

Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls Policy

Policy information

Policy number: 649

Classification:
Corporate

Supersedes:
Previous versions

Version number:
3

Date of Equality Impact Assessment:
29/06/2023

Approval information

Approved by:
Health & Safety Committee

Date of approval:
11/09/2023

Date made active:
20/09/2023

Review date:
11/09/2026

Summary of document:

This policy contains information and guidance on the management of non-patient slip, trip and fall risks within Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB).

Scope:

The scope of this policy includes all paid employees of HDdUHB and all individuals who are not direct employees, but who undertake duties on any premises owned, leased or managed by HDdUHB, including bank or agency staff, volunteers, contractors or suppliers working on HDdUHB premises.

To be read in conjunction with:

[010 – Health and Safety Policy](#) - opens in a new tab

[273 – Manual Handling Policy](#) – opens in a new tab

[401 – Preventing Falls and Post Fall Care in In-patient Areas Policy](#) – opens in a new tab

[608 – Risk Management Framework](#) – opens in a new tab

[674 – Risk Assessment Procedure](#) – opens in a new tab

[696 – First Aid at Work Procedure](#) – opens in a new tab

[982 – Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Reporting Procedure](#) – opens in a new tab

Patient information:

Include links to [Patient Information Library](#)

Owning group:

Health and Safety Advisory Group

09/08/2023

Executive Director job title:

Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience

Reviews and updates:

1 – 20.11.2017

2 – review 2.11.2020

3 – review 11.09.2023

Keywords:

Slips, Trips, Falls, STF, Non-Patient, Workplace, RIDDOR

Glossary of terms:

STF - Slip, Trip or/and Fall

HSE - Health and Safety Executive

RIDDOR - Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Contents

Introduction	4
Policy Statement	4
Scope	4
Aim.....	4
Objectives	5
Definitions	5
Responsibilities	5
Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment.....	7
Information, Instruction and Training.....	7
RIDDOR Reporting	8
Monitoring and Review	8
Safety Advice	8
Acknowledgements & Reference Material	9
Appendix 1 - Slips, Trips and Falls Workplace Checklist	10

Introduction

The Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) has statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) to ensure the health and safety of all employees and anyone affected by their work, so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes taking steps to control slip, trip and fall (STF) risks.

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) builds on the HSWA and includes duties on employers to assess risks (including STF risks) and take action where necessary. The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 (WHSWR) require any floor surface to be in good condition, suitable for its purpose and kept free from hazard or obstruction which may cause a person to slip, trip or fall.

Policy Statement

People should be able to move around safely. This policy outlines HDdUHB's requirement to assess the risks associated with non-patient slips, trips and falls on its premises and to make provision to remove or reduce the associated risks of harm occurring.

Scope

The contents and requirements of this policy are applicable to the following groups;

- All paid employees of HDdUHB;
- Individuals who are not direct employees but who undertake duties on any premises owned, leased or managed by HDdUHB. These may include:
 - Bank or agency staff
 - Volunteers
 - Contractors and suppliers working on HDdUHB premises.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out the measures required to ensure that the risks of non-patient STFs in the workplace are identified and that appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risk of incidents occurring.

A recent benchmarking exercise highlighted that 53% of HDdUHB notifications to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2015 (RIDDOR) over a 12-month period were as a result of a slip, trip or fall on the same level (i.e. not from height).

The main causes of STFs, both at HDdUHB and in the wider workplace environment are:

- Slippery surfaces due to being wet, dusty or contaminated by other substances or fluids;
- Obstructions of passageways and aisles, either permanent or temporary;
- Uneven surfaces and changes of level such as unmarked ramps;
- Environmental conditions such as poor lighting, wet weather etc.

Objectives

The main objective of this policy is to reduce preventable workplace non-patient STF incidents through appropriate risk assessment, effective planning and positive management.

Definitions

Slip -To slide unintentionally for a short distance by losing balance, footing or by unintended sliding, usually resulting in either the regaining of balance or a fall.

Trip - To make a false or unintended step or stumble over an obstacle by unintentionally making contact with that obstacle with part of the anatomy, usually resulting in the regaining of balance or a fall.

Fall – 1. If someone or something falls, they move quickly downwards onto or towards the ground, by accident or because of a natural force. 2. To move from a higher to a lower level, typically rapidly and without control.

Responsibilities

All Employees have a responsibility to ensure that the workplace is maintained in a condition that will minimise the risks of injury or ill health to others. All employees can play their part in reducing STFs in the workplace by following these simple steps, as suggested by the HSE in their publication *Preventing slips and trips at work*, INDG225(rev2) 2012:

- If you have an accident or a near miss, make sure you report it to your line manager promptly. The Health Board can use this information to prevent future accidents. (All incidents and near misses must reported via the Datix system).
- If you see a spillage, clean it up or make arrangements for it to be cleaned.
- Report any damaged floors or mats.
- Play your part and keep the workplace tidy.
- If you see items on the floor where someone could trip over them, remove them or arrange for them to be removed or for the situation to be made safe.
- If you are given PPE, wear it and look after it. Report any faults or damage to your employer and make arrangements for a replacement.

- Tell your employer about any work situation that you think is dangerous, or if you notice that something has gone wrong with their health and safety arrangements.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for this policy, to ensure a safe working environment where reasonably practicable control measures can be applied to minimise the risks from slips, trips and falls.

The Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience has delegated Executive Board responsibility for the management of Health and Safety and therefore operational implementation of this and other Health and Safety policies.

Departmental and Premises Managers are responsible for ensuring that the Workplace Slips, Trips and Falls Policy is implemented and monitored within their areas of responsibility. In particular they must identify any potential STF related hazards in their areas, risk assess any hazards identified and implement measures to control any identified risks. For specific details see Section 8. Additionally, departmental and premises managers should:

- Investigate all STF incidents ensuring that a post incident risk assessment is completed;
- Ensure good housekeeping standards are adhered to in their areas to minimise STF hazards. This includes ensuring that all articles are stored in designated areas;
- Promptly remove equipment that is not safe or suitable for its purpose;
- Raise awareness in relation to the management of STFs.

The Head of Facilities, Estates & Capital Management is responsible for:

- Ensuring cleaning regimes are adequately risk assessed and sufficient safety equipment is provided for employees so they may comply with the preventative and protective measures designed to reduce STFs;
- Ensuring floor surfaces replaced or newly fitted as part of a modification, extension or new build comply with standards of slip resistance/surface roughness;
- Ensuring adequate control of contractors to ensure potential hazards associated with their work that may cause persons to slip, trip or fall are eliminated where possible or are adequately controlled;
- Ensuring sufficient arrangements are in place to deal promptly with leaks and other defects which may cause a person to slip and fall;
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place for gritting of external areas in the event of adverse weather conditions.

The Health and Safety Assurance Committee is responsible for:

- Monitoring all staff accidents and incidents, including those events and claims relating to STFs;
- Discussion of specific risks and potential escalation to the appropriate HDdUHB risk register.

The Health, Safety and Security Team are responsible for:

- Providing advice to managers and staff on the prevention of STFs within the work environment;
- Supporting managers as required in the investigation of incidents that have occurred;
- Monitoring the environment during inspections and audits and providing advice to managers on areas of non-compliance or when hazards are identified;
- Reporting incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as required by the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) as appropriate.

The Occupational Health Departments are responsible for:

- Providing advice and support to employees and management following slip, trip or fall injuries;
- Supporting employees to return to work or other courses of action as appropriate, taking into account both the health and wellbeing of the employee, and the needs of the service.

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

In line with the Management of Health and Safety Regulations and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations, HDdUHB is required to assess the workplace for STF hazards and outline the control measures in place to ensure the risks of injury are removed or kept as low as possible. At HDdUHB this responsibility sits with the Departmental and Premises Managers. In particular the managers must:

- Identify any potential STF related hazards within their areas of responsibility or control. The Slips, Trips and Falls Workplace Checklist in Appendix 1 can be used to assist the process of hazard identification;
- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for any hazards identified on the Checklist using the HDdUHB general risk assessment (see 199 - Risk Management Procedure) and attaching the completed checklist to the assessment;
- Immediately implement measures to control any identified risks;
- Escalate any risks for which the controls cannot be immediately implemented to the local risk register until those controls become effective;
- Escalate any risks that cannot be controlled locally to their director for review and potential inclusion on the departmental risk register.

Information, Instruction and Training

Awareness information on slips, trips and falls prevention and/or reduction is included in:

- Health Board corporate induction for new starters;
- Local induction;
- The Mandatory Health & Safety E-learning module.

In addition to the training modules, managers should make their employees aware of the findings of any STF risk assessments that have been conducted and any subsequent controls that have been put in place.

Managers should also ensure that the findings of any investigations into STF incidents and the lessons learned are shared with the relevant employees.

The HSE has a free online learning tool, called the Slips and Trips eLearning Package, referred to as 'STEP' (www.hse.gov.uk/slips/step/start.htm) (opens in a new tab). This tool is designed for both employers and workers in all sectors, providing help on assessing and managing slip and trip risks in the workplace. It provides an overview of slips and trips, how they are caused and how to prevent them, from introductory to advanced level.

RIDDOR Reporting

If an STF incident is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the line manager must contact a member of the Health, Safety and Security Team at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the incident is promptly reported in line with statutory requirements.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be assessed by the analysis of Datix STF incident data and RIDDOR reportable data. This data will also be used to identify causal trends to allow measures to be taken to prevent future accidents. STF incidents will form part of an annual report presented to the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Sub-Committee.

The Health, Safety and Security Team will monitor and review this policy on a three-yearly basis (or sooner in light of changes in legislation or practice). This will provide a measurement of performance and ensure adequate processes and structures are in place, as well as continuing compliance with statutory responsibilities.

Safety Advice

Advice on safety issues associated with flooring and slip, trip and fall risks can be obtained from a number of sources as follows:

Health, Safety and Security Department:

- Head of Health, Safety and Security 01437 773771 (WGH)
- Health and Safety Manager 01267 227334 (GGH)
- Health, Safety and Security Officer 07929 832707 (CICC)
- Health, Safety and Security Officer 07811 711426 (PPH)
- Health and Safety Advisor 07977 273021 (PPH)

Occupational Health:

- Bronglais Hospital 01970 635811
- Prince Philip Hospital 01554 783518
- Glangwili Hospital 01267 227338
- Withybush Hospital 01437 773215

To report defective flooring, please contact your local Maintenance Help Desk:

- Bronglais Hospital 01970 623131 ext. 5770
- Prince Philip Hospital 01554 783689 ext. 3689
- Glangwili Hospital 01267 235151 ext. 2942
- Withybush Hospital 01437 764545 ext. 3463

Acknowledgements & Reference Material

The following reference sources have been used in the compilation of this Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls Policy:

- Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls Policy, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust, 2013
- Slips, Trips & Falls Policy (Staff), East Cheshire NHS Trust, 2015
- Slips, Trips & Falls Policy (Staff), Wirral Community NHS Trust, 2013
- Slips, Trips & Falls Policy for Staff, Visitors and Contractors, Worcester Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, 2015
- Slips, Trips & Falls Policy for Employees, Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust, 2014
- Preventing slips and trips at work, A brief guide, HSE Guidance INDG225(rev2), 2012
- Slips and Trips, Hazard spotting checklist, HSE Checklist CK4), 2013
- Preventing slips and trips in kitchens and food service, HSE Information Sheet No.6 CAIS6(rev2), 2012
- Assessing the slip resistance of flooring, HSE Technical Information Sheet GEIS2, 2012
- Slips and trips: The importance of floor cleaning, HSE Information Sheets Slips and Trips 2, 2005
- Framework/ Strategy for Managing Slips, Trips and Falls, Louise Jenkins, Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist Occupational Health, HDdUHB, 2017

Relevant law:

- health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 2002
- Work at Height Regulations 2005

Further information is available on the HSE website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/index.htm>

Appendix 1 - Slips, Trips and Falls Workplace Checklist

Hospital Site:			
Ward / Department:			
Area being assessed			
Name of Assessors:			
Job Titles:			
Contact Telephone:		Date:	

Hazard	Please tick if hazard relevant to area being assessed	
	Yes	No
Loose flooring		
Loose and worn mats / carpets		
Uneven indoor / outdoor surfaces		
Holes / cracks / potholes		
Bumps / ridges / protruding nails		
Spills and splashes of liquids, solids or dusts		
Presence of mists, smoke, dust or vapour clouds		
Unsigned / unguarded wet floors (e.g. following cleaning)		
Cleaning at unsuitable times		
Unsuitable footwear		
Adverse weather (e.g. rain, sleet, snow or loose leaves)		
Change from a wet to dry surface (footwear still wet)		
Passageways with heavy pedestrian / trolley traffic use		
Unsuitable floor surface / covering		
Dusty / dirty floors		
Accumulation of waste		
Low wall and floor fixtures		

Filing systems or drawers that can open at ground level		
Poor location of electrical and telephone sockets		
Items stored on floor - lack of storage		
Unmarked sloping surfaces		
Lack of handrails on severe slopes / steps / stairs		
Grab rails are suitable and sufficient for purpose		
Equipment not stowed appropriately		
Unsecured cables, service pipes or conduits		
Use of extension leads		
Unguarded floor openings		
Unsuitable lighting levels		
Distracting noises / levels		
Vulnerable staff (e.g. poor eyesight, general health, fatigue, lack of care etc.)		

If the 'YES' box has been ticked, please confirm what control measures are being implemented by completing the HDUHB general risk assessment document and attaching this completed checklist to the assessment.