

School of Medicine Health and Safety Policy and Manual

School/ Directorate
School of Medicine

Person Responsible
Carol Gallacher

Created
7th September, 2018

Last Review
7th September, 2018

Status
Assessed

Next Review
4th July, 2022

Screening Data

What is the name/title of the policy/activity?

School of Medicine Health and Safety Policy and Manual 2021

Describe the aim, objective and intended consequences of the policy/activity.

The aim of the policy and its supporting manual is to ensure that staff and students within the School of Medicine are aware of their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations and have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow should an incident occur.

Who is responsible for the policy/activity and who implements it?

The Dean of the School of Medicine is responsible for the policy and manual, however it is applied and implemented by the Health and Safety Committee and all staff and students in the School.

Who is effected by this policy?

Staff, students, contractors and visitors to the School are affected by the policy and manual

Is there any indication that this policy is relevant to equality and the protected characteristics or that those with any of the protected characteristics will have a different experience in relation to the intended outcomes of the policy?

The policy and manual are relevant to equality in so far as there are a wide range of people working, studying and visiting the School at any one time. In particular there will be implications related to Health and Safety for anyone who has a disability that may require a reasonable adjustment or to pregnancy and maternity, given that students, technicians, contractors and staff will on occasion work with hazardous materials.

There may be minimal risk related to gender in so far as some hazardous materials will have implications for fertility and other health matters which are gender specific.

It is clear that some hazardous materials, including blood and tissue samples, are able to carry pathogens that are a risk to others when not handled in a safe and proper manner. In particular those whose immune system is compromised for any reason and women who are pregnant and their unborn child may be at particular risk. The same applies to the safe use of medical equipment that uses either a chemical or radiological material in its execution.

Laboratory work includes a range of materials that, if not handled properly, can create a risk environment to all.

Recommend this EA for Full Analysis?

Yes

Comments

The Policy and manual are relevant in particular to the protected characteristics of disability and pregnancy and maternity. However they are also relevant to all people working, studying and visiting the School of Medicine.

In relation to all people the policy is about invoking and ensuring a safe environment. The particular relevance to Disability is in relation to both the need for reasonable adjustments for anyone working or studying in the School whilst maintaining safety for that individual and also in the sense that anyone with a disability that widens their risk to viruses or disease. In relation to pregnancy and maternity, the potential risk is from materials and equipment that may impact on the pregnant mother or unborn child.

Rate this EA

Low

Impact Assessment Data

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Age?

- Yes

Very occasionally under 18 year olds will visit the laboratory environment. This is rare, however when it occurs a Health and Safety Risk Assessment is carried out and they are strictly and closely supervised at all times. There is minimal relevance.

Visits to wards within the hospital may raise risk of infection, which in itself may be increased as a result of age factors. An example would be a male, over the age of 60 being at greater risk to the Covid 19 virus than a man in their 20's.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Disability?

- Yes

Yes, particularly where the disability is related to mobility or sensory impairments and require reasonable adjustments or a Personal Emergency Egress Plan in place.

Again a Health and Safety Risk assessment should be carried out to ensure any reasonable adjustments in place comply with health and safety requirements. Risk is assessed on a case by case basis.

Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEP) are developed for any individual who has mobility restrictions or sensory disabilities. This supports any fire evacuation plans for buildings.

In addition to reasonable adjustments, where a disability impacts on the individuals immune system, there may be increased risk through exposure to samples, materials and patients. These factors are assessed through the Health and Safety Risk Assessment

6 July 2021 - additional paragraphs added to the Policy and manual regarding disability and reasonable adjustments.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment?

- No

There is no obvious impact that is specific to gender re-assignment

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership?

- No

There is no obvious link to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Pregnancy and Maternity?

- Yes

There is relevance in so far as the Medical School accommodates laboratory activities and use of chemical, radiological and biological materials. In all cases relating to the use of or exposure to these materials, a Health and Safety Risk Assessment is carried out as normal. This is the normal use of identifying risk for an individual and there is a requirement for staff to disclose their pregnancy in these situations. Unless the risk is not manageable, a pregnant staff member/student would normally remain in their position unless the risk assessment deemed otherwise.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Race?

- Yes

There may be limited impact in relation to dress codes in a laboratory environment. There have been a small number of issues in the past with clothing creating additional risk working around open flames and also in relation to trip hazards. These have been very limited, however any such issue would be identified by a Health and Safety Risk Assessment and any requirements to alter or remove items of clothing would be based on that assessment.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Religion and Belief?

- Yes

The relevance here is similar to that of race, where religious clothing or artefacts may impact on the environment where the individual is working. Risk assessments will be undertaken and requests to alter or remove particular clothing and artefacts will be based on that risk assessment. This might also include facial hair and the use of face masks and visors, although there is little evidence of this having happened previously.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Sex?

- Yes

Yes, limited potential risk where exposure to chemical, biological and radiological materials have a differential gender specific impact.

Health and Safety Risk Assessment would be used to identify risk.

Is this policy relevant to the protected characteristic of Sexual Orientation?

- No

There is no obvious implications of the Health and Safety Policy related to Sexual Orientation

Taking account of the findings so far, is there a possibility that the implementation of this policy would result in a different experience or a detriment for those with protected characteristics?

- Yes

There will be different experiences from those highlighted, however the policy will ensure that where there is risk to anyone, the use of a Health and Safety Risk Assessment will be used to determine any changes. The Medical School has around 600 staff and around 1000 students. From that there is likely to be a representation of all of the protected groups within both cohorts. The guidance document provides practical advice on health and safety and has some specific references to some of the protected characteristics.

Based on your findings so far, what recommendations or changes (if any) would you make in relation to the policy and how it is implemented?

In relation to the policy and the Safety Manual, whilst reference is made to pregnancy and maternity, nothing is explicit about disability or the need for reasonable adjustments and their compliance with health and safety requirements. The Policy and manual are thorough, but do require some additional reference to wider protected groups.

An additional section is added to the policy about additional risk related to protected characteristics

A need for an additional section in the policy and manual regarding disability and reasonable adjustments and ensuring their compliance with health and safety requirements

6 July 2021 - addition information regarding disability and reasonable adjustments added to both the policy and manual.

Where you have recommended actions/changes to the policy, what are the timescales for completion of these

09-07-2021

What monitoring arrangements do you have in place to identify changes in any impact or relevance?

The policy and manual will be reviewed annually. In addition reports relating to health and safety are reported on a quarterly basis to the Medical School Health and Safety Committee and Working Group. Their role is to oversee any incidents and instigate investigations where required, as well as carry out any additional reviews of the policy and manual. The quarterly reports should identify any equality related issues, which might require a change to the policy or manual.

Comments

Relevant to:

Age- reference is made to younger people, but should also include age groups that have a particular risk factor relating to some pathogens

Disability- there are several aspects that do or should specify disability; the policy needs to include the disclosure of a disability and the need for reasonable adjustments and ensuring compliance with health and safety needs; the manual should include a section on disability and reasonable adjustments and the requirement of risk assessments to determine whether adjustments can comply with health and safety requirements

Pregnancy and maternity - risks include the exposure to working practices or hazardous materials that are a risk to the individual and their child (unborn or feeding)

Race - risk assessment should take into account raised risk between ethnic groups of particular pathogens.

Religion and belief - the requirement of clothing and jewellery related to religion and belief in a clinical and laboratory environment. Risk assessments should be used to determine risk levels.

Sex - any risk assessment should take into account different risks relating to gender, particularly in the use of different pathogens

The manual already discusses matters relating to pregnancy and maternity and an additional section relating to the protected groups should be added. Specifically there should be reference to disability and reasonable adjustments, as well as the specific mentions in the PEEP

6 July 2021 - the policy and manual have been strengthened by additional sections specific to disability and reasonable adjustments.

Organisation Sign-off Data

Having read the EIA, do you approve its findings and recommendations?

- Yes

What are your reasons for approving/not approving the EIA?

The additional information strengthens the policy and the manual in areas specific to protected characteristics.

If you have approved the EIA, do you agree with the monitoring arrangements in place?

- Yes

It is vital that the policy and manual are maintained on a regular basis to comply with risks coming to light. Reviewing the EIA at the same time is a logical step. This is normally a yearly arrangement, however where new risks come to light or where gaps are identified in the policy or manual, steps are taken to immediately remedy this. Those steps would include a review of the EIA.

Where you have not approved the monitoring process, what other steps do you require to be taken?

No relevant

Comments

The EIA has been approved, and the recommendations progressed. The main relevance is to disability and pregnancy, however there is a potential risk related to religion and belief race and sex. The recommendations advise some small insertions into the policy and the manual, to specifically address issues relating to disability and reasonable adjustments, which were previously only referred to in the section relating to emergency evacuation.

Those additional points were added to the policy and the manual on the 6 July 2021.

Next Review Date

2022-07-04

Outstanding Actions

No outstanding actions