

ENGAYNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy No: 75



First Aid Policy

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First Aid Policy

Introduction

People can become injured or be taken ill while at work. Regardless of whether or not the injury or illness is caused by the work they do, it is important that they receive immediate attention and, in serious cases, an ambulance is called.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981(1) cover the arrangements that should be in place to ensure this happens, and in so doing save lives and prevent minor injuries from becoming major ones.

These arrangements include the provision of adequate and appropriate first aid equipment, facilities, and trained staff. What constitutes adequate and appropriate will depend on the circumstances in each workplace and will be determined by undertaking an assessment of first aid needs.

The minimum first aid provision at any work site is:

- A suitably stocked first aid box;
- A first aid appointed person to take charge of the first aid arrangements;
- Information for employees about the first aid arrangements available.

The HSE uses the following definitions:

First aid:

- Treatment in the preserving of life and minimizing the consequences of injury and illness, in cases where a person will need help from a medical practitioner or nurse, until such help is obtained, and
- The treatment of minor injuries and illnesses that would otherwise receive no treatment or which do not require treatment by a medical practitioner or nurse.

First-aider:

- A person who holds a current certificate of competence in either first aid at work (FAW) or emergency first aid at work (EFAW) issued by an organization whose training and qualifications are approved by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

Appointed person:

- A person who is authorized to take charge of first aid arrangements in a workplace where it has been decided that a first-aider is not required

First aid assessment of need

Each Establishment is required to assess the level of first aid provision required. The first aid provision can be made up of fully qualified first aiders (having passed an HSE approved course) and appointed persons.

Some smaller Establishments may only require the minimum first aid provision, however there are a number of factors that may mean a greater first aid provision is required.

In assessing the first aid needs the following should be considered:

- The nature of the work, the workplace hazards and the associated risks;
- The size of the establishment, or building;
- The nature and distribution of the workforce;
- The history of previous accidents;
- The needs of travelling, lone or remote staff;
- The work patterns of staff;
- The remoteness of the site from the emergency medical services;
- Staff working on shared or multi-occupied sites;
- Annual leave or other absences of first-aiders and appointed persons;
- The first aid requirements of non-employees (pupils/students, clients, service users, members of the public, contractors including maintenance contractors and cleaning staff).

The requirements for first aid are covered by the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. However these only apply to employees. Nevertheless, it is necessary to make suitable provision for pupils/students.

There are a number of aids that will assist in undertaking the assessment.

- The first aid needs assessment checklist in Appendix 1 covers the points that need to be considered to establish the first aid provision that may be required.
- The HSE website has a first aid at work assessment tool that will also assist with establishing first aid requirements.

The former also provides a means of recording the assessment and, although there is no legal requirement to record the assessment of first aid needs, it is good practice to do so, in case there is a need to justify the level of first aid provision.

It is important to remember that accidents, incidents, and ill health occurrences can happen at any time. First aid provisions must therefore be available at all times when staff are at work, including cover for before and after schools clubs, across lunchtimes and during holiday periods.

The ultimate decision as to the number of first-aiders and other first aid provisions lies with the person responsible for the Establishment.

First aid personnel

Where an assessment of first aid needs identifies a need for people to be available to administer first aid, sufficient numbers should be provided, and at appropriate locations, to ensure first aid can be delivered without delay should the need arise.

The assessment of first aid needs will help to determine how many first-aiders are required. There are no hard and fast rules to determine how many are needed, and account should be taken of all the relevant circumstances of each workplace when coming to a decision. When selecting someone to become a first-aider, a number of factors need to be taken into consideration. These include:

- Their reliability, disposition and communication skills;
- Their aptitude and ability to absorb new information and learn new skills;
- Their ability to cope in stressful situations;
- Their normal duties, which should be such that they can be left immediately in an emergency.

The Regulations recognise two types of first-aider:

- A qualified first-aider, who is someone, holding a current first aid at work certificate from a course approved by the HSE.
- An appointed person, who is someone with basic first aid training and who can take charge when someone is injured or falls ill, including calling for an ambulance if necessary and can look after the first aid equipment and restock the first aid boxes.

First-aiders are generally asked to volunteer, and once nominated are provided with relevant training on either the FAW or EFAW course.

In Community Schools, first aiders who administer first aid as part of their work duties for the Local Authority will be covered by the Council's insurance arrangements. Academies, Foundation, and Voluntary Aided Schools should ensure their employee liability insurance covers first aiders.

It should be noted that a qualified first aider may find themselves in a situation outside work, where, because they happen to be in that place at the time, they are in a position to offer first aid in an emergency, e.g. a road traffic accident whilst on leave.

In these situations the person will be acting in a private capacity and not on behalf of their employer and will not therefore be covered by their employer's first aid insurance arrangements. This advice is not intended to discourage First Aiders from administering first aid in emergency situations.

The courts in the UK have traditionally applied the "good Samaritan" principle. This means that a civil claim for damages against someone who has acted in good faith to prevent loss of life or disablement will not be successful, for example someone administering first aid at a road traffic accident.

Where an assessment of first aid needs identifies that a first-aider is not required, the Regulations require a person to be appointed to take charge of the first aid arrangements. The role of the appointed person includes looking after first aid equipment and facilities, restocking the first aid boxes and calling the emergency services when necessary.

Appointed persons can also provide emergency cover within their role and competence, where a first-aider is absent due to exceptional, unforeseen and temporary circumstances. This does not include covering for annual leave.

First aid materials, equipment and facilities

Once an assessment of first aid needs has been completed, the findings can be used to determine what first aid equipment should be provided. The minimum requirement is a suitably stocked first aid box.

First aid boxes should be sited so that they are accessible by staff at all times, and when sited should be protected from dust and damp, and located near to a hand-washing facility.

First aid boxes should be marked with a white cross on a green background.

There is no mandatory list of items that should be in a first aid box. The contents will depend on the findings of the assessment of first aid needs. Where work activities are low risk, the HSE has indicated that the minimum stock of first aid materials may be:

- The HSE leaflet "Basic advice on first aid", giving general first aid guidance;
- Twenty individually wrapped sterile plasters, or assorted sizes, appropriate to the type of work;
- Two sterile eye pads;
- Four individually wrapped triangular bandages, preferably sterile;
- Six safety pins;
- Two large sterile, individually wrapped, unmedicated wound dressings;
- Six medium sized, individually wrapped, unmedicated wound dressings;
- A pair of disposable gloves.

However this list is suggested guidance only and additional materials and equipment for example scissors, tape, disposable apron, and individually wrapped moist wipes, may be identified in the assessment of first aid needs.

Similarly there is no mandatory list of items to include in a travelling first aid box, and the contents should be determined according to need. Where work activities are low risk, the HSE has indicated that the minimum stock of first aid materials may be:

- The HSE leaflet "Basic advice on first aid", giving general first aid guidance;
- Six individually wrapped sterile plasters;
- Two individually wrapped triangular bandages, preferably sterile;
- Two safety pins;
- One large sterile, individually wrapped, unmedicated wound dressing;

- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes;
- A pair of disposable gloves.

Again, this list is suggested guidance only and the assessment of first aid needs may identify that additional materials are required.

First aid at work does not include administering tablets or medicines to treat illnesses, except where aspirin is used when giving first aid to someone with a suspected heart attack, in accordance with currently accepted first aid practice.

Tablets or medicines should not be kept in a first aid box.

The contents of first aid boxes should be regularly examined and restocked after use by the first aider. Care should be taken to ensure that once items have reached their expiry date, they are disposed of safely.

Training for first-aiders

Before commencing first aid duties, a first-aider must undertake first aid training and hold a valid certificate of competence in either:

- First aid at work (FAW), or
- Emergency first aid at work (EFAW).

The training must be undertaken with, and the certificate issued by, a training organization approved by the HSE.

The findings of the assessment of first aid needs can be used to determine whether first-aiders need FAW or EFAW training, however if the assessment shows that a FAW trained first-aider is required, it is not acceptable to provide an EFAW trained first-aider instead.

A EFAW qualification comprises of one-day (6 hours) training. At the end of both courses, a successful candidate receives a certificate that remains valid for three years.

For any staff who attended a FAW four day training course, their current certificate is still valid, and they will enter the new training regime when their three year certificate expires.

It is recommended that staff who previously attended the appointed person's first aid training attend the EFAW training.

Towards the end of the three-year qualification period, first-aiders must undertake a FAW requalification course, or another EFAW course, as appropriate.

The FAW re-qualification course lasts two days (12 hours), and successful candidates will receive a further certificate valid for three years. Similarly, the EFAW course lasts one day (6 hours) and the successful candidates receive a further certificate valid for three years.

Re-qualification training needs to be arranged before the current certificate expires.

- Where retraining is undertaken within three months before the expiry date, the new certificate will take effect from that expiry date.
- Where retraining is undertaken earlier than three months before the expiry of the current certificate, the new certificate will take effect from the date the course is completed.
- Where retraining has not been undertaken before the expiry date of the current certificate, it should be completed no more than 28 days beyond the expiry date, and the new certificate will take effect from the expiry date of the previous certificate.
- Where retraining is not completed by the end of the 28 day period, the person will need to undertake a full FAW or EFAW course, as appropriate, in order to be re-established as a first-aider.

The HSE strongly recommends annual refresher training for all first-aiders with either FAW or EFAW certification. The refresher training should be attended at the end of the first and second year following qualification. Refresher training would normally last at least three hours and although not mandatory, will help first-aiders maintain their skills and keep up to date with any changes to first aid procedures.

Additional training of first-aiders may be necessary to cover any special hazards, for example, where work activities involve working in confined spaces or with hazardous substances.

Similarly, additional training may be necessary for staff who may be required to use a defibrillator or administer adrenalin using an epi-pen.

Those working with children should note that standard first aid at work training courses do not include resuscitation procedures for children, however most training providers offer Paediatric First Aid training courses for those working with children under the age of 8 years.

Additional training may be taken as standalone courses, and any certificate issued will be separate to the first aid certificate. Organisations offering such additional training do not need HSE approval for these courses.

On the successful completion of the course, a first aid certificate will be received, valid for three years.

Training for appointed persons

An appointed person does not need first aid training in order to fulfil their role, although emergency first aid training is available. An appointed person is therefore not a first-aider, and should not give first aid for which they have not been trained.

There are many basic first aid courses available that are appropriate for appointed persons, however, although there may not be a need for a first-aider there is still a possibility of an accident or sudden illness occurring, it may therefore be prudent to

provide EFAW training, in which case the person would become first-aiders in regulatory terms.

Action in the event of an injury

For serious accidents to pupils or staff, the main consideration is to avoid delay in securing treatment. If the case is sufficiently serious to warrant hospital treatment (e.g. cases of suspected fracture) the ambulance should be called immediately.

If possible, arrangements should be made for a member of staff to accompany an injured pupil in the ambulance. Parents should be informed as soon as possible. Staff working outside normal establishment hours (e.g. caretakers, cleaning staff) must have access to a telephone outside normal establishment hours

Recording and reporting accidents and incidents

Treatment given to staff and/or pupils/students must be recorded on Medical Tracker **see appendix 2 for the Medical Tracker guide.**

All accidents other than minor accidents to pupils/students, all incidents and near misses must be reported according to the Local Authority's and/or the Establishment's reporting procedures.

Employees must be informed of the first aid arrangements, including the location of equipment, facilities and first-aiders. First aid notices displaying such information should be displayed in prominent locations in each building.

Special arrangements may be necessary to give first aid information to staff with language or reading difficulties.

First aid information should also be included during the induction training of new staff.

Reviewing first aid arrangements

First aid arrangements should be periodically reviewed to ensure they are still valid. They should be reviewed particularly if there have been any operational changes that might increase the risks of injury to staff, or introduced additional hazards to the workplace. They should also be reviewed when current first-aider(s) have moved location or leave their employment.

Risk to first-aiders

As with all work activities, the risks to first-aiders must be assessed, and controls implemented to reduce the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

A generic risk assessment has been produced, which managers can adapt and adopt to suit their own circumstances. The generic assessment, once adopted must

be signed and dated, and reviewed on a regular basis, or as a minimum on an annual basis.

COSHH Assessment

Where the risk assessment identifies the use of hazardous substances (for example hazardous chemicals), or potential exposure to hazardous substances (for example bacteria or virus from bodily fluids), a COSHH assessment must be undertaken, adequate control measures put into place and these communicated to those staff involved. Further information is available in the section on Hazardous Substances.

Hygiene and First Aid

The risks to first aiders and others dealing with spillages of body fluids are so small as to be virtually non-existent. Nevertheless the maintenance of good hygiene standards is important. The risk from infection from bodily fluids etc. will be adequately controlled providing the hygiene procedures outlined below are followed.

Protective Equipment

- Disposable gloves - Vinyl disposable gloves (polythene disposable gloves with seams are unsuitable).
- Resuscitate aids (for use in mouth to mouth resuscitation)
- Disposable aprons.

Precautions

- Assume body fluids (blood, vomit, urine etc.) may be infectious and always follow hygiene procedures;
- Always wash hands before and after applying dressings;
- Cuts and abrasions on exposed skin of the first aider should be covered with a waterproof plaster before treating the casualty;
- Disposable gloves must be worn if contact with body fluids likely;
- Resuscitate aids must be used for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation;
- The type of mouthpiece known as a "rigid airway" must only be used by First Aiders specifically trained in its use;
- Skin that has been in contact with another person's blood, vomit etc. should be washed with soap as soon as possible;
- Splashes into eyes or mouth should be rinsed freely with clean cold water;
- Puncture wounds should be encouraged to bleed freely. They should be washed with soap (not around eyes) and water and covered with a sterile dressing;
- Blood and other body fluid spillages should be cleaned using whatever absorbent materials are available e.g. toilet paper, paper towels
- Disposable gloves and aprons should be worn when cleaning such spills
- Disinfect spillage area with bleach or other chlorine-releasing compound.

Disposal

Disposable gloves and aprons, together with contaminated absorbent material and dressings, should be disposed of in sealed yellow plastic bags marked clinical waste bio-hazard and disposed of as clinical waste.

Further information

- Basic advice on first aid HSE Leaflet INDG347 (rev 1), www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg327.pdf
- Guidance on first aid for schools www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthandsafety/firstaid
- The event safety guide: A guide to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events, HSG195, 1999.
- The event safety guide HSG195 – update, April 2008.
- Latex and you HSE Leaflet INDG320, HSE Books 2000 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg320.pdf
- Blood-borne viruses in the workplace, INDG342 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg342.pdf

References

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4. Frequently asked questions on the changes to first aid training and approval arrangements, <http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/review/trainingfaq.htm>
5. First aid training – what first aid training does the law require? Croners Dec 2009.
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