



Very Important People

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Title of the policy: Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure

Purpose: To outline the information and guidance for staff to follow on how to carry out and implement risk assessments.

Policy: VIPS understand that we have a duty to manage the risk to service users, staff and others. However, we recognise that service users have the right to make choices about their life.

These choices may affect the risks associated with provision of their care and support. We are committed to balancing these choices with the associated risks in accordance with legislation and best practice. This process is risk assessment and the following procedure detailed how we seek to meet our obligations in this respect.

Scope: The legislation and guidance staff must adhere to includes:

- Care Quality Commission - Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety Executive Guidance

Assessment of Risk: Risk assessments are to be carried out by staff who have the skills, knowledge and experience to assess risk and have knowledge of how the service works.

Definitions

Hazard: Anything that can cause someone harm. This might be a piece of equipment such as a hoist; an organism such as an infection; or the way in which someone works, such as not leaving a walking frame within reach.

Risk: The likelihood that the hazards identified will lead to harm and the amount of harm the hazard could cause.

Reasonably practicable: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines this as ‘balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble.’ This means that the time and cost of reducing the risk should not outweigh the risk itself.

Reasonably foreseeable: This means that you could reasonably predict something might happen in the given circumstance.

Procedure

Step 1. Identify the hazards

Identify hazards within the organisation in the following ways:

- Use equality legislation to identify areas of risk.
- Walk around the workplace and/or office to see what hazards can be identified.
- Ask staff about hazards they have noticed in their work area.
- Use accident and incident books, complaints, suggestions and other records to identify hazards that have caused injury within the last 12 months.

Use a Risk Assessment Form to identify hazards.

Step 2. Decide who might be harmed and how

Identify the people who might be harmed by the hazard. As well as staff, the service user and their family or visitors, pay particular attention to the following groups of people:

- New members of staff.
- Young or junior members of staff.
- Temporary staff.
- Volunteers.
- Expectant mothers.
- Older members of staff.
- People with disabilities.
- Lone workers.
- Contractors.

Add these to the Risk Assessment Form.

Step 3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Identify how likely and how severe any harm might be to the person. Then work out the level of risk using a Risk Identification Table.

How to Assess the Likelihood of Harm Occurring

Assess the likelihood of the hazard causing a risk to the person, using the definitions below:

Highly likely: The hazard is highly likely to cause harm because it occurs regularly e.g. several times a day or each time the activity takes place.

Moderately likely: The hazard is only moderately likely to cause harm because the hazard only arises occasionally, such as once a month or intermittently.

Not very likely: The hazard is seldom likely to cause harm as the hazard only arises once or twice a year.

How to Assess the Severity of Harm that Might be Caused

Define the severity of harm as follows:

Severely harmful: The hazard may cause death or major injury, such as loss of a limb or illness that causes long-term disability that might result in long-term care or hospital treatment.

Moderately harmful: The hazard might cause injuries or illness causing short-term or temporary disability resulting in short hospital stays or visits.

Slightly harmful: The hazard might cause minor injuries or illnesses that need first aid treatment.

Now plot these on a Risk Identification Table to work out the level of risks and the type of control measures needed to reduce the risk.

Add the level of risk to a Risk Assessment Form.

Decide upon control measure to reduce or prevent the risk from occurring using the following order:

1. Removing the hazard altogether.
2. Try a less risky option.
3. Prevent access to the hazard.
4. Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard.
5. Provide personal protective equipment (PPE).
6. Provide safe systems of work.

Add these onto a Risk Assessment Form.

Step 4. Record your findings and implement them

Make sure all forms are completed in full, including the control measures. Add these to the care plan where necessary.

Make sure that any measures such as any specific care, rewriting policies or procedures, or staff training is carried out.

Step 5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

Review risk assessments each year or when the following occurs:

- Work practices have changed.
- The service is reorganised.
- Staff have changed.
- The service user's condition has changed.
- A new piece of equipment is introduced.
- A service user loses a carer who has supported them.

Add reviews to a Risk Assessment Form along with any additional control measures identified.