

The Control of Risks at Work to Young Persons Policy

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If the review date has passed please contact the Author for advice.

Disclaimer

Powys Teaching Health Board is the operational name of Powys Teaching Local Health Board
Bwrdd Iechyd Addysgu Powys yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Addysgu Powys

Version Control

Version	Summary of Changes/Amendments	Issue Date
1	Initial Issue	Dec 2009
2	Review of existing policy to reflect changes in legislation and guidance & new organisational name.	Dec 2012
3	Review of existing policy to reflect changes in legislation and guidance	Jan 2017
4	Review and re-write of the existing policy due to changes in current legislation and guidance.	Jan 2021
5	Change to Environment Directorate, roles and responsibilities.	March 2022
6	Policy Review.	Feb 2024

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Engagement & Consultation

Key Individuals/Groups Involved in Developing this Document

Role / Designation
Senior Health & Safety Officers

Circulated to the following for Consultation

Date	Role / Designation
22 Jan 24	Health and Safety Group

Evidence Base
Fully listed in the Reference Section

Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment Summary					
	No impact	Adverse	Differential	Positive	Statement
Age				x	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. A summary can be found in the table on the left.</p> <p>Please remember policy documents are published to both the intranet and internet.</p>
Disability	x				
Gender Reassignment	x				
Pregnancy and Maternity	x				
Race	x				
Religion or Belief	x				
Sexual Orientation	x				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	x				
Welsh Language	x				
Risk Assessment Summary					
<p>Have you identified any risks arising from the implementation of this policy / procedure / written control document?</p> <p>No additional risks identified.</p>					
<p>Have you identified any Information Governance issues arising from the implementation of this policy / procedure / written control document?</p> <p>No</p>					
<p>Have you identified any training and / or resource implications as a result of implementing this?</p> <p>No additional resources identified.</p>					

1. Introduction

Introducing young people to the world of work can help them understand the work environment, choose future careers or prepare for employment. An appreciation of workplace risk and how to deal with it can be one of the biggest benefits offered by a work placement.

In doing this, Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) is aware of its responsibilities under health and safety law, to ensure, **so far as reasonably practicable**, the health and safety of all their employees, irrespective of age. As part of this, there are certain considerations that need to be made for young people at work or on work placements. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, an employer has a responsibility to ensure that young people employed by them are not exposed to risk due to:

- lack of experience
- being unaware of existing or potential risks and/or
- lack of maturity

An employer must consider:

- the layout of the workplace
- the physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to
- how they will handle work equipment
- how the work and processes are organised
- the extent of health and safety training needed
- risks from particular agents, processes and work

The health board is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees and in particular young persons who are made more vulnerable by their lack of experience, knowledge or absence of awareness of existing or potential risks, or the fact that they have not yet fully matured.

2. Objective

The health board is committed to ensuring that the risks to young person's whilst at work, are identified through risk assessment and these are adequately controlled, to either eliminate or reduce the risk to an acceptable level. The health board is committed to ensuring all employees including young workers, are provided with sufficient levels of training and supervision to enable them to work safely and ensure the safety of others.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the other relevant policies including but not limited to:

HR008 – Work Placement and Work Experience Policy
HSP003 – Manual Handling

3. Definitions

A young person - is anyone under 18 and

A child - is anyone who has not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA). Pupils will reach the MSLA in the school year in which they turn 16.

So far as is reasonably practicable - This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble. However, you do not need to take action if it would be grossly disproportionate to the level of risk.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility and is accountable to the board of PTHB for the management of health & safety within the organisation. These include the responsibility for the resourcing and implementation of all measures needed to comply with this policy, relevant legislation and guidance.

4.2	Executive Directors Executive Directors are responsible to the PTHB Board and for ensuring that all risks associated with the work activities undertaken by young persons, have been identified and are adequately controlled within their areas of responsibility. They are also responsible for ensuring appropriate resources are available for the effective implementation of this policy and any measures required to control the risk associated with the employment of young persons.
4.3	Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in 4.2, the Executive Director of Therapies and Health Science will take lead responsibility for the corporate management of health & safety within the organisation and is accountable for this to the Board of PTHB. These responsibilities also include ensuring that the organisation receives competent advice and guidance regarding the employment of young persons.
4.4	Senior Managers For example: Assistant Directors/Business Managers/Heads of Services and those responsible for service delivery. Senior Managers for each locality/directorate have responsibility for the day-to-day management and monitoring of health and safety within their area of responsibility. They are directly accountable to their management for ensuring full compliance with health & safety legislation and any risk associated with the employment of young persons are adequately risk assessed and controlled within their areas of responsibility.
4.5	Line Managers, Ward Managers, Team Leaders and Supervisors etc. with day-to-day responsibility for staff Are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for the work activities within their areas of responsibility and ensure these are reviewed before a young person starts work. This is to ensure they take into consideration the capabilities and vulnerabilities of the young person.• Ensuring young person are not tasked with undertaking a work activity beyond their ability and limited experience.

- Ensuring young persons as with all other employees, are informed of the risks associated with the work being undertaken and the control measures to be used to reduce the risk.
- Ensuring young persons along with other employees, are provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction, and training relevant to the levels of risk and to enable them to carry out work activities safely.
- Ensuring young persons along with other employees, are adequately supervised at all times.
- Ensuring where a significant risk remains, the young worker is prohibited from carrying out the work unless:
 - It is necessary for his or her training; and
 - they supervised by a competent person; and
 - the risk will be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring all H&S concerns raised by young workers are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action is taken to address any identified issues/concerns.
- Ensuring all accidents and incidents are investigated and reported via the Datix system. Also ensuring appropriate action is taken where possible to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.
- Ensuring risk assessments are reviewed and updated as required following any incident/accidents or where H&S issues or concerns are raised. This is to check if the existing controls measures are suitable and still relevant, or if further action is required to mitigate the risk.

4.6 Young Workers

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring they work within the limits of their abilities, skills and experience.
- Ensuring they comply with the information, instruction and training they receive.
- Ensuring they comply with any control measures or safe systems that have been implemented to mitigate any risk associated with their work activities.
- Ensure they inform their line manager or safety representatives of any H&S concerns or dangerous situations immediately they become evident.

Ensure they report all accidents and incidents to their line manager and through the Datix System.

4.7 Senior Health & Safety Officers

The Senior Health and Safety Officers will be responsible through PTHB's Health and Safety management system for:

- Ensuring the control of risk at work to young person policy is reviewed regularly and ensure it is in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.

Providing competent health and safety advice and guidance to managers, relating to the management of H&S risk to young person's whilst working for the health board.

5. Six Steps to Protect Young Workers

The Health and Safety Executive identify six basic steps to be adopted when employing young workers, these are as follows:

1. Assess the young workers capabilities - For example:

- literacy and numeracy levels
- general health
- relevant work experience
- physical capability to do the job

- familiarity with the work being done and the working environment (especially where conditions change rapidly, such as on construction sites).

Don't forget to assess cultural and language issues (grasp of English) too, where relevant - you may need to use visual, non-verbal methods such as pictures, signs or learning materials such as videos/DVDs/CD-ROMs.

2. Plan and provide an induction -

- Provide an induction. Plan it carefully, including photos of hazards where possible, and use plain, simple language. Take time to walk around the workplace or site with new workers and show them where the main hazards exist (e.g. falls, slips and transport).

3. Make sure control measures to protect against risks are up to date and being properly used and maintained -

- Involve employees and health and safety representatives in discussions about the risk and how best to make sure new starters are protected.
- Emphasise the importance of reporting accidents and near misses.
- Make any necessary arrangements for health surveillance.
- If required, make sure suitable personal protective equipment is provided and maintained without cost to the workers.

4. Provide relevant information, instruction and training -

- Provide relevant information, instruction and training about the risks that new workers may be exposed to and the precautions they will need to take to avoid those risks

5. Provide adequate supervision -

- Provide adequate supervision. Make sure workers know how to raise concerns and supervisors are familiar with the possible problems due to unfamiliarity and inexperience.

6. Check workers have understood the information, instruction and training they need to work safely -

- Check workers have understood the information, instruction and training they need to work safely, and are acting on it, especially during the vital first days/weeks at work. Remember to make sure workers know how and with whom they can raise any concerns about

their health and safety and that they know about any emergency arrangements or procedures.

6. Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction

6.1 Risk Assessment

Managers should already be ensuring that any significant risks within their departments are adequately managed, and are best placed to assess whether or not they need to do anything additional for a young person joining them.

While there no longer a requirement for an employer to carry out a separate risk assessment specifically for a young person. If the organisation currently employs a young person, or has done so in the last few years, the existing arrangements for risk assessment and management of the risks for new young people in the workplace should be sufficient, if the new starter is of a broadly similar level of maturity and understanding and has no needs.

If employing a young person for the first time, or employing one with needs, the risk assessments will need to be reviewed, taking into account the specific factors for young persons before they start. This should be straightforward in departments where the risk is low, for example working in an office with everyday risks that will mostly be familiar to the young person.

For work in higher-risk environments, e.g., construction, manufacturing or work involving exposure to toxic substances or extreme temperatures, the risks are likely to be greater and will need more careful attention to ensure they are properly controlled. If a workplace contains these hazards, there should already be effective arrangements and control measures in place to manage the risk. These will need to include induction, supervision, site familiarisation and provision of any protective equipment needed.

You must let the parents or guardians of any child know the possible risks and the measures put in place to control them. This can be done in whatever way is simplest and suitable, including verbally.

Persons under the age of 16 will not be placed within clinical areas, or high-risk environments, to work while on placement with Powys Teaching Health Board. Further guidance may be found within the Student Placement Policy and within the work experience packs issued to managers.

6.2 Risk Reduction

Managers must ensure that young persons are not exposed to risk at work due to their age and lack of experience. In particular a young person must not be expected to:

- Work beyond their physical and psychological capabilities [lift or carry excessive weights, perform frequent repetitive movements, work in cramped conditions for prolonged lengths of time are a few instances].
- Be exposed to harmful ionising or non-ionising radiation.
- Carry out work that involves risks to health from noise, vibration and excessive heat or cold.
- Perform work that involves harmful exposure to any agents that can chronically affect health including those with toxic or carcinogenic effects or cause genetic damage to an unborn child.
- Be exposed to any other situation where there is a significant element of danger (working on live mains, falls, power tools, rotating machinery are just a few examples)
- Work at heights.
- Be exposed to violence or aggression, including handling large amounts of cash.

Additional control measures, which may be required to adequately control the risk, include:

- Not exposing the young person to the risk at all.
- Providing additional information, instruction and training.
- Providing close supervision by a competent person and reminding supervisors of their increased responsibilities to care for the young person.
- Carrying out additional health surveillance.
- Taking other additional precautions relative to the work activities being undertaken.

7. Training

Young persons **must** be given appropriate training when they commence work and continuously while working for the organisation. Topics that need to be covered in addition to the formal induction programme and mandatory training plan will include:

- Instruction in any local safety policy and any local or site rules.
- Instruction in the key safety people and Line Managers within the department or on-site.
- Instruction in the hazards and risks associated with the work activities they are expected to undertake and all safety precautions and safe systems that are in place.
- Instruction in any restricted areas in the department or on-site.
- Instruction in any machinery and equipment may be used and what may not, how to operate the items safely and what to do if something goes wrong.
- Instruction in the hazardous substances that can be used and what may not, including the safety precautions to be used.
- Instruction in the personal protective equipment is to be used, why, how it is worn, how it is maintained and method of replacement.
- Instruction in the safety equipment is to be used, how to use it and why it is to be used etc.
- Instruction into what to do in the event of an accident or incident, how to deal with it and the first aid provision that is in place in the event of an injury.
- Instruction in what emergency procedures are in place: fire, spillages, leak of harmful materials etc.
- Instruction in any rules re: smoking, drugs, alcohol, mobile phones etc.

All young and inexperienced workers **must** be instructed to work within the bounds of their (limited) experience and knowledge. They **must** always work to the instructions they have received: **'if in doubt-ask!'**

All young and inexperienced workers **must** also be told what to do and who to tell if they come across a situation they suspect may be a danger to themselves or others – **“Don’t stay silent- speak out!”**

8. Supervision

It is important that adequate and appropriate levels of supervision are provided for all employees and especially young persons:

- Supervisors need to know what the organisation expects from them in terms of health and safety. They need to understand the organisations health and safety policy, where they fit in, and how health and safety is to be managed.
- Supervisors may need training in the specific hazards and how the organisation expects the risks are to be controlled.
- New, inexperienced or young people, as well as those whose first language is not English, are very likely to need more supervision than others. Make sure workers know how to raise concerns and supervisors are familiar with the possible problems due to unfamiliarity, inexperience and communication difficulties.
- Supervisors need to ensure that workers in their charge understand risks associated with the work environment and measures to control them.
- Supervisors will need to make sure the control measures to protect against risk are up to date and are being properly used, maintained and monitored.

Effective supervision can help monitor the effectiveness of the training that the young people have received, and whether they have the necessary capacity and competence to do the job.

9. Monitoring Compliance, Audit & Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier should audit results or changes to legislation / practice within PTHB indicate otherwise.

Implementation and efficacy of the policy will be monitored and audited in line with the Corporate Health & Safety Action Plan by the Corporate Health and Safety Group.

10. References & Useful Information

H.M. Government, 1974: "Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974" H.M. Stationary Office, London.

Accessed at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37>

H.M. Government, 1999: "*The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No: 3242)*" H.M. Stationary Office, London.

Accessed at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made>

Health & Safety Executive: "Young People at Work"

Accessed at:

[Young people at work - Overview - HSE](#)