic needs. These needs include: a sense of autonomy and control, having the volition to make responsible choices, a sense of competence, achievement, meaning and purpose which comes from being stretched. Risk assessment should balance meeting the basic human needs of our service users with effective risk management. Taking planned controlled risks form an essential part this approach.

Similarly, whilst it is true that behaviours displayed by some service users may at times pose a risk to the health and safety of others, we can only hope to minimise not totally eliminate this risk.

DRH exists solely to provide a service to people with complex needs, maximising choice and providing opportunities for our service users to live their preferred lifestyle with the required level of support to do so.

Taking a risk implies that there is a possibility that things may go wrong. It also implies a desirable outcome, i.e.: on balance, the risk may be worth taking. We do have the responsibility to **identify**, **assess** and **manage** risks. If things do go wrong, we have to show that we acted in good faith.

Risk management is about balancing options and exercising judgement. The law does not require us to be infallible.

2. **Risks & Hazards – What is a Risk and How do you Identify it?**

Hazards & Risks

- A **hazard** is anything with the potential to cause harm; this may include fire, electricity, harmful substances, damaged flooring or aggressive behaviour.
- A **risk** is the likelihood that the hazard will cause harm and is dependent on a number of factors. For example, the risk of tripping on a damaged floor will depend upon:
 - The extent of damage
 - Who is walking over it
 - The number of people walking over it

The number of times they walk over it
The nature of the footwear
The level of lighting

Categories of Risk

There are three broad categories of risk:

- **Environmental Risk** (internal & external):
 - Buildings, layout, services
 - Furniture, fittings, equipment
 - Material, substances
 - Heat, noise, etc
- **People:**
 - Knowledge, skills, experience
 - Behavioural
 - Personal vulnerabilities
- **Systems of Work:**
 - These are the systems that link the environment to the people working and living within it.

Our risk management strategies need to ensure the safety of everyone who lives, works or visits our homes. They need to combine occupational and clinical approaches to risk management.

Identifying Areas of Risk

The main areas of risk identified within DRH include:

- Risks associated with activities, eg:
 - Bathing
 - Administration of medication
 - Lifting and handling
- Risks associated with the environment, eg:
 - Fire
 - Flooring
 - Temperature
- Risks associated with equipment, eg:
 - Hoists
 - Vehicles
 - Beds
 - Furniture
 - Cookers

Tumble dryers
VDU's

- Risks associated with service users condition or behaviours, eg:
Falls
Aggression
Road safety awareness
Self-care
Impaired awareness of risk
- Risks associated with exposure to infectious agents, eg:
Dealing with infectious agents
Dealing with infectious waste material
Needle stick injuries
- Risks associated with food preparation and handling
- Risks associated with staff, eg:
Pregnant or lactating employees
Any physical health issues
Existing injuries
Mental health issues
New employees
Agency staff or student nurses
Lack of knowledge or skills
- Risks associated with potentially harmful substances

3. Risk Assessment – What is a Risk Assessment and How to Complete one?

Risk Assessment Process

Risk assessment is a simple concept. It is the process of identifying what hazards exist in relation to a particular task or activity and how likely these hazards are to cause harm, in order to decide what prevention or control measures are needed. Within DRH there are many other risk management guidance systems already in place (see **Appendix A**). A full awareness and appropriate use of these systems will make much of the process relatively straightforward. Many of these systems are designed to address the general occupational requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act. However, many of the day to day risk management challenges relate to the specific nature of the business type we are engaged in, ie: providing vulnerable people who have complex needs with a good quality of life.

The Health and Safety Executive have described a simple 5-step process:

- Look for and identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record findings and implement them
- Review the assessment and update if necessary

An effective risk assessment ought to involve the following steps – you can utilise a risk rating scale to provide a more objective view of risk (see **Appendix B**):

- What are the likely benefits of the activity etc
- What is the nature of the risks?
- Who might be harmed and how?
- When (under what circumstances) is this risk likely to be a problem?
- What is the likelihood of the risk causing harm?
- How severe is the potential level of harm which may result from the risk?

The risk assessment should answer the following questions:

- What are the likely outcomes of taking this risk?
- How likely is it that any given outcome will happen if the risk is taken?
- Is it so serious that the risk must and can be eliminated?

Gathering Evidence

There are many methods of gathering evidence to determine if there is a risk and how significant it may be. To ensure an objective analysis of risk, a high variety of methods should be used and an open team discussion held. Methods of gathering evidence may include:

- Service user feedback
- Personal observation and active awareness
- Staff feedback
- Accurate recording of incidents
- Open exchange of information within the team
- Accident/incident documentation (statistical analysis)
- HSE guidance and warnings
- Professional journals
- Management guidance
- Clinical knowledge
- Research evidence

4. Risk Management – What is a Risk Management Plan?

A risk management plan is a management strategy that aims to eliminate or minimise any identified risks. The risk management plan should take into consideration the following questions:

- Can any action be taken to reduce the impact of a negative outcome if problems do occur?
- Can this risk be eliminated without detriment?
- Can the task or process be done in a different way in order to minimise an unavoidable risk?
- What are the benefits from taking this risk?
- How do those affected by a negative outcome feel about this risk?
- Are all those involved capable of weighing up the costs and benefits of this particular risk decision?

- If understanding is limited, do we need additional help and advice to make an informed decision?
- Are there particular legal implications related to this decision?
- Does the likelihood of harm outweigh the likelihood of benefit?
- Are we sure we have enough information to make this decision?
- Are we sure we have listed all the relevant options?
- In the absence of full consensus, who will make the final decision?
- Does everyone understand how this risk will be reduced?
- Are there any specific training requirements in order to minimise this risk?
- Are there any specific environmental controls/equipment required in order to minimise this risk?
- How will this information be communicated?
- Is this clearly documented?
- Is the document explicit enough for all those involved to understand?
- How regularly will this be re-assessed / reviewed and by whom?

Reviewed July 2007 / May 2009





LINKS TO POLICIES, PROCEDURES, ASSESSMENTS AND GUIDELINES THESE SHOULD BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE Page: 13

SAFETY AND WELFARE POLICY AND RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

ENVIRONMENT

- Handling Of Waste Guidelines
- Sensitivity To Latex Policy
- Accident/Incident/Near Miss Policy & Procedures
- First Aid Policy
- Security Policy
- Transport Policy
- COSHH Guidelines and Risk Assessment
- Control of Infection Policy & Procedures
- Fire Policy and Procedures
- Quarterly Health, Safety and Risk Management Audit & Guidelines
- Food Standards Guidelines and HACCP Risk Assessments
- Health & Safety Code Of Practice
- Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Financial Procedures Policy

STAFF/VISITORS/CONTRACTORS

- Manual Handling Policy/Procedure & Risk Assessment
- Maternity Policy/Procedure and Risk Assessment
- Harassment at Work Policy
- Prevention and Response to Violence and Aggression
- Training and Development Policy
- Safety Information for Contractors Guidelines
- Domestic Services Safe Working Practices & Guidelines
- Alcohol and other Drugs at Work Policy
- Children Visiting DRH Homes
- Management of Sickness/Absence Policy
- Staff Wishing to Take Residents to their Own Homes Policy
- Voluntary Works Policy
- Simple Guides, ie: Team Working, Supervision

RESIDENTS

- Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures
- Resident Risk Checklist
- Care Planning Policy
- Locked Door Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Missing Resident Policy
- Physical and Restrictive Interventions Policy
- Residents Monies Policy
- Resuscitation Policy
- Specific Clinical Assessments, ie: HONOS, FEBA, PASS ADD, Waterlow Scale
- Simple Guides, ie: Challenging Behaviour, Sexuality

Many areas of Health, Safety and Risk Management overlap, therefore staff should ensure they take account of all Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and specific risk assessments.



**C
A
L
C
U
L
A
T
I
N
G

R
I
S
K**

RISK RATING:

Nature of the risk –
Who is at risk and from what

RISK SCORING:

Likelihood x Severity

---oOo---

Likelihood of risk occurring?

- Major = 3
- Serious = 2
- Minor = 1

Potential severity of harmful outcomes?

- # Short term/long term consequences
- # Who will be affected?
- # Is the outcome significant?

- High = 3
- Moderate = 2
- Low = 1

---oOo---

Risk Score

Priority

- 1
- 2
- 3 or 4
- 6
- 9

- No Action/Low priority
- Low priority
- Medium priority
- High priority
- Urgent action



Any risk assessment form or tool should be used in conjunction with guidance notes provided.

Identify the Hazard:	
/	

Identify the associated risks:	Identify the evidence:
What?	
Who?	
When?	
Where?	
How?	

Example of
one type of assessment
form

Calculate the risk potential		
Likelihood	Severity	Risk Score

Identify the benefits:	Identify the evidence:

Identify any specific factors that need to be taken into account – inc residents wishes/preferences as appropriate

Identify actions to be taken			
What	Where	When	Who

Identify how and when this information is to be communicated:		
Resident	Team	Appropriate others

Identify how this assessment will be monitored/reviewed:		
Who	How	When

Agreement/comments to this assessment/plan:		
Resident	Staff team	Appropriate others