

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Pregnant Workers Policy

Effective: January 2011

Review: January 2013

1. Policy Statement

The Trust will take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of new and expectant mothers, and of their unborn children.

The health and safety of new and expectant mothers at work is covered by the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999. Which specifies that employees who are pregnant, or who have recently given birth within the last 6 months (including stillborn after 24 weeks) and those who are breast feeding (no time limit), will require a risk assessment to ensure that employees are not exposed to risks such as: -

- Unsafe Environments
- Excessive Manual Handling Tasks
- Undue Noise
- Shocks, Vibration and sudden Movements A
- Harmful Substances
- Radiation
- Undue Temperature Exposure
- Chemical or Biological agents
- Inadequate Hygiene and Welfare Conditions

2. Scope

This policy has been drawn up to give Trust employees support and advice in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform the Personnel Department and the Health and Safety Dept in writing that they are Pregnant as early as possible. In writing is requested to maintain the pregnant workers confidentiality, however employees may contact the Health and Safety Dept by phone if they wish to do so on Ext 48997

It is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Department to undertake confidential pregnancy risk assessment of the staff member, upon written notification.

4. Procedure

When the employee has given formal notice that they are pregnant, a risk assessment will be carried out by the Health and Safety Department. Any undue risk will be controlled or eliminated; where risks cannot be removed the employee will be re-deployed in a suitable area/dept.

In the rare event that re-development would not be possible; the employee would be required to take paid leave to protect the health and safety of herself and her unborn child. The only

exception to this guidance would be where the employee has unreasonably refused suitable alternative work, in which case no re-numeration is payable for the period during which the offer applies.

- 4.1 The employee's departmental manager will be informed of any relevant risks, which require action on their behalf.
- 4.2 Further advice and guidance will be available from the Occupational Health Department through the Health and Safety advisor or an individual referral basis.

5. Safe Systems of Work

The risk assessment should identify any inadequacies, which will need to be addressed in accordance with the particular circumstances. In determining what risks there are to pregnant women the following factors will need to be considered.

- 5.1 Exposure to physical agents such as vibration, noise, temperature extremes, poor or prolonged working postures and repetitive movements should be avoided or minimised.
- 5.2 Manual handling activities should be assessed and the individual's ability to carry out these activities regularly monitored, this is particularly important as these abilities will alter as the pregnancy develops.
- 5.3 Exposure to certain biological agents should be avoided. As a general principle of good practice staff must always adhere to standard precautions.
- 5.4 The following infections are known to pose a potential risk to the foetus or new born baby and therefore exposure should be avoided:

Cytomegalovirus, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, HIV, Listeria, Parvovirus, Rubella, Toxoplasma, and Chickenpox. The list is not exhausted and associated risks will be discussed at the staff members risk assessment.

- 5.5 Exposure to harmful substances (COSHH) needs to be controlled or in certain circumstances avoided. Substances labelled as follows should be avoided or at least reduced to the lowest level possible
 - Possible risk of irreversible effects
 - May cause cancer
 - May cause heritable genetic damage
 - May cause harm to the unborn child
 - May cause harm to breast fed babies.
- 5.6 Pregnant staff should always read the departmental COSHH and Safety Data sheets.
- 5.7 Pregnant members of staff should not be exposed to potentially violent patients/members of the public.

These factors will be discussed in more detail at the confidential risk assessment carried out by the Health and Safety Department

6 Monitoring

Compliance and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Trust Health and Safety advisors and the Trust Health and Safety committee.

7. Legislation

New and Expectant Mothers at Work, A Guide for Employers 2002

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Workplace, Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992

Manual Handling Regulations 1992

Infection Risks to the New and expectant Mothers in the Workplace

A Guide for employers 1997

Author; Health and Safety Manager

**THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SCREENING FORM A**

This form must be completed and attached to any procedural document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title:		Policy Author:	
		Yes/No?	You must provide evidence to support your response:
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of the following: (* denotes protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)		
	• Race *	No	
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	• Nationality	No	
	• Gender *	No	
	• Culture	No	
	• Religion or belief *	No	
	• Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people *	No	
	• Age *	No	
	• Disability – learning difficulties, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems *	No	
	• Gender reassignment *	No	
	• Marriage and civil partnership *	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination which can include associative discrimination i.e. direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
4(a).	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative? <i>(If "yes", please answer sections 4(b) to 4(d)).</i>	No	
4(b).	If so can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
4(c).	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
4(d).	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	

Comments:	Action Plan due (or Not Applicable):
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Name and Designation of Person responsible for completion of this form: Paul Clancy Health and Safety Advisor..... Date: 25/1/2011.....

Names & Designations of those involved in the impact assessment screening process:

(If any reader of this procedural document identifies a potential discriminatory impact that has not been identified on this form, please refer to the Policy Author identified above, together with any suggestions for the actions required to avoid/reduce this impact.)