

Risk Assessment Procedure

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Owner:	Brian Gunn	Job Title:	H&S Adviser
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Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
March 2021	Brian Gunn	V3.0	Cyclical review

Summary of Changes

Section	Change
Whole Policy	New procedure format with information and updated information on workplace risk assessment to comply with The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – Regulation 3



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1.0 Introduction

Risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what in your work could cause harm to people, so that you can decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The risk, or likelihood and severity, of the harm being realised then has to be assessed, and if significant, eliminated or managed.

1.1 Work Task Risk Assessments – Generic

Written generic work task risk assessments are available in Ark's health and safety folders in the general drive. These assessments are available to all Ark staff, relief, agency and volunteers. The generic assessments are a guide for staff and managers and they require adapting / editing as necessary by each service / department to ensure that they address any risks not identified in the generic format. Guidance can be sought from Ark's Health & Safety Adviser.

1.2 Work Task Risk Assessments – Specific

There may be times when the generic risk assessments do not identify risks in your workplace, and this procedure will provide guidance on how to complete a specific risk assessment or ask for assistance from Ark's H&S Adviser to support with completion.

1.3 Extra Duty of Care Risk Assessment

These risk assessments are for employees that may require extra or additional measures put in place to help them:

- Return to work after short term or long term absence;
- During and after pregnancy; or
- If they have a short / long term mental or physical impairment that affects their work.

Further information on extra duty of care risk assessment can be found in Ark's Extra Duty of Care Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure HS21.

1.4 Supported People Risk Assessment

Ark's Care & Support team uses risk and vulnerability assessments and risk management plans that are tailored specifically to each individual supported person and work alongside workplace task risk assessments.

2.0 Risk Assessment Planning

Risk assessments should be carried out on work tasks, work equipment, workplaces and for an extra duty of care.

Employers are required to make a 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessment available.

Appendix 1 has detail on risk assessment terms used when planning.

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment for Ark workplaces should:

- Identify the hazards present and the significant risks arising out of the work activities or situation;
- Assess the risks from the identified hazards, taking into account existing workplace precautions;
- Ensure all aspects of work activity are covered;
- Assess what actually happens in the workplace;
- Take account of the views of employees and others with an interest in safety;
- Consider all groups of employees and third parties who may be affected;
- Identify any groups of workers who might be particularly at risk (i.e. inexperienced workers, those who work alone and staff with temporary or permanent impairments).
- Take account of existing preventive or precautionary measures;
- Provide information on safe systems of work; and
- Be appropriate to the nature of the work and remain valid for a reasonable period of time.

3.0 Five Steps to Developing an Ark Risk Assessment

These steps can be used for work task and extra duty of care risk assessments.

Step 1 - All assessments should have relevant location / date / name of assessor noted.

- What is the work task identified that needs risk assessed;
- Moving and handling / infection control / cleaning etc.

Step 2 – What are the hazards associated with the work task.

It is important to look at the following factors when identifying hazards:

- People – Who does the activity, could supported people and other third parties be affected by these activities;
- Equipment – Is work equipment suitable and safe to use;
- Materials – Are materials in the workplace hazardous or dangerous; and
- Environment - Is the area or work location safe to work.

To help identify hazards you can use:

- Visual inspection of the workplace and observing work activities;
- Management/employee discussions - hazards identified and brought to management's attention following formal or informal meetings or discussions at work;
- Inspections or audits undertaken by independent third parties such as the Health and Safety Executive, Fire and Rescue Services, Care Inspectorate , Health and Safety Adviser etc;
- Reported incidents and accidents;
- Staff using common, industry and expert knowledge; and
- ARK H&S alerts/ newsletters/ manager information sheets.

Step 3 – What are the risks associated with the hazards.

You then need to decide whether the level of risk requires workplace precautions to be implemented considering factors of cost, time and effort needed to control the risk(s), so far as is reasonably practicable.

According to Ark incident statistics, common risks for staff are behaviours of concern towards staff from supported people, slips / trips / falls, muscular / skeletal injury and collisions.

Ark risk assessments do not put a level or a quantity of risk on the risk assessment forms to avoid what might be considered low or common risks being forgotten about.

Step 4 – Workplace precautions and the hierarchy of control measures.

Workplace precautions are the control measures put into place to reduce risk. Some workplace precautions are more effective than others and deciding on which one to use will depend on the risk of harm and the duty given to managing that risk.

The most effective method of dealing with a hazard is by **elimination** i.e. removing the hazard altogether. However, this may not be reasonably practicable, so **reducing** the risk should be the next step to manage the risk. When introducing measures to manage the

risks the principles below should be applied in order of effectiveness. A combination of measures is likely to be more effective than one workplace precaution in isolation.

Hierarchy of Control Measures examples are:

- **Eliminate the hazard**– the most effective control measure
e.g. removal of bed rails;
- **Reduce the hazard** – the next best option
e.g. use of hoists and lifting equipment;
- **Prevent contact**
e.g. locking cupboards where medication and chemicals are stored;
- **Systems of work**
e.g. CALM, escape and de-escalation techniques; and
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**- can be an effective control measure in managing daily infection control risks, infection control outbreaks such as Coronavirus and Norovirus, personal care tasks and cleaning

Step 5 – Recording and reviewing your assessment.

The assessment now needs the assessor to sign / date, add their job title and record any actions and review dates so that actions can be tracked and reviews completed.

Managers should make staff aware of the risk assessment folder (hard copy folder/ electronic copies in H&S folders general drive / service H&S folders).

Staff affected by the assessment should have access and be encouraged to review / feedback / contribute towards the risk assessment.

Risk assessments should be reviewed at regular timescales to see if still valid, for Ark work tasks. They should be reviewed **at least annually** or after a change in circumstances, **and when reviewed should be signed and dated**. Extra duty of care assessments should be reviewed at an agreed timescale with the employee.

Ark's H&S Adviser will annually review all generic work task risk assessments stored in the general drive.

4.0 How to Identify and Manage Workplace Risks

Ark managers and staff should use the following methods and timescales to help identify and manage risks in their workplace.

4.1 Ark Workplace Inspection

This must be completed quarterly for HMOs / Care Homes and six monthly for offices. These are recorded electronically in the Care and Support H&S section in the general drive.

Ark H&S Policy Checklist – must be completed every quarter for all workplaces. These are recorded electronically in the Care and Support H&S section in the general drive.

Ark incidents – All incidents must have some form of investigation to allow the manager and staff to review any workplace precautions and risk assessments.

Ark staff – Use their common / industry / expert knowledge to manage risk.

Ark H&S Adviser – can advise and support with any workplace risk that you need assistance with.

5.0 Implementation and Review

5.1 Implementation

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is in place. All Ark managers are responsible for ensuring that this procedure is followed by Ark employees.

5.2 Review

The Chief Executive will ensure that this procedure is reviewed at least every three years, from the date of approval in accordance with Ark's policy review framework.

Appendix 1- Definitions

Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm
Risk	Risk (R) is the combination of the likelihood (L) of an incident or accident occurring and the consequence (C) of the incident or accident, in a simpler form risk is $(R=L \times C)$
Workplace Precaution	A precaution or control measure which will eliminate or reduce the level of risk. They come in various forms and can include training, safe working procedures and work equipment
Safe System of Work	A procedure or method of working which enables the 'task' to be carried out in a safe manner
So far as is reasonably practicable?	The term involves a balancing act between risk and cost (cost includes time, effort, money or inconvenience). Where a risk is low but would require disproportionate time, resources and effort to do something about it, it might not be reasonably practicable to do so. However, where the risk is high, then the reasonably practicable test might demand that something be done even at significant cost. Likewise it would be reasonably practicable to deal with a low risk that could be dealt with at low cost.
Third parties	This term applies to anyone who is not an employee e.g. supported people, tenants, visitors, regulators, contractors etc.