

Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls Policy (Health and Safety)



Title:

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Version Control

Date	Author	Version/Page	Reason for change
Aug 2015	Lead Health and Safety Adviser	v1.0	New policy developed and approved
Feb 2018	Lead Health and Safety Adviser	v1.2	Technical update approved by Health & Safety Committee
Aug 2021	Lead Health and Safety Adviser	v2.0	Policy reviewed and approved by Policy Approval Group

Executive Summary

NHS Lothian attaches the greatest importance to the Health, Safety and Welfare of its employees and others who may be affected by its activities. In particular recognises the significance of the risks of injury associated with slips, trips and falls.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, include duties for people in control of workplaces to assess the risks (including slips, trips and falls) associated with workplace environments. They require appropriate arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of any measures to safeguard health and safety. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 also require that floors and surfaces are, so far as is reasonably practicable, suitable for purpose and do not expose persons to risk.

This policy sets out how NHS Lothian will ensure that such risks are eliminated or at least minimised to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

To adequately manage the risks that arise from potential slips, trips and falls NHS Lothian through its management teams will need to assess the tasks and the workplace for slip and trip hazards and outline the control measures in place to ensure the risks of injury are removed or kept as low as possible.

This Policy outlines the principles to be adopted and implemented in order to achieve as a minimum statutory compliance with health and safety legislation. This statutory requirement is in addition to other NHS Lothian policies and procedures.

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to reduce and wherever possible prevent slips, trips and falls injuries suffered by staff and other persons such as patients, contractors, voluntary workers, visitors and members of the public by implementing effective risk identification, assessment and management controls.

2.0 Policy statement

NHS Lothian as an organisation through its management teams will manage and control all reasonably foreseeable risks associated with slips, trips and falls hazards.

In order to do this managers need to assess the tasks and the workplace for slip and trip hazards, then identify and implement the control measures to ensure the risks of injury are removed or kept as low as possible.

During safety tours, walk rounds and inspections managers must encourage and support staff to have a tidy and slip/trip free workplace. Floor contamination must be cleaned up immediately whenever possible.

Staff are expected report immediately or as soon as practicable to their line manager any slip, trip and fall hazard that they may across whilst at work. The spillage should then be dealt with if it is safe to do in order to minimise the risk to others.

Compliance with the Policy must be monitored by conducting regular workplace inspections, safety tours and safety briefings/tool box talks to further determine the effectiveness on the communication and implementation of the policy.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all NHS Lothian staff, and to all individuals and any organisation(s) providing services on behalf of NHS Lothian. It applies to staff working on NHS property and property out with the remit of NHS Lothian.

4.0 Definitions

Slip - a slip is generally associated with situations related to a loss of friction between the foot and the underfoot surface.

Trip - a trip as the sudden arrest of movement of the foot with continued motion of the body

Fall - a fall generally refers to being brought to the ground

Adverse Event – Accident results in an injury or ill health and Incident (near miss)

The Reporting of Injuries Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) – Slips, Trips and Falls Adverse Events: -

Staff Falls: RIDDOR is applicable to falls suffered by NHSL staff if they arise out or in connection with work and results in the employee suffering a specified injury, being absent from work or unable to do their normal duties from more than seven consecutive days.

Person not at Work Falls: A patient/service user/visitor/member of public fall is reportable under RIDDOR when the fall has arisen out of or in connection with a work activity and the accident results in a the person not at work suffering an injury and being taken directly to hospital for treatment or if the accident happens at a hospital, if they suffer a specified injury.

This includes where equipment or the work environment (including how or when work is carried out, organised or supervised) are involved.

Scottish Health Technical Memorandum (SHTM 61) - This Scottish Health Technical Memorandum (SHTM) offers guidance on the technical design and output specification of flooring for health buildings.

5.0 Implementation roles and responsibilities

5.1 NHS Lothian Chief Executive

The NHS Lothian Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to manage all safety, health and risk matters within NHS Lothian. The operational responsibility for those arrangements is delegated to the Executive Medical Director. The Chief Executive Officer remains accountable to the NHS Lothian Board.

5.2 Site Directors, Senior Managers and their Teams

Site Directors, Chief Officer, and other Senior Managers and their Teams are responsible for leading on the operational implementation of the policy by ensuring that effective systems are in place to identify, manage, monitor, review and control slips, trips and falls hazard(s).

5.3 Clinical Nurse Manager(s)/Line Manager

The Clinical Nurse Manager (s)/Line Manager working with their Charge Nurse(s)/Team Leads(s) or equivalent is responsible for the communication and implementation of policy in their areas of responsibility. The CNM(s) or equivalent will monitor the implementation of the policy via any existing ward/department walk rounds and escalate any issue via the Quarterly Report System.

5.4 Charge Nurse/Team Lead or equivalent

The Charge Nurse/Team Lead or equivalent will:

- Ensure that their staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities contained with the Policy.
- Review the workplace and the tasks with staff using the Manager's Checklist and where slips, trips and falls are identified as hazard, assess that foreseeable risk.

- Record those findings above on the NHS Lothian General Risk Assessment Form including the current control measures in place to reduce the risk. Should further work be required then record in the time bound action plan within the General Risk Assessment form and monitor for progress.
- Slips, trips and falls hazard are contained e.g. within a workplace (use of a kitchen/ catering area or wet room) or a task e.g. Floor cleaning/mopping or spillage clean up and could be “captured” as part of that overall workplace or task risk.
- Communicate the results of risk assessment findings to ensure that all staff are fully aware of the outcomes and any actions
- Ensure staff are aware any procedures in place to eliminate/minimise the risks of slips, trips and falls.
- Ensure that the findings from the assessment relating to the risks of slips, trips and falls, are recorded and communicated to others who may be exposed to the same risk.
- For patient related falls reference must be made to the NHS Lothian Policy for the Prevention and Management of Adult Inpatients Falling in Hospital Settings.
- Develop and implement local procedures to assist with controlling and then removing the risks from slips, trips and falls. As an example see General Spill Procedure.
- Ensure through the use of regular safety tours/walk rounds/meetings that any PPE identified as part of the risk assessment process is worn by those staff at risk e.g. the use of suitable slip resistant footwear.
- Encourage, promote and support staff to have a tidy and trip free workplace.
- Investigate all adverse events related to slips, trips and falls in line with the NHS Lothian Adverse Events Management Policy and Procedure.

5.5 Staff

Staff must follow this policy and any other local procedural arrangements designed to ensure ways safer ways of working including actions to prevent slips, trips and falls.

Specifically all staff will:

- Maintain a tidy and trip free workplace wherever possible.
- Clean up more common spillages, i.e. tea, coffee, water or juice.
- Clean up any chemical spillages as detailed in the COSHH assessment (depending on the work activities within the ward/department) or seek further advice from the Line Manager and/or Health and Safety Team.
- Clean up any body or bodily fluid in line with the Guidance in the Infection Control Manual and COSHH assessment (depending on the work activities within the ward/department) or seek further advice from the Line Manager.
- Contribute to the risk assessment process.

- Complete any training relating to minimising slips, trips and falls.
- Report any hazard to their line manager they identify or any concern they might have in respect to slips, trips and falls including risks associated with particular locations and activities.
- Report in DATIX all the adverse events related to slips, trips and falls.

5.6 Hard Facilities Management Services (Estates)

Hard Facilities Management Services including Third Party Facilities are responsible for:

- Maintaining an up to date record of the types of floor coverings and locations.
- Ensuring a prompt response to any requests for repairs to internal and external areas such floors and floor coverings, lighting, and stairways, footways and car parking facilities. The response timescale will be based on the level of risk (likelihood x consequence) and any potential harm to staff and or patients. E.g. the greater the risk the quicker the response.
- Ensuring lighting levels are adequate so that staff can work safely and patients or public can move around safely. Lighting will be replaced repaired or cleaned whenever emitting levels fall below the minimum standard.

Where NHS Lothian are in control of the premises/ site, Estates Managers will ensure that there are in place effective controls to minimise the slip, trip and falls risk for external areas where staff, visitors and others use. Such controls include for example having in place effective cleaning and clearing operations that reflect the effects of the weather conditions to ensure safe access and egress. In premises/site occupied by NHS Lothian staff but not controlled/ managed by NHS Lothian it will be the responsibility of those who control the premises/site to ensure similar safe access and egress.

5.7 Capital Planning, Project and Design teams, Estates Managers and external Facilities Managers

Capital Planning, Project and Design teams, Estates Managers and external Facilities Managers and others responsible for construction, commissioning and maintenance will ensure all refurbished and any new build floor coverings meet the requirements detailed in SHTM61.

6.0 Associated materials

[Model Risk Assessment – Slips Trips and Falls](#)

[Checklist for Managers – Slips Trips and Falls](#)

[General Spill Procedure](#), NHS Lothian Health and Safety

[Performance Standard](#)

[Policy for the Prevention and Management of Adult Inpatients Falling in Hospital Settings](#), approved by the Policy Approval Group

7.0 Evidence base

- [The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
- [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- [The Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#)
- [Preventing slips and trips at work. A brief guide. INDG225 \(rev2\)](#)

8.0 Stakeholder consultation

Facilities Management Services were consulted in the content of the Policy and this policy was placed on the NHS Lothian Consultation Zone for a 4-week period for comment and adjustment as required.

9.0 Monitoring and review

9.1 Proactive management

The Slips, Trips and Falls hazard is monitored, reviewed and reported on annually as part of the Health and Safety Management Quarterly Reporting System within Quarter 4 (January to March). Documented information is gathered at ward/department level and then provided to the Service(s)/HSCP Management Teams. Reports are then provided to the respective Health and Safety Committee's/Groups and the NHS Lothian Health and Safety Committee in order to determine the level of risk assurance and what, if any, actions may be required to reduce that risk.

9.2 Reactive management

All adverse events involving slips, trips and falls hazards must be reported using the DATIX system and investigated in line with the NHS Lothian Adverse Event Management Policy and Operational Procedure.

9.3 Review

The policy will be reviewed and revised every three years or as a result of any changes in level of risk and/or in legislation which may occur before this. This policy may also be subject to review if new guidance or legal opinion is issued or NHS Lothian identifies a need for revision as the result of inspection, audit or following investigation of an adverse event.