

R/601/8922

Contribute to health
and safety in health
and social care

Standards

Understand your own responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others, relating to health and safety in the work setting

Identify legislation relating to general health and safety in a health or social care work setting

The main reason for health and safety legislation is to protect people at work and those who are affected by work activities.

Legislation or laws are made so that everyone in society knows which behaviours are acceptable and which are not. Laws cover all aspects of people's lives including protecting the health and safety of people at work and those affected by work activities including those who receive care and support.

Legislation is the term used to describe laws and the process of creating statutory guidance on the legal rules that affect people in society.

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 sets out how employers, employees and the self-employed must work in a safe way, giving every person on the work premises legal duties and responsibilities. As this act is very general, subject-specific 'regulations' have been put in place to help every workplace to be safe.

www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm



Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 are often referred to as 'RIDDOR'. You will have to undertake accident and incident reporting as an important part of your work in any health or social care workplace. The most serious accidents and incidents are reportable to health and safety authorities.

www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 are about how health and safety is managed within a care workplace, including risk assessment, training and ensuring employees receive the information they need.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/3242/contents/made

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 sets out how every workplace must prevent/protect against fire.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents/made

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002 are designed to protect people from hazardous substances, i.e. if they can cause harm or ill health.

www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 cover the transporting or supporting of any load (including people) and how to carry this out safely and prevent injury.

www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pushpull/

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 2002 set out how equipment, from televisions to lifting aids, is to be used safely. Work equipment needs to be checked and maintained regularly and employees trained in its safe use.

www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) have specific requirements relating to work equipment which is used for lifting and lowering people or loads.

www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/loler.htm

Awareness of the legislation outlined above will help you to understand why health and safety law is essential to keep everyone safe. If you would like to know more, the HSE website is available for everyone to use at www.hse.gov.uk

Describe the main points of the health and safety policies and procedures agreed with the employer

Every employer needs to communicate with their employees about a whole range of subjects. How would you know what your employer thinks about ensuring health and safety not only of employees, but of individuals? Do they take it seriously and take action to prevent accidents and ill health? Or do they not care and let employees do what they want without any training or information? Employers with more than 5 employees, therefore, will have a written health and safety policy which sets out how they will protect everyone who is affected by their business, e.g. employees, visitors, contractors and individuals who access services.

Even if your role involves working in the private homes of individuals your employer should be aware of health and safety legislation. You should ask your manager about policies that are in place to support your health, safety and wellbeing. What all policies and procedures have in common is to tell everyone how to do something or what must be in place to make sure all people are safe.

A policy is a formal course of action that everyone must follow. Policies must give clear instructions so that everyone is kept safe and no one is harmed through the work that is being carried out.

A procedure is the way in which a task must be completed or carried out.

Examples of procedures can include:

- how to store and give out medication
- how to provide personal care
- how to lift and carry loads
- what to do in the event of fire
- how to handle soiled bedlinen

You must familiarise yourself with your own workplace health and safety policy and procedures.



Outline the main health and safety responsibilities of:

- **yourself**
- **the employer or manager**
- **others in the work setting**

As a health or social care worker, you are given responsibilities to take reasonable care of yourself and others in the workplace.

While at work, as a social care worker, you need to follow the policies and procedures of your employer and not act in a way which will cause an accident or ill health to yourself or others. You will work with a number of individuals who all have different needs and who require different types of care and support. Any task you do while at work, must not put them at risk. An example of how you can take reasonable care of those within your workplace would be to report anything that could cause someone to trip or fall, like a frayed carpet or a wet floor, and take any action that you are asked to do.

Others could include anyone who could be affected by what you do including your colleagues, the individuals you support and their friends and family or other visitors.

The employer has many legal responsibilities; these are likely to be carried out by line managers. Their overall responsibility is to ensure the health, safety and welfare (or wellbeing) of all employees. The employer must make sure that this happens by putting in place policies and procedures and ensuring there is enough time and money to put safety at the centre of all tasks.

Employers must provide:

- a safe place to work
- necessary training
- appropriate and safe work equipment

Health and safety at work is everybody's business; that means others in the workplace have a duty too. Everyone in the workplace should avoid any actions that could potentially harm others, act respectfully and not cause any damage to property. You should always report any known health and safety hazards that might affect others.



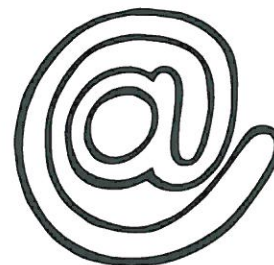
Identify tasks relating to health and safety that should not be carried out without special training

There are a number of activities that you must not carry out until you have received special training. Usually such training would include some practical elements and assessment by a competent trainer. These activities include:

- **use of equipment** such as hoists and lifts to move people and objects safely. Each piece of equipment that you will use will have instructions for safe use.
- **medication.** There is legislation and guidance that controls the prescribing, dispensing, administration, storage and disposal of medicines.
- **assisting and moving.** It is essential that you know about safe moving and assisting so you don't hurt yourself or the individual.
- **first aid.** This is the immediate assistance given to someone who has been injured or taken ill before the arrival of qualified medical assistance. If you have not been trained you should get help from a qualified first-aider or call an ambulance. You should not attempt first aid as you could make their condition or injury worse.
- **emergency procedures.** For emergency situations such as fire, explosion, flood, building damage, for example.

- **food handling and preparation.** This will help you to prepare food that is safe for individuals to eat and stop you from causing food poisoning.
- **working in unsafe ways,** ways that have not been agreed with the employer and without appropriate training can mean that you are putting yourself, the individuals you support and others at risk of harm.

Explain how to access additional support and information relating to health and safety



There may be times when you feel you need to know more about how to prevent accidents or ill health. Your employer may already have lots of information or procedures, so ask your manager if you can look at these and discuss them. Also, the workplace may have a designated health and safety person who can help you to find information or answer a question. Health and safety law posters (displayed in the workplace) or leaflets (provided to each individual) are other ways of gaining more knowledge. Additional support and information can be found on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website. www.hse.gov.uk

Understand the use of risk assessments in relation to health and safety

Explain why it is important to assess health and safety hazards posed by the work setting or by particular activities

A risk assessment helps the individual to have their choices met in the safest possible ways. Risk assessments are not only a legal requirement, they also provide clear guidance and information on how to keep people safe and prevent danger, harm and accidents.

They identify hazards in a workplace, evaluate the level of risk and put in place measures or procedures to reduce the risk.



Hazard - this is something with the potential to cause harm. For example soiled bed linen or clothing, spillages of bodily fluids and assisting people to move.



Risk - the likelihood of the hazard causing harm. For example, picking up an infection from soiled bedlinen, slipping on fluids from spillages or trapping injuries from using a hoist.

Explain how and when to report potential health and safety risks that have been identified

If you feel something is a hazard in your workplace or care setting, you should report it immediately to your supervisor or manager. Health and safety legislation requires employees to report hazards to their supervisor. This allows employees to report hazardous conditions or practices as they notice them, especially if they feel they cannot take action themselves to reduce the risk. This procedure also allows for action to be taken quickly to prevent an accident or incident in which someone may be harmed: for example, the electric plug to a fan is cracked, the carpet is lifting along a corridor or the plastic seat to a commode is cracked.

Some employers or care settings have a hazard reporting book in which hazards or conditions can be written down and acted upon. Reported hazards can be discussed at health and safety or team meetings so people can take the right actions or raise awareness to prevent accidents or ill health.

The most important part of hazard reporting is that you act quickly and tell a manager or supervisor who can take action to prevent an accident or harm.

Once a hazard is identified, a risk assessment needs to be carried out. A risk assessment is a formal process that every service dealing with the public has to have considered and they must keep a copy of the results on file. This should contain information on possible hazards related to the service provided and steps that need to be taken to control the risks that are associated with those hazards.

Explain how risk assessment can help address dilemmas between rights and health and safety concerns

A risk assessment helps the individual to have their choices met in the safest possible ways. Risk assessments are not only a legal requirement, they also provide clear guidance and information on how to keep people safe and prevent danger, harm and accidents. They identify hazards in a workplace, evaluate the level of risk and put in place measures or procedures to reduce the risk.

There are **5** steps to a risk assessment which you will need to understand.

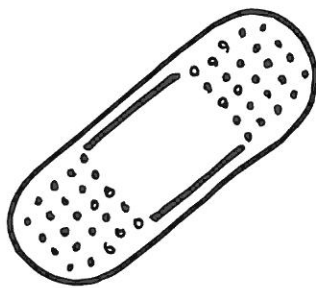
1. Identify the hazards in an area, a specific task or situation.
2. Identify those who may be harmed such as individuals, visitors, other workers and contractors.
3. Evaluate the risk by looking at what methods are in place to control risks or reduce them.
4. Record the findings of the risk assessment to help to remind everyone of what the risks are and how to reduce them.
5. Review and modify the risk assessment if and when changes happen to the tasks or workplace. Changes may increase risks or reduce them.



Understand procedures for responding to accidents and sudden illness

Describe different types of accidents and sudden illness that may occur in your own work setting

Accidents that may happen depend upon the risks found in the particular workplace. Risk assessments should be available which identify all the potential risks and steps being taken to reduce the likelihood of them happening.



Potential accidents could include:

- **slips and trips**

- **falls**

- **sharps injuries (an incident in which a sharp object, e.g. needle, blade, broken glass or cannula penetrates the skin)**

- **burns and scalds**

- **injuries from operating machinery or specialised equipment**

- **electrocution and accidental poisoning**

The nature of health or social care means that individuals may have existing conditions which can cause sudden illness. You may be faced with sudden illness situations, including:

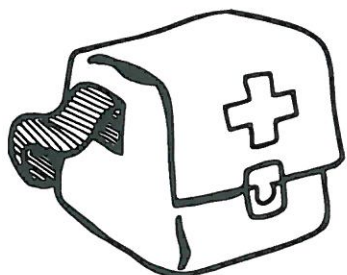
- diabetic coma
- food poisoning
- epileptic seizure
- burns
- fainting
- bleeding
- shock
- choking
- fractures
- stroke
- heart attack



Outline the procedures to be followed if an accident or sudden illness should occur

If an accident or sudden illness happens you must ensure the safety of the individuals concerned and everyone else who may be affected. All workplaces will have a health and safety procedure to outline what to do in an emergency and you must ensure that you are familiar with it. You must also be familiar with the individual's care plan, for example if they are known to have a condition that could lead to sudden illness, and how you should respond.

First aid



There are 3 levels of first-aid training: first-aider, emergency first aid at work and appointed person. If you have not received training in any of the levels, you should not attempt any form of first aid, but must seek help immediately. Without specialist first-aid training, you should not attempt first aid as you could make the injury or condition worse. For example, moving someone into the recovery position could make a neck or spinal injury worse. In emergency situations, what you should do is:

- remain calm and send for help by shouting, phoning or finding someone
- observe the individual, listen to what they are saying, try to find out what happened and reassure them, but do not move them unless it is absolutely necessary for safety
- stay with the injured or sick individual until help arrives, observing and noting any changes in their condition, as you will need to tell relevant medical staff or others what you have seen
- do only what is necessary to keep the casualty stable and alive until qualified help arrives
- complete a full written report and follow the agreed ways of working to inform carers or family members who need to know

Be able to reduce the spread of infection

Demonstrate the recommended method for hand washing

Five moments for hand hygiene

Hand hygiene is an important part of preventing infection. Hands can be cleaned, or decontaminated by:

- washing with water and soap that removes dirt and germs from the hands but doesn't kill them.

- using alcohol hand rubs and gels, which kill most bacteria. These are less effective against *Clostridium difficile* and some viruses that cause vomiting and diarrhoea if hands are visibly dirty.



The World Health Organisation has identified '5 moments' when health and social care workers should clean their hands. These moments are:

1. Before touching the individual you are supporting
2. Immediately before carrying out a 'clean' procedure
3. After exposure to body fluids and after removing gloves
4. After touching the individual you are supporting
5. After touching the area or objects surrounding the individual you are supporting

For handwashing to be effective it is important that you make sure that every part of your hands are carefully washed, rinsed and dried. The steps below show you how to ensure that your hands are washed correctly:

1. First, wet your hands and wrists thoroughly using warm running water.
2. Apply liquid or foam soap.
3. Produce a good lather by rubbing your palms together, then interlock your fingers and rub together again.
4. Rub the palm of your hand ensuring that fingertips and fingernails are cleaned. Ensure that the backs of your hands are lathered and cleaned.
5. Rub with fingers locked, maintaining a good lather. Ensure that your wrists are cleaned.
6. Rinse hands thoroughly using running water.

Hands and wrists should be thoroughly dried using paper towels or a hand dryer. Rubbing and lathering your hands should take around 20 seconds.

Demonstrate ways to ensure that own health and hygiene do not pose a risk to others at work

You have an important role to play in preventing the spread of infections. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with your own vaccinations in line with the UK vaccination schedule as it is part of your duty to protect the individual. If you are carrying pathogens, you can transmit them to the people you support directly or you can transfer them from other people or equipment if you do not follow correct hygiene procedures.

Illness - if you have cold or flu symptoms (such as a runny nose), an upset stomach or skin infections, you should speak to your manager before reporting for work. If you have diarrhoea or vomiting, you should not attend work until you have been free from symptoms for 48 hours.

Clothing - your clothes can become contaminated with harmful micro-organisms. Disposable aprons and over-sleeves should be used when handling anything contaminated with body fluids to protect clothes from contamination. Changing your clothing daily reduces the risk of remaining contaminants being spread to the individuals you provide support for. Uniforms or work clothing should be washed on a hot wash, then tumble-dried or hot ironed, to kill any bacteria present.

Personal hygiene - this is extremely important for people who take care of others. Daily washing, showering or bathing will remove most of the micro-organisms on your skin. Hand hygiene is also extremely important. Fingernails should be kept short. Rings (apart from plain wedding bands), wristwatches or bracelets should not be worn as they can make handwashing less effective.



Skin health - micro-organisms can live on the skin. The number of pathogens increases when skin is damaged. All cuts should be covered with a waterproof dressing. Using hand cream, good quality paper towels and soaps can help to protect the skin.

Good hand habits - Having good hand habits means not touching areas that can be a source of pathogens more than you need to. These areas include your nose, hair and mouth, and not biting nails. This also applies to work practices such as using foot-operated bins rather than lifting bin lids with your hands.

Be able to move and handle equipment and other objects safely

Identify legislation that relates to moving and handling

Your role may include assisting people to move and will certainly involve moving and handling objects. Some laws apply specifically to tasks that involve lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand or bodily force. In particular, the last 3 regulations in the list of legislation on page 1.

Explain principles for moving and handling equipment and other objects safely

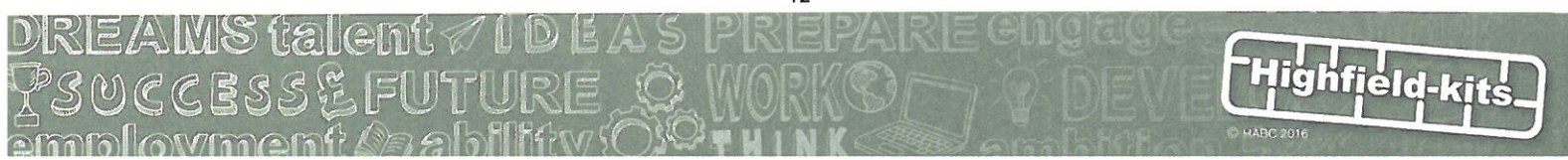
Some roles require the use of assisted beds and hoists to help with the moving and assisting of individuals. You must have the correct training before using this equipment to ensure that you use it properly and do not injure yourself or the individual accidentally. Other tasks that require training and an assessment of competence include: supporting an individual to move from a bed to a chair, helping with daily assisting routines like bathing and supporting them to move

on and off the toilet. You should always carry out moving and assisting tasks in the agreed ways found in your policies and procedures and the individual's care plan, and from the training you should receive.

Over a third of injuries in the workplace, which lead to time off work, are due to moving and handling. It is extremely important that specialist training on moving and handling is provided. This will reduce the number of accidents and minimise the likelihood of injury to the individuals you support, to you and to others.

Before you begin to handle a load or equipment manually, you must think about what you are going to do and how you intend to do it safely. Imagine you had to support an individual to move from a bed into a wheelchair; you would read their risk assessment and care plan, check the lifting equipment and ask the service user's consent before beginning the task.

L	<p>1. Load Look at the load. If it is too heavy, can it be lightened or split? If it is unstable, can handles be fitted or the load reapportioned?</p>
I	<p>2. Individual Consider the capability of the person. Are they strong or fit enough? Have they completed a pre-employment medical? Are they adequately trained?</p>
T	<p>3. Task Carefully evaluate the job to be done. Does the task involve stretching, twisting or bending? Can machinery be used to help or can team handling be used?</p>
E	<p>4. Environment Control the environment where the operation takes place. Is the floor slippery or uneven? Can the layout or floor condition be improved?</p>



Move and handle equipment or other objects safely

You already know that much of the health and safety legislation requires an employer to train employees in how to carry out tasks safely.

Imagine you are working in a setting that provides assisted beds and hoists to help with the moving and assisting of individuals. Without the correct training, if you were to use an assisted bed, you could press the wrong buttons and injure yourself or the individual accidentally. If not used appropriately, you or the individual could become tangled up in the hoist, or an electric wheelchair could run into people. Therefore, it is essential that you receive appropriate training before engaging in any moving or handling activities that involve equipment.

Your employer or workplace setting will have its own procedures and guidance for general moving and handling. It will also have specific procedures and guidance for the use of equipment which is provided to aid moving or handling in the care setting. You need to have training in these procedures and safety guidelines as equipment can differ a lot between employers and care settings. Always follow the safe use guidelines you learn in your training. You will need to demonstrate that you can put learning into practice when carrying out moving and handling tasks at work

Know how to handle hazardous substances and materials

Identify hazardous substances and materials that may be found in the work setting

One of the most common hazards found in a care setting is the use, handling and storage of hazardous substances. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations guide employers on how to use these substances safely and how to reduce risks.







Hazardous substances found in a care setting may include cleaning materials, disinfectants, body fluids and medication.

They can enter the body via inhalation (breathing in), ingestion (swallowing), injection (needle stick) or absorption (through the skin).

Cleaning and disinfection products that you may use in the care setting can be identified as hazardous by the warning label on the container. They may be labelled as 'toxic', 'corrosive', 'harmful/irritant' or 'health hazard'



You may also find containers for the disposal of body fluids or sharps are labelled as 'bio hazard' and are yellow in colour. For all products you use, watch out for the hazard labelling; it will inform you about the hazards of use. So hazardous substances found in a health and social care environment may include: cleaning materials, disinfectants, body fluids, medication, clinical waste such as dressings, and contaminated bedlinen.

	<p>CORROSIVE</p>
	<p>IRRITANT HARMFUL</p>
	<p>FLAMMABLE</p>
	<p>OXIDISING</p>
	<p>TOXIC</p>
	<p>RESPIRATORY SENSITISING CARCINOGENIC MUTAGENIC CAUSES SPECIFIC ORGAN DAMAGE TOXIC FOR REPRODUCTION</p>

Describe safe practices for:

- **Storing hazardous substances**
- **Using hazardous substances**
- **Disposing of hazardous substances and materials**

The workplace must have a secure and specific area especially for the storage of hazardous substances.

Some hazardous substances should only be handled when the worker is wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). Your employer will have policies and procedures which set out when PPE should be worn which will normally include handling clinical waste and some chemicals.

You must always work within agreed ways to protect your own health and wellbeing as well as those around you. Cleaning products and disinfectants should be kept in their original containers as these give the manufacturers' instructions for correct usage. These instructions must always be followed. An individual may choose to transfer products out of their original containers in their own home. For your own safety you should only use products that are in their original containers. Identifiable human tissue must always be incinerated. Other biological waste needs to be put in orange or yellow bags and disposed of separately from household waste. Local authorities may arrange a separate collection for this type of waste from individuals' own homes. Body fluids such as blood, urine, vomit and faeces must be cleaned up immediately. Disposable items used for cleaning the spills, such

as paper towels and gloves, should be disposed of as clinical waste.

Clinical waste includes contaminated waste such as used dressings and contaminated personal protective equipment. This waste should be put into bags which identify it as potentially harmful (these are usually yellow or orange) and stored securely until it can be disposed of as set out in the procedures for your workplace. Many local authorities will arrange the safe collection of clinical waste from individuals' homes if it has been assessed as clinical waste by a community healthcare professional.

Some contaminated clinical waste can pierce the skin and should be stored in sharps bins rather than bags, which protects workers from sustaining injuries. You must follow the agreed ways of working. If supporting people in their own homes, a risk assessment for disposing of sharps will have been carried out. Sharps should normally be returned, in an approved sharps box, to the place they were prescribed.

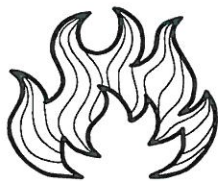
Linen which has been contaminated with body fluids should ideally be washed immediately if you are supporting a person to live in their own home. In the health and social care workplace it should be placed in identifiable bags and placed in a hot wash, separate from other linen.

Waste is considered hazardous if it is potentially harmful to humans or the environment. Disposal must be carried out in a way that avoids any danger or harm. Your employer will have procedures in place for the storage and disposal of hazardous waste.

Understand how to promote fire safety in the work setting

Describe practices that prevent fires from:

- **starting**
- **spreading**



Fires are a hazard in any workplace and can lead to injury or death. Basic fire prevention measures are:

- no smoking or naked flames within the building
- do not have fire doors propped open as this will increase the speed at which a fire spreads in a building
- do not allow waste to accumulate which could provide fuel to a fire
- check escape routes are not blocked and keep them clear of furniture or boxes
- check that appliances and plugs are turned off to help prevent an electrical fire from starting

If you are supporting someone in their own home these measures may not apply. You can support individuals to get advice to make their homes safer but you must respect the choices that they make; for example, they may choose to smoke or may not have smoke alarms.

Outline emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in the work setting

A workplace will have its own specific procedures and actions to be taken in the event of a fire and you must make sure that you familiarise yourself with these procedures. If you work in someone's home, make sure you familiarise yourself with escape routes and agree with your employer what you would do in the case of a fire. Sometimes there may be increased risks in an individual's home that you need to be aware of; they may choose to smoke for example.

If you find a fire, you must raise the alarm first. Either shout 'fire' or activate the nearest break glass call point, should these be provided in the care setting. By raising the alarm first, you are giving everyone in the care setting time to take action to get to a safe place. Dial 999 or inform the health and safety officer or your manager immediately so that they can make the 999 call.

Wherever possible move yourself and others away from the danger area, if safe to do so. Remain calm as this will help individuals you care for to keep calm. Make your way to the fire assembly point and await further instructions.

Explain the importance of maintaining clear evacuation routes at all times

Clear evacuation routes are essential at all times as in an emergency everyone needs to leave the building safely, efficiently and as quickly as possible. Any belongings left lying around can become trip hazards and any equipment or furniture left in the wrong place can waste valuable time and similarly cause additional accidents. Always make sure that you know the evacuation routes and exit routes and keep them clear at all times.



Be able to implement security measures in the work setting

Use agreed ways of working for checking the identity of anyone requesting access to:

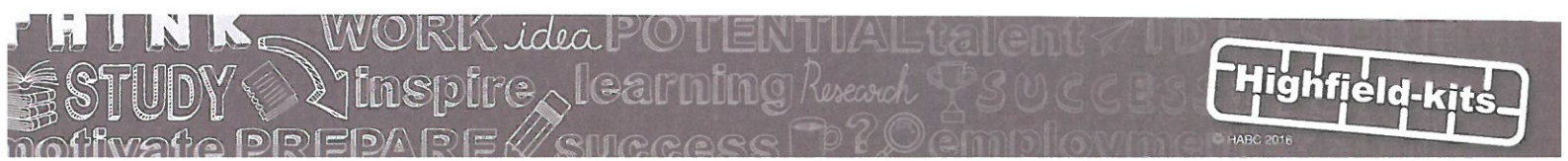
- Premises
- Information

To stop intruders and prevent individuals from becoming victims of crime, good security measures are important. Your organisation will have its own security procedures in place, ensure you familiarise yourself with them. Your employer may also have guidance or advice around safe working. Ask your manager about this.

Examples of agreed ways of working which could be taken include challenging any strangers you find on the premises or in restricted areas, requiring visitors on secure premises to sign a visitors' book, setting alarms where they are fitted and checking the identity of individuals who ring and ask for information.

Implement measures to protect own security and the security of others in the work setting

You may provide care and support for vulnerable individuals and it is your responsibility to keep them safe. In every care setting, including an individual's own home, there will be a risk that intruders can gain unauthorised access to personal possessions, money, valuables and sensitive information. Measures you can take to prevent unwanted and unauthorised intrusion include being vigilant about the security of the building by locking doors and windows, never giving out key codes to others, and following a security procedure checklist that your employer may give you for each care setting.



If your workplace is small, outside doors should be locked and fitted with a doorbell to ensure no unauthorised access. Never let in visitors or give out information unless you have consent to do so.

If you are working in an individual's home you can support them to get advice about how to make their home more secure, for example by accessing information on the internet <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/home-and-care/home-safety-and-security/crime-prevention-/security-in-your-home/> If you find an intruder or believe there is a security breach, inform the health and safety officer, your manager or supervisor immediately. Depending upon the care setting and whether there is a threat to safety, you may need to dial 999 immediately. Move yourself and others to a safe area if possible. Make sure you record the incident as soon as possible.

Explain the importance of ensuring that others are aware of own whereabouts

Other people must always know of your whereabouts, particularly your supervisor and the manager. This is because they are then able to carry out the employer's duty of care to you as an employee and will also be able to find you when needed. If there were a fire or incident everyone would need to be accounted for. Valuable time would be lost if the management did not know where you were at that time.

For those who work alone or in the community it is even more important to keep to your schedule and be where you should be. It is a good idea to carry a mobile phone if you are able to and that it is charged so that you can be contacted if necessary and so that you can call for help if needed.

Know how to manage own stress

Identify common signs and indicators of stress

Stress, depression and anxiety can lead to millions of lost working days. Stress can be both positive and negative. Some pressures and challenges are good as they can help you to work more effectively but negative stress such as undue pressure, overwork or difficult working conditions can affect your wellbeing and cause illness. Challenging events themselves are not the root cause of stress; it is the way that people see and think about the event or challenge that leads to feeling stressed.

Work-related stress: stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as 'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them'.



The signs and indicators of stress can be separated into different categories.

- Psychological or emotional – anxiety, anger, depression, low self-esteem, feeling helpless, sensitivity or tearfulness, irritability and indecisiveness
- Physiological or physical – heart palpitations, stomach complaints such as irritable bowel syndrome, uneasiness and tension
- Behavioural – aggression, increased substance misuse such as smoking or drinking alcohol, sleeping more or less, changes in eating patterns and changes to mood and consequent behaviour impacting on relationships and work

Identify circumstances that tend to trigger own stress

The circumstances and situations that can trigger stress vary from person to person. Some people can take on lots of pressures and demands before they will show signs of stress whereas others may be affected by situations and events more easily. This can depend on their personality, their ways of coping with stress and their personal history.

Stress triggers may include increased demands from others in the workplace or at home, changes in working practices or new working practices, changes to team members, relationship issues, unexpected changes relating to finance, personal circumstances or work, challenging behaviour of individuals you support, tiredness and getting something wrong or being criticised.

Describe ways to manage your own stress

Everyone deals with and responds to 'stressors' in very different ways and their reactions and strategies for responding to them will vary greatly. Some helpful strategies to deal with stress are taking more exercise or going for a walk, taking time out for yourself, doing something that you enjoy, taking a deep breath, counting down slowly in your head, removing yourself from a situation and taking time out, talking through how you feel with your line manager, attending any stress management courses or workshops available, engaging in relaxing activities while away from work, looking at your diet and substance intake, for example, caffeine, and managing a sensible intake, undertaking self-awareness activities, talking through your stresses with a counsellor, talking to a human resources adviser or occupational health adviser (if available in your organisation).

Think about the events and situations that tend to cause you to feel stressed. It is very important to be aware of these so that you can develop positive ways of coping and managing stress. Sometimes it might not be possible to remove the thing that causes stress but if you develop ways of coping then you are able to take the time to look after yourself so that the stress does not have too much of a negative impact on your health and wellbeing. Managing stress well will reduce the negative effects on others including the individuals you care for, your colleagues, family and friends.

