WORKPLACE SLIPS TRIPS AND FALLS MANAGEMENT

This is a controlled document. It should not be altered in any way without the express permission of the author or their representative. On receipt of a new version, please destroy all previous versions.

Date of Issue:	January 2016	**Next Review Date:**	March 2019
Version:	2.0	**Last Review Date:**	March 2017
Author:	Health and Safety Manager		
Directorate:	Estates and Facilities Management		
Authorised by Director of Estates and Commercial Development			
Approval Route: Health and Safety Committee			
Approved By:		**Date Approved:**	
Health and Safety Committee		07 April 2017	
Links or overlaps with other procedures/policies:			
Health and Safety Policy			
Manual Handling Policy			
Working at Height Procedure			
Fall Prevention Policy			

Amendment History

Issue	Status	Date	Reason for Change	Authorised

Please note:

If you require a copy of this procedure in an alternative format (for example Large Print, Easy Read) or would like any assistance in relation to the content of this procedure, please contact the Human Resources (HR) team on 01803 656680.

CONTENTS

Introduction 4
Purpose 4
Definitions 5
Roles and Responsibilities 5
Falls from Height 6
Prevention and Management of Slips Trips and Falls 7
References 8
Appendices 8

1. Introduction

Slips and trips resulting in falls are the most common cause of major injuries in Great Britain with over a third of all accidents to employees that were reportable to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) occurring as a result of slips and trips. Nationally over 2000 of these incidents are reported by the NHS every year. These accidents can be cut dramatically through planning and pro-active management, together with good housekeeping. Accidents are not an inevitable part of the healthcare industry – they can and should be prevented.

There are specific responsibilities for the employer and employees to prevent slips, trips and falls under the following Acts and Regulations.

1.1 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

This requires employers to ensure the health and safety of all employees and anyone who may be affected by their work, including any and all visitors to any part of the Trust's premises. This includes taking steps to control slip and trip risks. Employees must not endanger themselves or others and must use any safety equipment provided. Manufacturers and suppliers have a duty to ensure that their products are safe. They must also provide adequate information about appropriate use.

1.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

These build on the Act and include duties on employers to assess risks (including slip and trip risks) and where necessary take action to safeguard health and safety.

1.3 Workplace (Health, Safety, and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Require floors to be suitable, in good condition and free from obstructions. People must be able to move around safely.

1.4 The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR)

The Regulations came into force on 6 April 2005 and apply to all work at where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. They place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person who controls the work of others (e.g. facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height) to the extent they control the work.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to enable the Trust to ensure that it provides, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment free from slip, trip and fall hazards by ensuring that potential hazards in the workplace are identified, risk assessed and managed. It describes the procedures which should be followed, and the factors which should be taken into account by all employees when dealing with aspects of slips, trips and falls in the workplace.

3. Definitions

3.1 Slip

To slide unintentionally for a short distance by losing balance, footing or by unintended sliding usually resulting in either the regaining of balance or a fall.

3.2 Trip

To make a false or unintended step or stumble over an obstacle by unintentionally making contact with that obstacle with part of the anatomy usually resulting in the regaining of balance or a fall.

3.3 Fall

A fall is an event whereby an individual unintentionally comes to rest on the ground or another lower level (excluding intentional change in position to rest in furniture, wall or other objects) or any uncontrolled descent of a person or an object from a height.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this procedure and in turn this responsibility is delegated to the Director of Estates and Commercial Development

4.2 Director of Estates and Commercial Development

The Director of Estates and Commercial Development has delegated responsibility for the successful implementation, management and monitoring of this procedure.

4.3 Health and Safety Manager

The Health and Safety Manager is responsible for providing reports on all workplace falls for discussion and consideration for addition to the risk register, and/or the assurance framework.

4.4 Managers

All managers are responsible for ensuring their staff read, understand and adhere to this procedure and related documents. In addition they are responsible for:

- Identifying any potential slip, trip or fall related hazards within their areas of responsibility or control
- Undertaking any required risk assessments for falls or falls from height
- Immediately implementing measures to control any identified risks

- Escalating any risks for which the controls cannot be immediately implemented or controlled locally to the appropriate risk register until those controls become effective

- Promptly removing equipment that is not safe or suitable for purpose

- Implementing any actions identified from falls incidents

- Ensuring all articles are stored in designated areas

- Raising awareness in relation to the management of slips, trips and falls

- Identifying training requirements across their area of practice in line with the Training Needs Analysis, and ensuring that staff complete required training

4.5 Staff

All employees have a responsibility to abide by this procedure and any decisions arising from the implementation of it. Any significant slip and trip hazards that they become aware of should be reported to their manager. Employees should also take steps to reduce the risks so far as is reasonably practicable, such as keeping all areas tidy and removing any obvious trip hazards.

All incidents involving slips, trips or fall must be reported on the incident reporting system.

4.6 Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic aims and targets for the reduction of slips, trips and falls in the workplace

- Monitoring all staff accidents and incidents, including those events and claims relating to slips, trips and falls

- Escalating risks for discussion and potential inclusion on the appropriate risk register

5. Falls from height

The HSE state that precautions are needed where there is a risk of injury from a fall irrespective of fall height.

The WHAR require risk assessment to decide whether precautions are needed and in what form. Precautions are expected where there is a risk and in 9 times out of 10 this will be the provision of fall prevention in the form of guardrails.

In the health care environment we must not only consider the risk of falls from height for staff and contractors and visitors to the site but also the risk of patients falling from a low height from a bed, trolley or hoist. Further information call is found in the Trust Falls Prevention policy.

For low falls i.e. falls below head height, duty holders should assess the risk and provide sensible precautions that reflect the risk. Low falls should be dealt with where they are matters of evident concern (e.g. a narrow working platform less than head height alongside a production line particularly if a person has to work with their back to the open edge or a fall below head height onto an uneven surface containing sharp edges or protrusions. A risk assessment should conclude that fall prevention should be required in both situations as there is a risk of injury if a person was to fall). Over half of the major injuries reported are due to low falls.

Duty holders in this procedure must consider **all** falls and take precautions where there is a risk of injury from a fall. For general falls from height a Trust risk assessment form should be completed.

Further guidance and information can be found in the Trust Working at Height Procedure.

For inpatients the Patient Handling, Falls and Bed Rails Risk Assessment Tool with interventions should be completed as soon as possible after patients are admitted and within 6 hours at the latest. This will identify any risk and help to instigate interventions to reduce that risk

6. Prevention and Management of Slips Trips and Falls

6.1 Risk Assessment

In order to control hazards in the workplace and to reduce risk there is a requirement to undertake appropriate proactive and reactive risk assessments for the prevention and management of slips, trips and falls. The management of risks from slips trips and falls is the same as for any other hazard.

6.3 Training

The awareness of slips, trips and falls, as well as teaching the principles of risk assessment should be covered during training sessions in line with the Training Needs Analysis including induction, mandatory and health and safety training for managers. Additional refresher and more specialist training should be provided on a needs basis to establish and maintain suitably competent persons.

Where patients/clients are involved the Trust has a structure of falls prevention training depending on staff responsibility and area of work. Contact the training department for further information

6.4 Raising awareness

Various methods of internal communication are utilised to raise staff awareness, including the use of articles in the staff newsletter, the use of incident reports, dissemination through risk co-ordinators, Union and Employee Health and Safety Champions and the Trust Health and Safety Committee meetings and minutes.

6.5 Actions following a slip, trip or fall incident

The Trust's Incident Reporting Policy must be followed for any slip, trip or fall incident. Where an obvious hazard is present the hazard must be eliminated, isolated or

appropriately dealt with to avoid further incidents. Where the hazard involves maintenance, or building or flooring fabric, this must be reported to the Estates Department and logged on the risk register as soon as is reasonably practicable. Where possible the area of the incident should be isolated and left undisturbed until inspection by the Estates department.

7. References

The following references and further reading are applicable to this document:

- Health and Safety Executive Working at Height Regulations (2005) amended – A brief guide.
- Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Trust Working at Height Procedure
- The Trust Fall Prevention Policy

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Slips and Trips – Likely Causes

Appendix 2 - Control Guidance and Good Housekeeping Guidelines

Appendix 3 - Control measures for preventing slips trips and falls

Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

Slips and Trips – Likely Causes

Slip and trip accidents may have different causes, but often have the same result. By looking at the contributing factors separately, it is possible to work out more accurately the cause of a slip or trip accident.

Slip Hazards

- Spills and splashes of liquids and solids
- Wet floors (following cleaning)
- Unsuitable footwear
- Rain, sleet and snow, ice
- Change from a wet to a dry surface (footwear still wet)
- Unsuitable floor surface/covering
- Dusty floors
- Sloping surfaces
- Failure to inform staff that floor cleaning is in progress or by placing of floor cleaning warning signs

Trip Hazards

- Loose floorboards/tiles
- Uneven outdoor surfaces
- Holes/cracks
- Changes in surface level - ramps, steps and stairs
- Cables across walking areas
- Obstructions
- Bumps, ridges and protruding nails etc
- Low wall and floor fixtures - door catches, door stops
- Electrical and telephone socket outlets
- Leaving wet floor signs out when floors are dry

Fall Hazards

- Staff not trained in moving and handling patients
- Over reaching
- Climbing on furniture
- Rushing down steps/stairs, ladders and faulty equipment
- Reduced circulation space

Factors which Increase Risk

- Patients left moving around unsupervised
- Untrained staff
- Risk assessments not carried out regularly
- Poor or unsuitable lighting
- Wrong cleaning regime/materials
- Moving goods/carrying/pushing or pulling a load
- Rushing around
- Distractions/fatigue
- Effects of alcohol
- Drugs and medications

Appendix 2

Control Guidance and Good Housekeeping Guidelines

Work Place Conditions
Get ward/ workplace conditions right in the first place. It will make tackling slip and trip risks easier. Choose the right floor surfaces and suitable lighting, properly plan pedestrian and traffic routes, and avoid overcrowding. All these are important.

Good Housekeeping
Good housekeeping is important in preventing hazards and applies as much to wards, offices and other premises/ facilities provided by the Trust and workshops, etc. Keep work areas tidy. It will create a better working environment and mean fewer accidents.

Training
Properly train workers, particularly in the correct use of any safety and cleaning equipment provided, and clearly state who is responsible for what; this will help to minimise risks.

Cleaning Equipment, Materials and Methods
Ensure that cleaning methods and equipment are suitable for the type of surface being treated. These depend on several factors, such as the type of use and location and will have been identified in the risk assessment. Take care not to create additional slip and trip risks, for example from residues not properly removed from a surface. Encourage the use of scrubber dryers. Always warn others in the immediate vicinity that floor cleaning is in progress and display floor cleaning warning notices.

Maintenance Programmes
A proper programme of maintenance will ensure that the steps you have taken remain effective. Always check floors and floor coverings regularly, report damage immediately to the maintenance department and section off damaged floor areas where possible.

Repairs
Necessary maintenance and repairs must be carried out. Monitor repairs and inform the maintenance department if repairs are not carried out swiftly.

Cleaning Activities
While cleaning and maintenance work is being carried out, take care to avoid creating hazards. Fence off wet surfaces until dry, take care with trailing leads from cleaning equipment, and if possible carry out cleaning and maintenance during quieter hours.

A good system of maintenance ensures that:
- Maintenance (including inspection, testing, adjustment and cleaning) is carried out at suitable intervals
- Dangerous defects are corrected and access to faulty equipment or
- hazardous areas is prevented in the meantime;
- Suitable records are kept so that the system can be monitored.

Lighting should enable people to see obstructions on floor, potentially slippery areas etc. so they can work safely. Replace, repair or clean lights before lighting levels become insufficient for safe working.

Arrange lighting and light fittings so they do not create dazzling light or glare that can make it difficult to see. Ensure light levels are not reduced, for example by goods stacked in such

a way as to block light or cast shadows.

Local lighting should always be provided at staircases and changes of level; it is usually also needed at ramps where there is no change in colour, texture or flooring material from level walkway to ramp.

Flooring

Poor floor conditions are a major cause of slips and trips. Regular checks should be made for loose floor finishes, holes and cracks in surfaces, loose and worn out rugs and mats, etc.

Even a good surface will become dangerous in certain conditions, for example if liquids are spilt onto it. However, where they do occur they should be cleaned up immediately or the area fenced off to make people aware until they can be cleaned up. Where floors are unavoidably wet or dusty through work activity, take special care in the choice of floor coverings or floor surface.

Obstructions

Failure to tidy up properly is a common problem; objects left on walkways can easily go unnoticed and cause a fall. Where it is not possible to remove obstacles, take precautions to reduce the risk of accident by preventing access or warn people of the dangers, for example by using warning signs or hazard cones.

Footwear

While much can be done to reduce hazards, there will often be some remaining risk. An important second line of defense will be to ensure people have the right footwear for the activity they are undertaking.

Appendix 3

Control measures for preventing slips trips and falls

Contributory Factors	Preventative Measures for Risk Control
Contamination	
Contamination of the floor from: • Spillages of solid, liquid materials • Wet cleaning methods • Shoes/clothing • Natural contamination such as wet and/or mud in outside areas • Dry contamination, eg dusts, powders, polythene bags left on floors, product spillages or cardboard laid over spills • Wind-driven rain, sleet and snow through doorways • Condensation e.g. from poor ventilation	**Eliminate contamination in the first place** • Maintain equipment to prevent leakage • Install suitable entrance matting systems • Place entrances to suit the prevailing weather (only an option during the initial design of the building) • Put up effective entrance canopies If not reasonably practicable: **Prevent contamination becoming deposited on walking surfaces** • Use dry clean methods for cleaning floors • Clean and dry incoming footwear, by use of suitable entrance matting If not reasonably practicable: **Limit the effects of the contamination by** • Immediate clearing up of spillages • Prompt repair of leaks • Limiting the area of contamination • Restricting access to contaminated areas • Using under floor heating, particularly at entrances If there is still a risk, follow the next steps

Flooring	
Inherent slip resistance of the floor not maintained adequately, e.g. from: • Incorrect or inadequate cleaning or maintenance and wear	**Regain the original surface friction by cleaning effectively** • Follow an effective cleaning regime; • Train, supervise and equip cleaners; and • Maintain floors and drainage. If this is not enough consider slip resistance of the floor:
The slip resistance of the floor is too low The factors influencing this are: • The coefficient of friction between floor and shoe; • Surface roughness of the floor; • The shape and height of ridges in the floor surface, if profiled; • The drainage capacity of the floor; • The hardness of the floor; and • Incorrect installation of the floor.	**Increase the slip resistance of the existing floor, e.g. by treating the floor** [Caution – some treatments can be ineffective or short-lasting] If this is still not enough then: **Lay a more slip-resistant floor, with a sufficient surface roughness** • Draw up a specification to be met; • Select a floor with a sufficient coefficient of friction in contaminated conditions (floors rough enough for safety can be cleaned to hygiene requirements); • Provide effective drainage; • See installation is correct; and • Check the specification is met. And also consider the factors below.
Steps and slopes: do they cause sudden changes in step or not offer adequate foothold and/or handhold?	**Make sure steps and slopes give adequate foot and hand hold and have no sudden changes** • Make sure changes in level are clearly highlighted
Uneven surfaces E.g. gullies, holes, changes in level. **Obstructions** E.g. accumulation of items such as from work in progress or waste.	**Eliminate holes, slopes or uneven surfaces which could cause trips risks. Good Housekeeping** • Eliminate materials likely to obstruct and cause trips; • Mark fixed obstacles with, e.g. black and yellow stripes • If this is not reasonably practicable prevent material obstructing.

Environment	
Adverse conditions affecting use of the floor or distracting attention, e.g. • Low light levels; • Shadows; • Glare; • Excess noise; • Extreme temperature; • Excess dust; and • Bulky/awkward personal protective equipment (PPE).	**Make sure the prevailing conditions allow good visibility of, and concentration on, floor conditions, obstructions, changes in level and slopes**
Footwear	
Shoes offer insufficient slip resistance in combination with the floor surfaces and prevailing contamination/ conditions, e.g. • Type of shoe; • Fit; • Sole material; • Contamination of shoes; • Sole pattern; • Maintenance /renewal; and • Wear	**Select suitable shoes for the floor, the environment the activity and the individual**
Human Factors	
The nature of the task, .e.g. • The need to carry, lift, push, lower or pull loads; • The need to turn, to move quickly or take long strides; • Distractions; and • Having no hands free to hold on/break a fall. • Potential for creating obstructions in walkways	**Analyse tasks and process flows to see they do not compromise the ability to walk safely in any remaining slip or trip risk areas**

Consider vulnerable individuals, e.g. • Poor knowledge of risks and measures; • Poor health and agility; • Poor eyesight; and • Fatigue	**Only allocate tasks in slip risk areas to those competent to follow slip pre-cautions**
Unsafe actions of people, e.g. from lack of: • Awareness of risk; • Knowledge of how slips occur; • Information and training; and • Attention and care. • Good language skills	**Train, inform and supervise employees** **Set procedures for visitors.** - both for your site and for your employees visiting elsewhere.

Appendix 4

Equality Impact Assessment

Policy Title (and number)	***WORKPLACE SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS***		**Version and Date**	***V1***	
Policy Author	Maurice Lidster				
An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a process designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate or disadvantage people. EIAs also improve and promote equality. Consider the nature and extent of the impact, not the number of people affected.					
EQUALITY ANALYSIS: How well do people from protected groups fare in relation to the general population? ***PLEASE NOTE: Any 'Yes' answers may trigger a full EIA and must be referred to the equality leads below***					
Is it likely that the policy/procedure could treat people from protected groups less favorably than the general population? (see below)					
Age	Yes ☐ No☒	Disability	Yes ☐ No☒	Sexual Orientation	Yes ☐ No☒
Race	Yes ☐ No☒	Gender	Yes ☐ No☒	Religion/Belief (non)	Yes ☐ No☒
Gender Reassignment	Yes ☐ No☒	Pregnancy/ Maternity	Yes ☐ No☒	Marriage/ Civil Partnership	Yes ☐ No☒
Is it likely that the policy/procedure could affect particular 'Inclusion Health' groups less favorably than the general population? (substance misuse; teenage mums; carers[1]; travellers[2]; homeless[3]; convictions; social isolation[4]; refugees)					Yes ☐ No☒
Please provide details for each protected group where you have indicated 'Yes'. **Suitable risk assessment will be completed depending on staff circumstances.**					
VISION AND VALUES: Policies must aim to remove unintentional barriers and promote inclusion					
Is inclusive language[5] used throughout?					Yes ☒ No☐
Are the services outlined in the policy/procedure fully accessible[6]?					Yes ☒ No☐
Does the policy/procedure encourage individualised and person-centered care?					Yes ☒ No☐
Could there be an adverse impact on an individual's independence or autonomy[7]?					Yes ☐ No☒
If 'Yes', how will you mitigate this risk to ensure fair and equal access? See individual Risk Assessment.					
EXTERNAL FACTORS					
Is the policy/procedure a result of national legislation which cannot be modified in any way?					Yes ☒ No☐
What is the reason for writing this policy? (Is it a result in a change of legislation/ national research?)					
The purpose of this Procedure is to enable the Trust to ensure that it provides, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment free from slip, trip and fall hazards by ensuring that potential hazards in the workplace are identified, risk assessed and managed.					
Who was consulted when drafting this policy/procedure? What were the recommendations/suggestions?					
Health and Safety Committee					
ACTION PLAN: Please list all actions identified to address any impacts					
Action			**Person responsible**		**Completion date**
none					
AUTHORISATION: **By signing below, I confirm that the named person responsible above is aware of the actions assigned to them**					
Name of person completing the form			**Signature**		
Validated by (line manager)			**Signature**		