APEX

The Health and Safety Handbook

A Guide to the Hazards in the Healthcare Industry

Did you know...

* WorkSafe NZ dictates that temperatures must be set between 19-24 degrees in summer and 18-22 degrees in winter to ensure good workplace health and safety.

* Workers must not be exposed to noise levels at 85 decibels or above averaged over 8 hours, or a peak noise level of 140 decibels, as this can cause Noise Induced Hearing Loss which is irreversible.

* Exposure to toxic substances contributes to an estimated 600-900 deaths per year.

* A worldwide survey across 510 surgeons, conducted in April 2019, revealed that 95% of surgeons had either experienced a needlestick injury or witnessed a college sustain one.

* In 2018 an estimated 2565 health care professionals were injured in the workplace from a slip, trip or fall, which resulted in absence from work for at least a week.

* In 2015 ACC spent $3.3 million on claims made by health care professionals from injuries they receive in handling patients.

* The New Zealand Occupational Health and Safety Standard have determined that 12 cubic metres are needed at minimum for each employee in a working office.

* Asbestos is New Zealand's leading killer in the workplace killing an estimated 170 people every year.

INTRODUCTION

Health and safety is paramount in the workplace.

However, conditions encountered at work, can compromise physical, physiological and mental wellbeing.

Most of you are likely to be aware of the specific risks associated with your profession, however, there are other hazards that you may be exposed to at work.

This booklet is meant to be a guide to workplace hazards that you may not be aware of.

The types of hazards you may encounter in your work as a health care professional include:

- Germs & infections
- Moving patients or helping them to move
- Toxic substances
- Violence & bullying
- Fatigue & stress
- Ergonomics & space
- Adverse temperatures
- Loud noises
- Slips, trips & falls

People you can approach to help address the danger that workplace hazards pose to you:

- Your APEX delegates and advocates.
- Health & Safety representatives and committees. Provided in the Health and Safety Act 2015, each workplace may elect a representative or committee to identify hazards to employees and determine how to remedy the danger they pose.
- Your workplace managers.

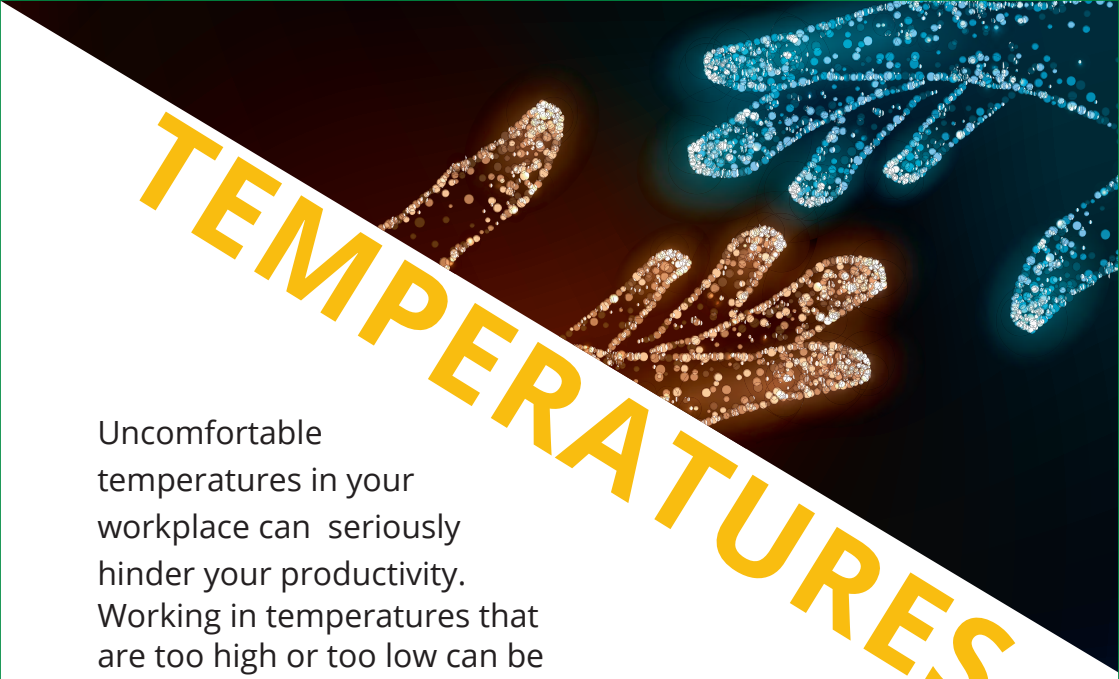
We hope that this guide proves to be a useful tool with which you will be able to create a workspace that you can thrive in, whilst continuing to perform crucial work.

Health & Safety By the Numbers...

750 to 900
deaths occur every year as a result of work-related health issues.

5000-6000
hospitalisations occur each year as a result of work-related ill-health.

A worker is **15** times more likely to die from a work-related disease than injury.[22]



TEMPERATURES

Uncomfortable temperatures in your workplace can seriously hinder your productivity. Working in temperatures that are too high or too low can be extremely demanding on you both mentally and physically, and can affect your ability to perform your job. To ensure that we view our work and workplace positively, it is important that we're supported by a comfortable environment.

While working, you may be exposed to uncomfortable temperatures that may not appear to be a health and safety hazard at first, but after significant exposure, can affect your health negatively.[1]

Thermal comfort is the ideal temperature for you to work and thrive in. These risks support the need for a thermally comfortable environment.

Working in healthy temperatures can improve mental wellbeing, efficiency and reduce the number of

What is Thermal Comfort?

Thermal Comfort is the optimal room temperature for at least 80% of all the people present.

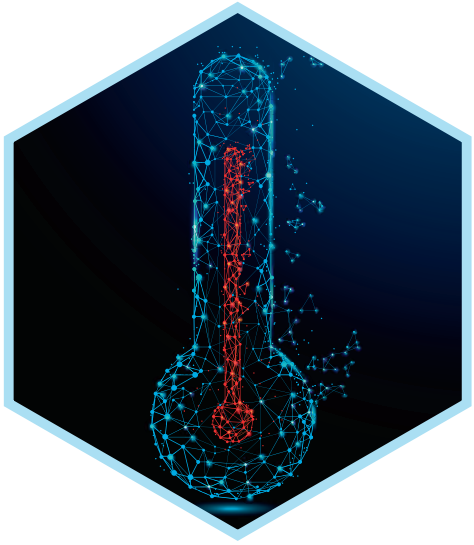
health and safety hazards you face at work.

Your employer must take steps to accommodate thermal comfort and ensure that required temperatures for workplaces are not affecting the workers within them.

There are many things you can do to improve your own thermal comfort such as altering your attire; however, this is not an option that is always available in many jobs.

It is the employer's duty to identify the hazards that may arise from working within the temperatures in your position and place control measures in place to reduce the risk to your health.

While it may be important to keep workplaces within the health sector at certain temperatures, your employer needs to take steps to mitigate the risk they cause to you in setting these temperatures.



WorkSafe recommends that office air conditioning units be set between 19-24 degrees in summer and 18-22 degrees in winter.[1]

What can you do?

Record the temperature with a thermometer every hour for a week, then report your findings to your Health and Safety representative.

CASE STUDY

In 2018, increased summer temperatures threatened the Health and Safety of Nurses in Hawke's Bay. The Nurses complained that with the high summer temperatures they were experiencing, they were finding it more difficult to conduct their duties without feeling unwell, uncomfortable and exhausted. The District Health Board recognised that due to the age of the hospital, the building was unable to effectively cater to its worker's needs.

A patient even commented that the conditions were so strenuous that if they had occurred in any other workplace there would have been a public outcry. In response, the Board considered whether the costs of installing a comprehensive air-conditioning system was acceptable to help their workers. Installing the air-conditioning system would have cost them $3 million dollars.

Therefore, the hospital chose to give out ice blocks, talked about providing fans and considered changing the fabrics of the uniforms instead. Although steps were taken to address the problem, it seems that the health of their workers may have been compromised.

NOISE

Noise Induced Hearing Loss(NIHL) can cause

Tinnitus (creates constant sounds such as roaring, humming, buzzing and ringing in your ears).
Mild NIHL can mean you can't hear high frequency sounds.
You may struggle to hear certain sounds and words correctly.

Working in exceedingly loud environments is never comfortable, however discomfort is not the only problem with noisy workplaces. Loud sounds also have the potential to negatively impact your health and safety.

Working in noisy conditions can seriously affect your health and productivity and can negatively impact your ability to carry out your job. It can also affect your life outside of work. The main issue with noise, is your ears ability to recover from exposure to loud noises. If you have ample breaks from loud sounds, your ears can recover. However, when there is prolonged exposure, your ears cannot recover from the damage done.

This subsequently has the potential to cause lifelong damage to your hearing.[3] If workplace conditions require you to shout to your co-workers when they are one meter from you,

your hearing is at risk of being permanently damaged.

Noise limits: Workers must not be exposed to noise levels at 85 decibels or above averaged over 8 hours, or a peak noise level of 140 decibels. [2]

Being exposed to levels above these limits can cause Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). Once hearing is lost it cannot come back as the nerve cells within the inner ear become damaged and eventually stop responding to sound.[2]

Not only will this cause you to struggle with completing your duties at work, it will also impact your everyday life drastically. Hearing loss can have a significant impact on your productivity, may cause you to feel stressed and overwhelmed, and even isolate you from others.

Further, hearing loss can have a significant impact on your productivity, may cause you to feel stressed and overwhelmed, and even isolate you from others.

Being exposed to levels above 85 decibels can cause Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). Therefore, it is important to consider workplace safety measures to minimise this risk. Although it may be uncomfortable for you to approach your employer to raise concerns about these potential issues, always remember that your health and safety is of utmost importance.

Anyone whose workplace is under construction, can be exposed to potentially damaging noise levels. Certain tools used in construction can emit approximately 100 decibels of noise whilst in use!

What can you do?

Get a Sounds Level Meter and record the levels in your workplace, then report this to your Health and Safety representative.

Noise Source	Decibel Level	Comment
Jet take-off (at 25 meters)	150	Eardrum rupture
Aircraft carrier deck	140	
Military jet aircraft take-off from aircraft carrier with afterburner at 50 ft (130 dB).	130	
Thunderclap, chain saw. Oxygen torch (121 dB).	120	Painful. 32 times as loud as 70 dB.
Steel mill, auto horn at 1 meter. Turbo-fan aircraft at takeoff power at 200 ft (118 dB). Riveting machine (110 dB); live rock music (108 - 114 dB).	110	Average human pain threshold. 16 times as loud as 70 dB.
Jet take-off (at 305 meters), use of outboard motor, power lawn mower, motorcycle, farm tractor, jackhammer, garbage truck. Boeing 707 or DC-8 aircraft at one nautical mile (6080 ft) before landing (106 dB); jet flyover at 1000 feet (103 dB); Bell J-2A helicopter at 100 ft (100 dB).	100	8 times as loud as 70 dB. Serious damage possible in 8 hr exposure
Boeing 737 or DC-9 aircraft at one nautical mile (6080 ft) before landing (97 dB); power mower (96 dB); motorcycle at 25 ft (90 dB). Newspaper press (97 dB).	90	4 times as loud as 70 dB. Likely damage 8 hr exp
Garbage disposal, dishwasher, average factory, freight train (at 15 meters). Car wash at 20 ft (89 dB); propeller plane flyover at 1000 ft (88 dB); diesel truck 40 mph at 50 ft (84 dB); diesel train at 45 mph at 100 ft (83 dB). Food blender (88 dB); milling machine (85 dB); garbage disposal (80 dB).	80	2 times as loud as 70 dB. Possible damage in 8 h exposure.
Passenger car at 65 mph at 25 ft (77 dB); freeway at 50 ft from pavement edge 10 a.m. (76 dB). Living room music (76 dB); radio or TV-audio, vacuum cleaner (70 dB).	70	Arbitrary base of comparison. Upper 70s are annoyingly loud to some people.
Conversation in restaurant, office, background music, Air conditioning unit at 100 ft	60	Half as loud as 70 dB. Fairly quiet
Quiet suburb, conversation at home. Large electrical transformers at 100 ft	50	One-fourth as loud as 70 dB.
Library, bird calls (44 dB); lowest limit of urban ambient sound	40	One-eighth as loud as 70 dB.
Quiet rural area	30	One-sixteenth as loud as 70 dB. Very Quiet
Whisper, rustling leaves	20	
Breathing	10	Barely audible

TOXIC SUBSTANCES

Toxic substances can be seriously hazardous to your health.

As a health professional, there are, unfortunately, many circumstances under which you can encounter harmful substances that can cause immediate injury, long lasting health issues, and, in extreme cases, even death. It is important that you are aware of these risks and take action to prevent harm before it causes irreversible damage to your health.

Due to the severity of the possible outcomes, it is of utmost importance that the appropriate measures are taken to mitigate any adverse effects while interacting with toxic substances at work.

Toxic substances contribute to an estimated **600-900** deaths per year.

Serious health issues resulting from exposure to toxic substances, result in an estimated 30,000 cases each year. [12]

The ways in which you may be exposed to toxic substances in the workplace include:

Interacting with patients: you may be exposed to antineoplastic drugs, aerosolized medications, anaesthetic gases.

Cleaning, disinfecting and sterilizing equipment and surfaces: you may be exposed to Phenolics, quaternary ammonium compounds and bleach.

Analysing tissue specimens: you may be exposed to xylene, toluene, formaldehyde.

During surgery: you may be exposed to surgical smoke containing chemicals, viruses and bacteria generated by surgical equipment.

Administering medication and treatment: You may also be exposed to radiation from

certain chemicals used in the treatment of patients.

Managing and disposing of waste

Spills

Receiving, transporting and storing

Compounding and dispensing medications

Toxic substances also have the potential to cause immediate harm to any workers that encounter them, such as:[13]

- Skin corrosion and burns, dermatitis
- Visual damage
- Poisoning
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headaches
- Reproductive toxicity
- Disorders of the lung, liver or kidney
- Nervous system disorders
- Increased risk of developing cancerous diseases, due to exposure carcinogenic drugs.

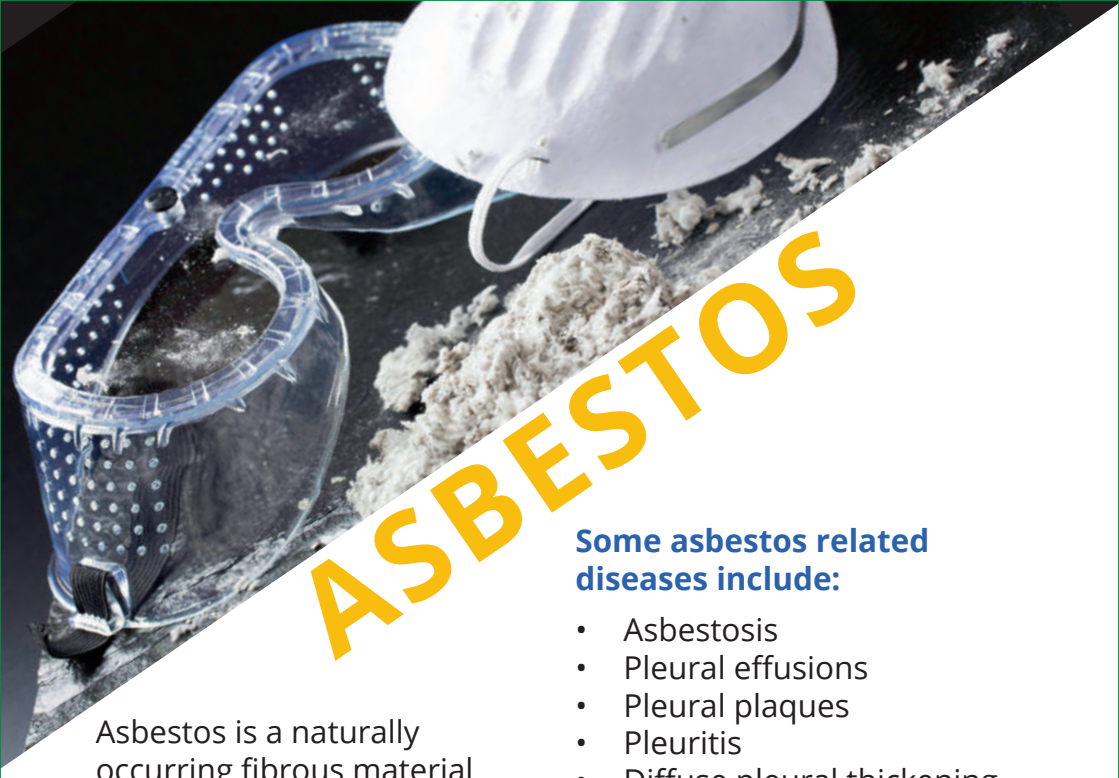
Due to the severity of these possible outcomes, it is of utmost importance that the appropriate measures are taken to mitigate any adverse effects while interacting with these substances at work. It is important to identify the hazards you may be encountering, wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) effectively and, if this is not available, alert your management team immediately. Furthermore, as these substances carry the potential for severe harm with them, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will not always be fully effective.

So your employer must:

- Inform and train you about harmful substances and how to interact with them.
- Provide safe and adequate storage of the substances
- Provide signage and information for any instances where you may encounter a substance
- Dispose of the substances appropriately
- If the substances are highly hazardous it may be necessary for them to designate an employee that handles the substances.[12]

What can you do?

Alert your employer to this immediately. You can also choose to refuse to return to work until your employer addresses the issue.



ASBESTOS

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material used in the composition of structures and buildings. Exposure to Asbestos causes multiple diseases and can be very dangerous to the health and safety of workers. When particles of the substance are inhaled or ingested in the conduct of your work, they can become trapped within your body and cause inflammation to tissue, scarring and the fibres will eventually cause genetic damage to the body's cells.

Some asbestos related diseases include:

- Asbestosis
- Pleural effusions
- Pleural plaques
- Pleuritis
- Diffuse pleural thickening
- COPD
- Mesothelioma,
- Lung cancer
- Ovarian cancer
- Laryngeal cancer

Asbestos fibres cannot be smelt, tasted or seen. It is New Zealand's leading killer in the workplace, killing an estimated 170 people every year. More than 80,000 public buildings in New Zealand have used asbestos during their construction.

What can you do?

Contact WorkSafe to get an inspection done immediately.

Surgical technology causing inhalation of toxic substances and infectious tissue.

In Dunedin's Mercy Hospital, surgeons over past generations have become accustomed to smoky atmosphere's as a result of surgical tools. The recent use of diathermy and lasers in surgical procedures creates electrosurgical plumes of smoke that contain carbonized tissue.

In the past, it was assumed that the smoke produced was sterile, however, in recent years it has been discovered that the smoke can potentially contain bacteria, viruses and cellular material, meaning it is potentially toxic to those who are forced to inhale it.

Research has even suggested that "inhaling carbonisation of one gram of tissue is equal to smoking between three and six cigarettes within 15 minutes."

CASE STUDY:

ON CHANGING HEALTH & SAFETY REGULATIONS

Once the profession became aware of this potential threat, many strides were taken to reduce the risk to surgical workers. Miriam Vollweiler, an infection prevention & control nurse at the hospital said that "Recognition that the plume is hazardous has been one of the key things." Due to the ability to address the situation there has been an improvement in the health of those affected by the hazard.

Orthopaedic surgeon Dr Bruce Hodgson said the effects of being exposed to the plume were "absolutely dreadful" and the equipment had made a huge improvement to the theatre environment.[20]

Recognising the risks to health and safety allows for action and response to certain conditions.

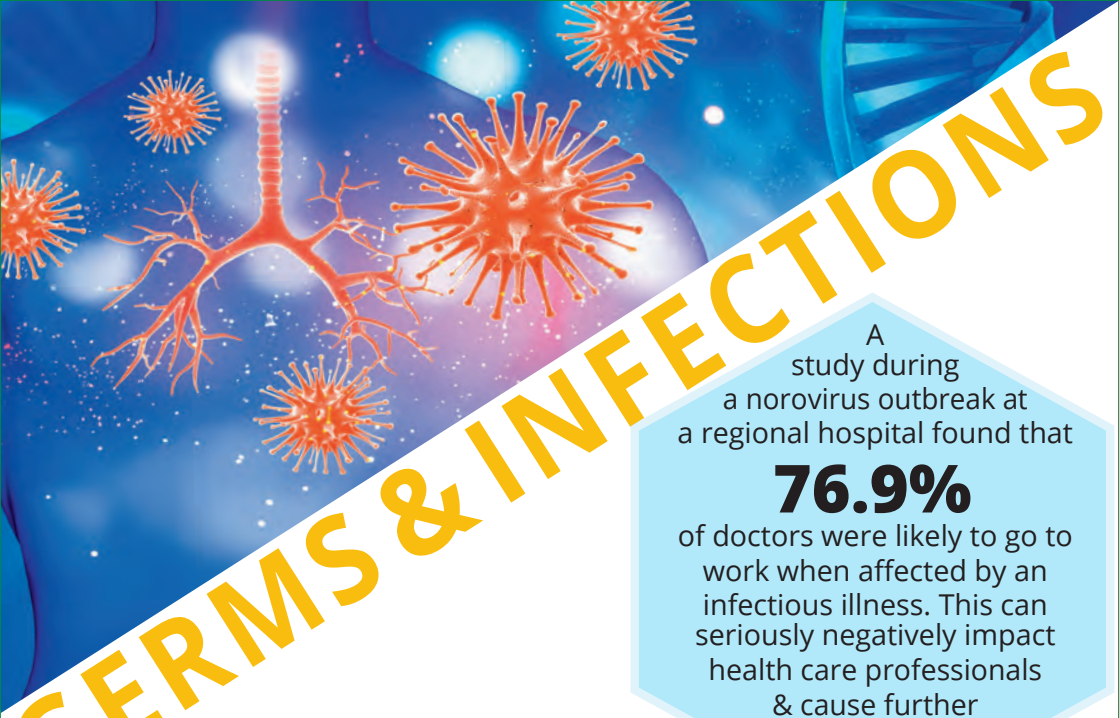
Over a third of all of the hospital buildings in the **Bay of Plenty** have asbestos contamination. The contamination has been established in a cancer centre, a renal unit, multiple patient wards, laboratories and kitchens. The hospital in Whakatane has 22 buildings containing asbestos & Tauranga has 23. [25]

Grafton Hospital, Auckland found asbestos in its walls in 2016 which resulted in the necessary movement of workers from certain areas of the buildings.

Asbestos was found in 3 roof areas of **Dunstan Hospital, Hamilton** in 2018 posing a risk to health and safety. The substance was originally removed and contained when it was first discovered in 2005. However, upon reassessment, the substance posed a significant health issue to those in the buildings and needed further attention. [23]

Timaru Hospital also discovered asbestos dust in 2015. The discovery cost the South Canterbury District Health Board $100,000 to remedy the health and safety threat to their workers and patients. [24]

Dunedin Hospital was forced to move patients and workers from wards in 2015 after the discovery of asbestos, which lead to the closing of the mortuary and postponement of ultrasound scans.



GERMS & INFECTIONS

A study during a norovirus outbreak at a regional hospital found that

76.9%

of doctors were likely to go to work when affected by an infectious illness. This can seriously negatively impact health care professionals & cause further spread of germs.[8]

The health care sector is critical in the treatment and elimination of germs and infections; however, it also runs the risk of becoming a breeding ground for infection and can pose a risk to workers. The potential infections that employees in the health sector might be exposed to, can be transmitted through the air, and by direct physical or indirect contact.

Airborne infections and germs can be spread when infected patients sneeze, cough and speak. This is further aggravated by the fact that many workplaces within the health sector lack adequate ventilation. Infections can be caused by contact with patients, or with blood and other bodily fluids. Indirect contact infections can be caused by interacting with surfaces that have been contaminated by an infected person. [9]

Due to the nature of your work, there is a greater likelihood that you will encounter germs and infections compared to other professions.[11]

Handling and disposing of Needles

The World Health Organisation (WHO)'s position is, "The best practice is to discard the needle and syringe, or needle and tube holder, as a single unit, into a sharps container that is clearly visible and within arm's reach. The size of the container should permit disposal of the entire device rather than just the needle".

According to the Clinical & Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI)'s guidelines, "The unit (tube holder and needle) must be discarded into an easily accessible sharps container, etc. CLSI does not support the removal of needles from the tube holders after use".

Several international jurisdictions ban the use of "De-notching" i.e: the act of removing of the needle and disposing it separately due to the health and safety risks associated with it. This does not include the Pronto quick release system nor any needle which has a safety device cap.

A survey conducted by SERMO in April 2019 across six countries, surveying 510 surgeons, revealed that

95%

of surgeons had either experienced a needlestick injury or witnessed a colleague sustain one.

What should you do if your employer has any other policy other than single unit disposal?

If you choose to, you may refuse to comply with the "de-notching" instruction, and continue to dispose of the entire unit intact, since the instruction to de-notch needles is not a lawful order. You should carry out your duties in a manner that you feel is safe, and not a risk to your health and safety.

If you choose to refuse to comply with the instructions, you should inform your HR Manager so that the matter can be put on record. In the event of a needlestick injury, if you have followed this procedure, Worksafe will be informed since staff are already on record saying that they do not feel safe. If an APEX member is subject

to any form of action on this issue, a Personal Grievance process will be initiated by APEX on behalf of the member.

In an email from one H&S manager to staff, it was stated that reporting to Worksafe was only required if the receiver of the injury contracted an infection. However, this is incorrect, as the exposure to human body fluids has its own category, and that the incidence of a needle stick requires medical intervention (a blood test), and also meets the requirement of reporting.

To minimise your risk of exposure to germs and infections, you should:

- Get immunised.
- Keep up your personal hygiene by washing and drying your hands.
- Stay home if you are unwell.
- Clean and disinfect spills immediately.
- Wear PPE.
- Dispose of contaminated substances effectively.
- Treat all bodily fluids as if they are infectious.
- Handle and dispose of sharp equipment correctly.

Your employer should:

- Encourage you to take care of yourself and facilitate precautionary measures.
- Provide you with immunizations and PPE.
- Keep workplaces clean and maintained regularly.
- Ensure good ventilation within the workplace.
- Adopt plans for outbreaks and pandemics. [10]

In a survey conducted by Waikato DHB in 2011, a total of 123 surveyed reported **1 or more** needlestick injuries within a period of **12** months

What can you do?

Inform your employer immediately of the hazard so they can address it. For issues related to the handling and disposal of needles, contact Human Resources, and speak with an APEX advocate. We want to know immediately if you are challenged on your decision to not follow the "De-notching" disposal process.

SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

The health care industry is one of the highest contributing professions to workplace injuries that result in time away from work.

In 2015 ACC spent

$3.3

million on claims made by health care professionals from injuries they received while handling patients.[5]

Slips, trips and falls are some of the most common causes of workplace injuries like:

- Slipping on wet surfaces.
- Unidentified changes in terrain.
- Poor organization of workspaces.
- Cramped working conditions.
- Poor lighting.
- Not following provided precautionary methods
- Requirements of the occupation that require a fast response in emergencies.

What can you do to minimise your risk of injury?

Wear appropriate footwear, be cautious on slippery surfaces and keep your work area tidy.

What can your employer do to minimise the risk of injury?

- Provide good maintenance over floors and working areas
- Minimise clutter in the workplace
- Provide mechanical lifting aids rather that requiring you to lift objects or patients yourself
- Dispose of waste materials efficiently
- Minimise loose items such as cords that can interfere with a worker's path [14]

A study conducted by WorkSafe in 2018, found an estimated

2565

injuries in health care professionals resulted from workplace circumstances, causing absence from work for a week or longer.[15]

What can you do?

Inform your employer of any hazards and immediately eliminate any potential hazards by placing signage in your workplace to alert others.

MOVING & HELPING PATIENTS

In the health care profession, you may often be required to lift, carry or push people and heavy objects. This can lead to serious injuries from actions that you may not have considered dangerous. These actions can result in Musculoskeletal Disease (MSD), due to the stress associated with the actions.

Frequent lifting, bending, treating a large number of patients, transferring impaired patients, prolonged posture and performing manual manipulation of patients.[4]

Incorrectly moving patients and professional machinery can cause many injuries such as:

- Muscle injuries
- Damage to ligaments
- Damage to muscles
- Ligaments and discs in the back
- Soft-tissue injuries
- Abdominal hernias
- Chronic pain
- Repetitive strain injuries
- Occupational overuse syndrome
- Cumulative trauma disorder
- Work-related musculoskeletal disorder.

What can you and your employer do to minimise these risks?

- Eliminate manually lifting patients for care except in situations where it is necessary to preserve life.
- Provide appropriate lifting aids and use them properly.
- Enlist safe handling methods of clients and equipment.
- Encourage clients and patients to help facilitate their transfer when possible.
- Request assistance in moving patients.
- Work collaboratively to have practical methods and solutions to avoid harm. [5]
- In order to adjust to the stresses that Musculoskeletal disease causes, it may be appropriate to adjust your position and the position of your patients to provide a suitable level of comfort for you to perform your job. This could mean changing the patients' bed height and enlisting new techniques to minimise stress to workers, without compromising the duty to your patients.[4]

What can you do?

Take practical steps to improve handling of patients as identified in this booklet. If you identify a hazard, alert your employer and colleagues. Contact your Health & Safety representative, if no action is taken, escalate the issue to your APEX advocate.

ERGONOMICS, SMELLS & SPACE

Ergonomics, or the physical position in which you work, can also impact your health and safety at work. Musculoskeletal Disease (MSD) is a highly prevalent occupational hazard among health care workers due to long shifts, and other conditions associated with performing the job. An assessment of studies across various countries in 2016 revealed that, on average, health care workers had experienced at least one or more symptoms of MSD in the previous 12 months.

Working in a sitting position can create strains and other injuries related to posture and repetitive movements. This can be a result of incorrect chair height, inadequate equipment spacing and incorrect desk height. These can all be difficult to detect but can create long lasting effects on a person's posture.

Conversely, working in a standing position for a long time can make you feel fatigued, give you back, neck and shoulder pain, and cause varicose veins. Hard surfaces can also cause undue stress on a worker's feet, knees and back. [16]

To avoid these effects, employees should:

- Maintain good posture and head positioning
- Avoid leaning and reaching too frequently
- Take breaks, walk around or have a rest where possible
- Wear suitable footwear

Employers should:

- Provide seating and equipment that supports good posture
- Encourage workers to have good posture
- Provide anti-fatigue mats
- Listen to their employees and accommodate them where possible

It is also important to have enough space to work. Your workplace should never be so crowded that it becomes hazardous to you or others. You should also have a reasonable area to work within, without your job being compromised.

In New Zealand, the Occupational Health and Safety standards have determined that a minimum of 12 cubic metres are needed for each employee in a working office, which is around 5 square metres.

A good ergonomic design can create a positive work environment, improve your morale and ensure that the risk of workplace injuries are minimised.

Another important consideration is the smells or odours within your workplace. A cramped work area can result in the issue of body odour and other personal hygiene issues. To reduce this health concern and how it may impact your work, it is important to practise good personal hygiene. [17]

What can you do?

Contact your Health & Safety representative. If no action is taken to improve workplace conditions, contact your APEX advocate immediately.

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY HAZARDS

A few other threats to health and safety are entire subjects onto their own. For that reason, this brochure can not fully address them, however it will refer to other aids available to you.

Violence

In the health care profession, there are many instances in which emotions run high and this could create situations in which violence may possibly occur.

Attempts, threats and actual violence can come from patients, co-workers, superiors and patient's family members.

The World Health Organization found that between 8% and 38% of health care professionals will suffer from violence during their careers, and many more will be verbally abused. This can be attributed to the high stress situations that accompany the health sector.[6]

Therefore, it is important to be fully aware of the dangers that violence poses to your physical and mental wellbeing.

More information about workplace violence can be found here: https://worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/work-related-health/violence-at-work/.

Bullying

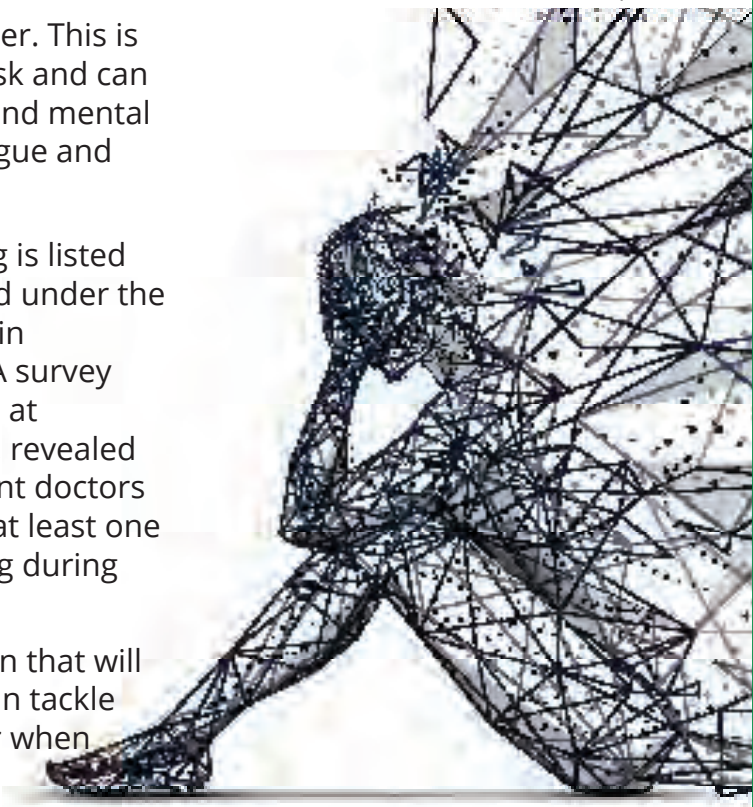
Are you affected by bullying?

Bullying is unreasonable, continued behaviour towards another person. It can be physical, verbal or social behaviours, and can include threatening, embarrassing or intimidating another. This is a serious health risk and can result in physical and mental harm, anxiety, fatigue and depression.

Workplace bullying is listed as a serious hazard under the Health and Safety in Employment Act. A survey conducted in 2008 at Auckland Hospital, revealed that 50% of resident doctors had encountered at least one instance of bullying during their career. [7]

Helpful information that will ensure that you can tackle bullying behaviour when it presents itself can be found here: https://www.employment.govt.nz/resolving-problems/types-of-problems/bullying-harassment-and-discrimination/bullying/Stress and Fatigue

Work related stress and fatigue can be caused by long shifts, conflicts within the workplace, a heavy workload and high stress situations that normally accompany health care professions. A challenging job is not the same as work-related stress,



and should be treated as an important issue because it can cause:

- Illness and disease
- Poor attitude and lack of confidence
- Anxiety
- Reduced productivity
- Antisocial behaviours
- Burnout [21]

Burnout

Burnout is prevalent among health care workers due to high risk situations and the physical requirements of the job frequently exceeding workers comfortable limits.

This can in turn cause fatigue, exhaustion, depersonalization and an increased feeling of failure. Workers who are impacted by work related stress may also develop a dependence on alcohol intoxication, drug abuse and a negative mindset about their work. [19]

Information about how to cope with stress and fatigue before it negatively impacts your health can be found at: https://worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/work-related-health/fatigue/.

What can you do?

Talk to a trusted person, contact Human Resources, talk to your employer, contact APEX, and if the issue persists, seek professional advice.

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