

Sussex MS Centre Health and Safety Policy

General Statement of Policy

At Sussex MS Centre it is our policy to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of our employees, volunteers, members, contractors, and visitors who may be affected by our work activities. The minimum standard we will adopt will be compliance with legal requirements and appropriate codes of practice. However, our aim will be to fulfil the spirit of the law and not just comply with technical requirements. We will assess the risks from our work activities and will operate according to the procedures that best promote health and safety at work.

We accept our responsibilities for health and safety and are committed to giving health and safety equal importance with other business matters. We will ensure that the resources necessary to achieve the objectives of this policy are made available.

Where applicable, equipment that enables tasks to be carried out safely will be provided and maintained to ensure their safe operation.

Materials or equipment kept on site will be stored in a safe manner. Safe access to and egress from our premises will be maintained, in order to protect all users of the premises. Suitable facilities for welfare at work will be provided and maintained.

The Health and Safety Trustee has ultimate responsibility for health and safety within our organisation and has nominated a competent person for health and safety (the Centre Manager). Other responsibilities for health and safety matters have been assigned as appropriate and are described in the relevant procedures.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the business changes in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy, and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed at least every year but, as a small organisation, consultation takes place through daily contact with staff/volunteers and will be reviewed as necessary.

Signed: *Martin Bennett*

Martin Bennett, Health and Safety Trustee

Date: 28 November 2022

Responsibilities

1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the Centre is that of the Health and Safety Trustee.
2. The Centre Manager, The Centre Manager is responsible for the implementation of the policy across the organisation.
3. All employees and volunteers have the responsibility to co-operate with the manager to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.
4. Whenever an employee, member, volunteer worker, or visitor notices a health and safety issue which they are not able to put right, they must immediately inform the Centre Manager or another member of staff.

General Arrangements

Abusive and Unreasonable Behaviour

Sussex MC Centre recognises the impacts an incident can have on an employee and adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, violence, aggression and unreasonable behaviour.

This means making sure that employees and others are protected from anything that may cause harm, effectively controlling any risks to injury or health that could arise in the workplace.

All employees must report incidents, ideally within 24 hours of them occurring. These must be recorded by the manager in the incident log on the shared drive. Incidents will be promptly dealt with by the manager, staff involved (and Trustees where necessary).

Accidents

- First Aid Posts are positioned adjacent to the chamber operators' workstation and in the kitchen identified with appropriate signs
- The current trained first aiders are shown on notice boards around the Centre and training takes place every three years with refresher training when required
- The above persons are responsible for reporting incidents to the manager and entering details in the Accident book.
- The Accident book is used to record accidents and near misses. This is kept next to the First Aid box at the operator's desk. The First Aid boxes are checked monthly to ensure supplies are adequate and topped up.
- With regard to RIDDOR* The Centre Manager is responsible for completing these forms following the RIDDOR procedure. (* Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, 1985)

Contractors and Visitor's Safety

All contractors and visitors should report to the Centre Manager upon entering the premises. Contractors, centre users, volunteers and visitors should not enter the compressor room, mains electric cupboard or any storage areas without specific permission from the Centre Manager.

Display Screen Equipment

The term 'display screen equipment' (DSE) is used to describe not only the visual display unit (VDU) of a computer but also the other computer equipment and the workstation where it is used i.e. the desk, work surface, chair, input devices, software, printer and document holder.

We accept that we have a duty under the current edition of Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 as amended, to assess the risks to the health and safety of our employees from the use of DSE. We have chosen to fulfil this duty by requiring all persons who use DSE, for more than two hours a day, to complete a DSE Self-Assessment Questionnaire. The Centre Manager will evaluate the Self-Assessment Questionnaires and appropriate action will be taken.

If staff experience visual difficulties, headaches or pains in the upper limbs or shoulders when working with DSE they should bring this to the attention of the Centre Manager immediately. All "DSE Users" will be provided with an eyesight test by a competent person, free of charge if requested.

Electrical Safety

The Centre Manager, or in their absence the Support Officer, is responsible for the routine checking and inspection of plugs and cables for loose connections and faults.

Portable electrical appliances will be inspected and tested at the recommended frequency as stipulated by current guidelines by HSE. All portable equipment is PAT tested yearly and non-portable equipment is PAT tested every 2 years (apart from computers and their power plugs and cables which will be visually inspected for damage). Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) of the building are carried out every 5 years.

Equipment

The Centre Manager and Support Officer are responsible for checking all equipment for faults. Should any employee or volunteer notice any fault or damage to equipment and/or any piece of equipment being used incorrectly or unsafely they should report this immediately to a member of staff.

Treatment couches are serviced annually (as designated lifting equipment*). Wheelchairs owned by the Centre are checked regularly and thoroughly inspected and maintained annually. (*LOLER – Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations, 1998)

General Fire Safety

- Fire Risk Assessments are carried out annually.
- The Centre Manager and Support Officer are responsible for checking the fire alarm weekly and the emergency lighting monthly.
- All employees and volunteers must ensure that exits are always clear
- Fire extinguishers are situated at each exit; CO2 extinguishers are provided to tackle electrical fires and water extinguishers for non-electrical fires.
- The fire alarm and fire extinguishers are serviced by a qualified Fire Protection engineer annually.
- Clear fire exit diagrams and instructions are displayed in all rooms.

Fire Procedures

In the event of a fire our Fire Evacuation Plan will be put into practice. All persons in the Centre are alerted by the fire alarm. All persons are immediately evacuated by their nearest exit by fire marshals to the clearly marked assembly point in the car park. The emergency services are contacted immediately.

With a small fire, it may be tackled with one of the appropriate extinguishers positioned about the premises by anyone trained to do so BUT ONLY IF SAFE TO DO SO. Otherwise, persons on the premises should be evacuated to the assembly point in the car park.

Oxygen Chamber evacuation procedures

- If there are members in the Oxygen Chamber when there is a fire outside the chamber, the first operator will decompress the chamber immediately to perform an evacuation. They should turn off the Oxygen supply and switch to providing air for members to breathe through their masks while decompressing.
- In the event of a fire being inside the Oxygen Chamber, a water deluge system should be activated, the Oxygen supply switched to air and the chamber should be decompressed immediately.
- In the event of fire generally on the premises, each member of staff or volunteer has their specific role to bring about a quick, effective evacuation of the premises (see Evacuation Plan for detailed information)
- The No.1 operator is responsible for the correct procedures to always ensure the safety of occupants in the Oxygen chamber. The No 2 operator is responsible for helping to assist with evacuating chamber attendees and those visiting for ambient oxygen, to safety and turning the oxygen supply off (where it is safe to do so).

Any incident involving the HDOT chamber would require a RIDDOR report to be filed as this would be classed as a serious or dangerous incident.

Hazardous Substances

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, employers need to either prevent or reduce their workers' exposure to substances that are hazardous to their health. Copies of the COSHH ('Control of Substances Hazardous to Health') assessments appropriate to the Centre are held at the First Aid Post and the cleaning cupboard along with material safety data sheets (MSDS).

The Centre Manager is responsible for:

- reviewing our COSHH assessments every 2 years, or sooner if substances or activities change significantly.
- providing suitable precautions to eliminate or reduce the risks to exposed persons if relevant.
- providing employees with suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) and training them in its use, where risks from exposure to hazardous substances cannot be reduced to acceptable levels by other means.
- when engaging contractors to work on our premises ensuring MSDS and COSHH assessments are obtained for any substances to be used.

Lone working

We will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff, volunteers, and self-employed therapists who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety. Measures will also be adopted to protect anyone else affected by solitary working. Lone working exposes employees and others to certain hazards. Our intention is either to entirely remove the risks from these hazards or, where complete elimination is not possible, to reduce them to an acceptable level.

See our Lone Working Policy for further information.

Machinery

The compressor and chamber are subject to annual safety checks and servicing by HPC Compressors PLC and Diveline Ltd, respectively and written schemes for use and maintenance are provided by both companies. Instructions, rules for use and treatment protocols for the operation of the Oxygen Treatment Chamber are contained in the MS National Therapy Centre's Reference and Training Manual.

Manual Handling

Manual handling is the name given to tasks involving lifting, putting down, carrying, pulling, pushing or moving that rely on bodily force. We recognise that such tasks have the potential to cause injuries. Therefore, wherever possible we will eliminate manual handling tasks by arranging for loads to be lifted and moved by mechanical means.

Where it is not reasonably practicable to lift or move loads by mechanical means, tasks will be assessed, equipment such as sack trucks, trolleys and wheelbarrows will be provided to reduce risks and employees will be provided with training in handling techniques.

The Centre Manager is responsible for carrying out any risk assessments required and from these safe systems of work will, where appropriate, be developed and brought to the attention of staff concerned.

Staff and volunteers are responsible for using equipment provided to reduce risks from manual handling tasks. You will not be required to carry out a manual handling task that you consider is beyond your capability.

Any person who considers that a manual handling task is beyond their capacity should bring this to the attention of the Centre Manager.

Risk Assessments

As required under the current edition of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, risk assessments are undertaken and any significant risks identified, documented, and controlled, and brought to the attention of staff and volunteers. They will be monitored and reviewed as necessary.

Manual handling tasks are also risk assessed and systems implemented to eliminate or reduce the risks of injury to the lowest possible level.

Training

The Centre Manager is responsible for the training of all staff and volunteers and ensuring that the training is relevant and effective. All personnel should receive all the training necessary to ensure that they are able to do their job safely. Training records are kept helping us to identify when refresher training might be needed.

General Housekeeping and Premises

The premises are maintained in a safe and comfortable state.

A heating/air conditioning system is installed.

Facilities are provided for the safety and benefit of all staff, members and visitors, including pregnant women and nursing mothers, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Cleanliness

The Centre Manager is responsible to ensure that all areas are cleaned regularly.

Waste Disposal

General 'household' and office waste is collected by Adur District Council. Clinical waste is collected fortnightly by Principal Hygiene. Confidential waste is outsourced as and when required. Other waste including WEEE (*Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment*) may be disposed of at the Shoreham Household Waste Recycling Site.

Safe Stacking and Storage

The Centre Manager is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that all goods, materials, substances, and equipment in the workplace are stacked, stored, secured, and kept so that they do not constitute a danger to persons in their vicinity during the course of daily operations. Employees and volunteers must ensure equipment and supplies are stacked and stored safely in the appropriate storage room and will be given training as necessary.

Special Access

Only people authorised by the Health and Safety Trustee, Centre Manager, or Support Officer, may enter the compressor room and have access to the external security cage containing the liquid oxygen storage tank.

Statutory Notices

A Health and Safety Law poster, RIDDOR poster and a copy of the Company's certificate of employer's liability insurance are displayed in the office.

Advice and Consultancy

Health and Safety Executive (south east)

Oxted

The Council Offices

Station Road East

Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0BT

Adur District Council

Environmental Health Department

The Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5WU

Telephone: 01273 263000

MS National Therapy Centres, Buckingham, MK18 8AR

email: info@msntc.org.uk Telephone: 01296 711699

Related Legislation

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR) (as amended 2002)

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

Relevant Policies

Lone working Policy

Policy Reviewed by:	Date Reviewed:	Date Approved by Trustees:	Next Review Date:
Created in 2010			
H&S Trustee	2016		
Centre Manager and H&S Trustee	January 2019	21.1.19	January 2020
Centre Manager and H&S Trustee	March 2021	22 March 2021	March 2022
Centre Manager and H&S Trustee	October 2022		