

Policy 33
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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POLICY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

1.1 Occupational health is the applied science concerned with the effects of work on health. It is also concerned with how an employee's state of health influences his/her ability to work. Individuals can have an influence on their own and other people's health at work, and A24Group will ensure they do all that is reasonable to protect the health of all individuals who work at A24Group and at any of our clients. The benefits of incorporating health issues into mainstream management functions are becoming increasingly apparent. Improved efficiency, reduced costs and increased employee morale are amongst those benefits. Therefore:

1.1.1 A24Group is committed to ensuring that the potential for ill health or injury arising from activities or premises is minimised at source to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. The policy of A24Group will be to strive to maintain the highest possible standard of occupational health and wellbeing for all employees and temporary workers.

1.1.2 A24Group recognises the importance of integrating the continuous improvement of health and wellbeing into the organisational activities and will aim to ensure early identification and management of occupational ill health ranking this equal with other operational considerations.

1.1.3 A24Group will provide competent specialist occupational health advice and services. The A24 Group has a service level agreement and has made provision for comprehensive occupational health services with the SEQOHS accredited Healthier Business UK Ltd.

1.1.4 The purpose of this policy and supporting procedures is to describe the framework and responsibilities for the management of occupational health at A24Group.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- a) Assist in the prevention of ill health in the workplace
- b) Promote good health and wellbeing in the workplace
- c) Assist in the maintenance of good health in the workplace

- d) Ensure the effective management of occupational health and wellbeing.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide:

- (a) Line Managers with information on their responsibilities in regard to the management of occupational health and wellbeing, and the services available to them in support of this.
- (b) Staff and agency workers with information of occupational health procedures, protocols and services available to them.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all line managers, employees and agency workers.

5. Policy Responsibilities

- 5.1 In line with the Health & Safety at Work Act, and associated legislation, and other Health & Safety Policies and procedures, line management will, in conjunction with the Health & Safety Consultancy (Seguro Management Ltd) and the Occupational Health Service (Healthier Business UK Ltd), take all reasonable steps to provide a working environment which is safe and healthy. They will strive to continuously improve A24Group's management systems in order to protect employees, agency workers and visitors from risks to their health, safety and welfare whilst engaged in work-related activities of A24Group.
- 5.2 The Occupational Health and Safety section will at all times work closely with Human Resources in trying to continuously improve the health and well-being of all staff and agency workers at A24Group.
- 5.3 The Occupational Health and Safety section will advise and recommend action to be taken in order to help line management and individual employees discharge their statutory duties with regard to occupational health. In particular, but not exclusively, assistance will be available in respect of:
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - First Aid at Work Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and Revised Approved Code of Practice 1997)
 - The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1996
 - Workplace Regulations 1992
 - Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992
 - Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992
 - Personal Protection Equipment Regulations 1992

- Manual Handling Regulations 1992
- Work Equipment Regulations 1992
- New and Expectant Mothers at Work, Health and Safety Executive Guidance 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Ionising Radiation Regulations 1985
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (Amendment) Regulations 1998
- Control of Carcinogens Substance Approved Code of Practice.
- Noise at Work Regulations
- Access to medical records
- Access to health records

5.4 The Occupational Health and Safety section offers advice on all matters relating to the effect of work on health and wellbeing.

6. Disability Discrimination

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 it is unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably than other people, without objective justification.

The act defines disability as a physical impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Where a manager knows or suspects that a staff member may be disabled within the meaning of the Act, advice can be sought from the Occupational Health and Safety section via the Human Resources Service.

The Occupational Health and Safety section will at all times do all that is reasonably practicable to comply with all aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and will treat all information about the medical history of an individual in the strictest confidence.

7. Data Protection Act 1998

In implementing this policy, A24Group will ensure that any personal data relating to an individual's medical history or sickness absence is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

8. The Organisation

- 8.1 The Occupational Health and Safety section will work closely with all interested parties including Human Resources, Line Managers, Occupational Health Services, and Health & Safety Consultancy
- 8.2 Staff and agency workers have personal responsibilities for their own health and wellbeing and for taking advantage of the occupational health support provided by A24Group.
- 8.3 A24Group has a responsibility for ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing and educational progress of all agency workers.

PROCEDURES FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH OF AGENCY WORKERS

9. FITNESS FOR WORK – PRE-EMPLOYMENT HEALTH SCREENING

9.1 Pre-Employment Health Questionnaire

- 9.1.1 Pre-employment health screening is a procedure which evaluates the fitness of an applicant's declared health in relation to the hazards and risks of the job, environment or activities.
- 9.1.2 All prospective employees must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire before being interviewed for potential agency registration.
- 9.1.3 Upon being successfully registered, the completed medical questionnaire will be assessed by the A24Group Quality Control department in conjunction with qualified Occupational Health personnel (Healthier Business UK Ltd.)
- 9.1.4 Information contained in the health questionnaire and medical reports received are deemed highly confidential.
- 5. This information enables the Occupational Health and Safety section to assess the suitability of agency workers fitness to carry out the specific work.
- 9.1.6 Managers only need to know whether a candidate is fit for the job or if modifications are required for the job. In some cases, it is required that the manager knows about an illness/condition (such as epilepsy) so they can be aware of any consequences or any recognisable adjustments (such as frequent breaks or regular periods of time off for treatment). However, unless the individual consents to any med-

ically confidential information being disclosed, the manager has no right to know and will not be informed. Should information be withheld the A24 Group cannot be held liable.

- 9.1.7 Following initial screening of the medical questionnaire, medical history and medical reports the Occupational Health service will provide a medical clearance certificate (Fitness to Work Certificate)
- 9.1.8 If medical clearance is granted, the Occupational Health Service will issue Fitness to Work Certificate which will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 9.1.9 If medical clearance is not granted, the Occupational Health Service will provide further information/explanation to A24 Group Quality Control Team, and arrange a suitably work place assessment to ascertain more information. The A24 Group will be kept suitably informed at all stages of assessment, as appropriate.
- 9.1.10 The Department of Health (DH) require you to be screened to establish that you are protected against and not suffering from, certain infectious diseases in order to protect both you and your patients. If this has been undertaken before in other NHS/Temporary employment or at University/College you may not need it repeating so long as you can provide satisfactory documentary evidence.

9.2 Fitness Criteria

- 9.2.1 To be able to undertake agency work and effectively, it is essential that individual agency workers:
- have the health and wellbeing necessary to deal with the specific types of duties in which they are engaged
 - are able to communicate effectively with patients and colleagues
 - possess sound judgement and insight
 - remain alert at all times
 - can respond to patients' needs rapidly and effectively
 - do not constitute any risk to the health, safety or well-being of children in their care
 - can, where disabilities exist, be enabled by reasonable adjustments to meet their criteria.

10. Acceptable Documentary Evidence

10.1 Non-EPP (Non Exposure Prone)

Varicella	Self-declaration, positive serology result or proof that you have received two Varicella vaccinations. Negative or Equivocal results require vaccination.
Tuberculosis	Documentary proof of BCG vaccination OR Documentary evidence of BCG scar from OH dept OR Documentary evidence of positive Heaf/Mantoux result 6mm – 15mm. Have resided in any TB prevalent country within the last 5 years, if you have, a blood test or chest x-ray would be required to proof lack of current infection. To check if it is a TB prevalent country: http://www.hpa.org.uk/MigrantHealthGuide/CountriesAZ/
Rubella (German measles)	Blood test result Confirming immunity or documentary evidence of vaccination details i.e. Proof that you have received Two MMR's or Two single Rubella vaccinations
Measles	Blood test result Confirming immunity or documentary evidence of vaccination details i.e. Proof that you have received Two MMR's or Two single Measles vaccinations
Hepatitis B	Blood test result AND documentary evidence of vaccination details. Levels of greater than or equal to 100 Iu/L or 100 Miu/I are required unless you are a proven low or non-responder. Miu/I and Iu/I are equal so are therefore a straight 1 to 1 conversion.

Please note all serology reports need to be of a verifiable nature (stamped/ signed).

10.2 EPP (Exposure Prone Procedures) additional requirements indicated with: (*)

Hepatitis B Surface Antigen *	Evidence of negative result.
Hepatitis C *	Evidence of negative result.
HIV *	Evidence showing antibody negative.

10.2.1 IVS Requirement for all EPP (Exposure Prone Procedures)

The healthcare worker should show proof of identity with photographic ID – NHS trust identity badge, new driver's licence, credit cards, passport or national identity card – when a sample is taken.

Please note: All locums are automatically considered (New) to the NHS due to the nature of the risk involved with Locum Work.

Once we have the necessary information, we will advise your agency whether you are assumed to be protected against the various illnesses listed above. If you do not

provide this information your protection cannot be assumed and your appointment will be delayed until we can deem you compliant.

11. Travelling – Returning From TB Prevalent Country

11.1 Tuberculosis (TB) Screening of new entrants to the UK and individuals who have resided in high TB prevalent countries accumulating to 3 months or more within 1 year (PHE, 2013).

11.1.1. As part of the new starter health screening process, you have declared on your Health Questionnaire that you have resided or have visited a TB prevalent country, in accordance to the World Health Organisation (see Appendix 1), for a total period exceeding 3 months or more within the past 12 months. At present, you have stated that you do not currently experience or present with the common symptoms of Active (Pulmonary).

11.1.2 If you have also declared that you have not been in contact with an individual with open (active) TB. However, due to the prolonged period of time in residing in such areas, you are more susceptible to “Latent Tuberculosis”, irrespective of previous history of BCG vaccination it is clinically recommended that you are referred for a Quantiferon Test (Interferon Gamma blood test (IGRA)) to assess potential exposure to Latent TB (NICE, 2011).

11.1.3 Whilst this is not mandatory to deem you compliant to work within the clinical frameworks you are assigned to via your agency, we are obliged to advise you that this test should be undertaken to eliminate any evidence of Tuberculosis infection prior to you commencing any work as a health care worker. As such, should you refuse this test you are advised to refrain from work immediately should you experience any of the signs and symptoms of Active TB and seek immediate medical advice/assessment from a Specialist Consultant in Respiratory/Infectious Disease and notify your Occupational Health Department/Healthier Business UK Ltd.

11.2 The following symptoms are suggestive of TB infection:

- cough which lasts for four weeks and doesn't get better with antibiotics
- weight loss
- night sweats
- coughing up blood

11.3 Should you require further information please visit the below links:

Appendix 1: (PHE, 2013) - World Health Organisation Tuberculosis Incidence by Country Available online:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332777/TB_Worldwide_by_Country_2012.pdf

Appendix 2: (NICE, 2011) – National Institute for Health and Care Excellence-CG-117

Tuberculosis: Clinical diagnosis and management of tuberculosis, and measures for its prevention and control

Available online:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg117/resources/guidance-tuberculosis-pdf>

12. Ebola Screening

12.1 Due to the recent (EVD) Ebola Virus Disease outbreak from March 2014 guidance has been given from WHO (World Healthcare Organisation), Public Health England, HPA (Health Protection Agency) and Department of Health for those returning from effected areas, new entrants to the UK from effected areas and those in contact with the virus. Our aim is to promote and maintain health of all people at work. Before health clearance is given for employment you may be contacted by Healthier Business UK Ltd and may need to be seen by an occupational health advisor or physician. Your record will be held on file for a short period of time and may be subject to audit.

12.2 Symptoms An infected person will typically develop a fever, headache, joint and muscle pain, sore throat, and intense muscle weakness. Diarrhoea, vomiting, a rash, stomach pain and impaired kidney and liver function follow. The patient then bleeds internally, and may also bleed from the ears, eyes, nose or mouth. Ebola virus disease is fatal in 50-90% of cases. The sooner a person is given care, the better the chances that they will survive.

13. Other Policies and Guidelines

13.1 A24Group, in conjunction the Health & Safety Consultancy and the Occupational Health Service (OHS) will, from time to time, develop guidelines for the implementation of this policy and will also develop supporting policies and procedures, addressing key risks, issues and programs related to occupational health, safety, welfare, sickness absence management and rehabilitation.

13.2 All of these supporting policies (and where appropriate, the supporting guidelines and procedures) should be developed in consultation and should be suitably endorsed by A24Group other interested bodies.

14. Review

The policy will normally be reviewed annually or in the event of major changes to legislation or the structure of Ambition 24 Hours or if deemed necessary by A24Group Health & Safety Committee.

The procedures information in this document will be amended as necessary to reflect any changes in other procedural or policy documents of Ambition 24 Hours.

All matters relating to the occupational health of an individual will be dealt with in the strictest confidence, and any advice, recommendations by OHS will, in the first instance be returned to the appropriate HR Manager/Adviser, or in the case of a self referral, advice will be given to the individual concerned.

End Of Policy