



Occupational Health Policy

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DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY		
Tracey Leghorn	17 July 2010	Sarah Greatorex
Version	Date	Comments (i.e. viewed, or reviewed, amended approved by person or committee)
V1.0		Approved
V2.0		Approved
V3.0	30 October 2012	Approved
V4.0	6 December 2013	SPF approved changes related to new OH provider

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V5.0	10 December 2015	Approved extension to review date by SPF to July 2016
V6.0	06 April 2019	Policy formatted on to new template
V6.1	24 September 2021	Policy reviewed by the Wellbeing Team
V6.2	27 September 2021	Sent to HR Policy Sub-Group for review
V6.3	10 November	Minor updates by Wellbeing Team
V6.4	16 November 2021	Further updates by Wellbeing Team
V6.5	03 December 2021	Sent to CRG, queries received and actioned
V6.6	19 January 2022	Resent to CRG
V7.0	21 February 2022	Approved at CRG

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Document Reference	Health and Social Care Act (2012) and associated Regulations Relevant Trust objective: To provide a 'Fit for Purpose' workforce. To assist in the Trusts target of reducing sickness absence. Directorate: HR	
Recommended at Date		
Approved at Date	Compliance and Risk Group 21 February 2022	
Valid Until Date	December 2024	
Equality Analysis	Yes	

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<p>Linked procedural documents</p>	<p>Infection Prevention and Control Policy</p> <p>Sickness Absence Policy (under review)</p> <p>Induction Policy</p> <p>PDR Policy</p> <p>Vaccination Transport and Storage</p> <p>Managing Stress and Enhancing Psychological Well-being Display Screen Equipment (DSE Users Procedure) including Visual Display Unit (VDU)</p> <p>Alcohol and/or Drug Misuse.</p> <p>Trust Guidance Documents:</p> <p>Prevention and management of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses</p> <p>Safe handling and disposal of sharps</p> <p>Guidance for staff requested to attend an inquest as a witness</p> <p>Procedure for Trust staff attending inquests</p>	
<p>Dissemination requirements</p>	<p>All Trust Employees via the Intranet</p>	
<p>Part of Trust's publication scheme</p>	<p>Yes</p>	

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust has made every effort to ensure this policy does not have the effect of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics of:

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age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity. The Trust will not tolerate unlawful discrimination on the basis of, spent criminal convictions, Trade Union membership or non-membership. In addition, the Trust will have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity for and fostering good relations between; people from different groups and people with protected characteristics.

This policy applies to all employees (whether permanent, fixed term or temporary) working at all levels and grades for the Trust, including senior managers, directors, and on secondment, honorary contracts and volunteers. All Trust policies can be provided in alternative formats if required.

East of England Ambulance Service Trust recognises its obligation of supporting the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and any future legislations. A prime objective of the Trust is to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking and recognises the significant part it must play in both combatting it and supporting victims. The Trust is also committed to ensuring that its supply chains and business activities are free from any ethical and labour standards abuse.

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This document outlines the Occupational Health Policy for The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (the Trust).
- 1.2 The Trust recognises that it has a responsibility towards safeguarding and promoting the health, safety and welfare of employees and others that work with the Trust under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 1.3 The Trust recognises the recommendations made by the Boorman Report (2009), and the Secretary of State commissioned [Improving Health and Wellbeing Programme \(2018\)](#), and in doing so is committed to the wider Health and Wellbeing of its employees.
- 1.4 The Occupational Health Service (OH Services) is an independent, confidential advisory service, which is available to support staff and provide advice to managers with the aim of improving the health, safety and welfare of all individuals within the organisation.
- 1.5 This policy outlines the purpose and functions of the Occupational Health Service in meeting the Trust's organisational needs in the context of its commitment to the Health and Wellbeing of its staff as well as its legislative and Department of Health (DH) guidance requirements.
- 1.6 This policy has been written in partnership by management and staff side.

2.0 Scope

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2.1 This policy applies to:

- All Trust employees;
- Prospective employees;
- Volunteers.

2.2 Non-compliance with this policy may be managed in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy (Managing Conduct and Performance).

3.0 Access To The Policy

3.1 All employees are entitled to access to this policy, which is located in the HR Policies and Procedures Folders and/or on the Trust's Intranet. However, if you require this policy in any other format please seek guidance from the Human Resources Department (HR), your line management or trade union representative.

4.0 Roles And Responsibilities

4.1 The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring:

- Adequate resources are available to support and promote the Occupational Health, Health and Wellbeing of its employees and volunteers in order that, as a minimum, it meets its statutory requirements;
- Compliance with the occupational health aspects of Health and Safety legislation, Department of Health and NHS Executive Standards.

4.2 Occupational Health is responsible for:

- Advising as to whether employees are sufficiently fit and healthy to be able to carry out the role they are employed (or engaged) to do;

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- Recognising that employee health and well-being is more than just the absence of disease. Rather, it puts an emphasis on achieving physical, mental and social contentment;
- Being both efficient and responsive to the needs of employees and managers;
- Providing advice to managers and employees about health related issues;
- Ensuring that the process for managing the risks associated with inoculation incidents is implemented;
- Ensuring that the provisions outlined within this policy are implemented appropriately;
- Keeping the provisions within this policy in line with employment legislation, best practice people management principles and NHS guidelines.

4.3 Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of the range of Occupational Health services available in the Trust, such as, physiotherapy, Crisis Line and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Services, etc. Details of the range of OH Services are provided on the Trust intranet site;
- Ensuring that any employees and/or volunteers for whom they are responsible have the appropriate EPP and/or immunisation/vaccination clearance necessary to undertake their role, and take appropriate action if clearance cannot be confirmed. Assessing health and safety risks to employees and others and identifying preventative and protective measures as required by health and safety law;
- Ensuring that the correct reporting procedure following an inoculation incident is adhered to;
- Ensuring that no individual commences employment with the Trust without appropriate health clearance;
- Managing and supporting employees who experience

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health issues with advice from the Occupational Health Service and Human Resources, as appropriate;

- Ensuring that Trust employees and volunteers comply with this policy and any periodic health surveillance requirements;
- Encouraging individuals to attend Occupational Health when requested to do so in accordance with their contractual obligation to the Trust, taking appropriate action where they fail to comply;
- Championing the Health and Wellbeing agenda and encouraging employees to address their own health and wellbeing.

4.4 Management and trade union representatives are responsible for bringing any mutually beneficial improvements to this policy to the attention of the Trust.

4.5 Managers, HR staff and trade union representatives are responsible for providing advice and guidance to employees on the application of this policy and procedure.

4.6 Employees are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of the range of Occupational Health services available to persons employed in the Trust. Details of the range of OH Services are provided on the Trust intranet site;
- Co-operating with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy and complying with any risk assessment requirements related to their role;
- Ensuring awareness of and complying with the Trusts guidance document 'Safe handling and disposal of sharps';
- Ensuring that they undertake/attend IPC training commensurate with their role and responsibilities as

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detailed at induction and staff compassionate conversation.

- Ensuring that they have the appropriate EPP and/or immunisation/vaccination clearance necessary to undertake their role,
- Being available for telephone appointments or attendance in person appointments as requested in accordance with their contractual obligation and complying with OH advice on fitness to work and rehabilitation to work programmes; (in order to prevent a cost being incurred for missed appointments, an appointment must be cancelled/rearranged 48 hours or more before the appointment)
- Reporting to their manager and OH any aspect of their health which may affect their ability to work safely and competently whilst performing their role within the Trust;
- Co-operate fully with any reasonable requests made by OH Services;
- Being advocates of good health and wellbeing to the general public.

4.7 Applicants for employment are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of, and comply with the mandatory Trust mandatory and statutory requirements as outlined in sections 6.0 and 7.0 of this policy

5.0 Occupational Health Service

5.1 Occupational Health is the area of health care that is concerned with the relationship between people's health and their work. Its role is an advisory one and it is not a substitute for a General Practitioner (GP).

- 5.2 Following referral to an Occupational Health assessment, staff will be contacted by a clinician at the Trust's OH provider. Medical consent must be sought before an Occupational Health assessment is undertaken. Verbal consent, or consent by implication, is considered suitable evidence for OH consultations and the format of consent will be documented in the record by the clinician. Consent for clinical procedures may be written, electronic, verbal or implied according to relevant clinical guidelines and best practice.
- 5.3 Following completion of the assessment by the OH provider's clinician, the report will be shared with the employee and their line manager.
- 5.4 If it is identified during the assessment that further medical evidence (FME) is required, a report will be requested from the relevant clinician (e.g. consultant or GP). This will be conducted in line with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1998 and consent will be sought by the OH provider from the employee for this report to be shared. The Trust will only be able to act on the information provided and management decisions will include consideration of all relevant information from such a report.
- 5.5 In exceptional circumstances, medical confidence can be breached where public interest outweighs patient interest in keeping the information confidential or where disclosure can be justified as a result of an interest which outweighs the patient's interest of confidentiality being maintained (see Section 12 References {1} {2}).

6.0 Mandatory Trust Requirements

- 6.1 The Trust aims to ensure that the OH Service provides a comprehensive, equitable and confidential service tailored to meet the specific needs of the organisation in respect to the specific work carried out by its employees and volunteers. A

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number of service provisions are mandatory and it is these requirements, which form the core Occupational Health services provided to the Trust.

These include: **Health Clearance on receipt of employment offer.**

Included in an offer of employment will be details which allow a candidate to submit their health declaration online. Questions will be job role specific and will include one or all of the following:

- Health questions aimed at assessing compliance with DVLA Group 2 requirements;
- Standard health check questions for workers who are new to the NHS in keeping with DH guidelines issued March 2007: [Health clearance for tuberculosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV: \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Questions to obtain information relating to their Occupational history detailing previous exposure to infections/infection risks.

- Questions to obtain relevant vaccination and immunisation history.

Occupational Health will assess these questionnaires and advise managers and HR on any reasonable adjustments or vaccinations that are required prior to commencement of employment.

6.2 Vaccination and Immunisations

The OH Service has a duty to ensure that employees and volunteers are assessed on their relevant vaccination and immunity history and to ensure that the individual is immunised appropriately according to the role undertaken in accordance with current DH guidance.

6.2.1 Hepatitis B Vaccination

Vaccination will be offered to all employees and volunteers whose role may involve contact with blood and body fluids unless they can show satisfactory evidence of immunity.

6.2.2 Refusal of Hepatitis B Vaccination

Employees who refuse to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B are required to commit to 6 monthly HbsAg blood tests and respond to the reminder letters issued by Occupational Health within the stated time period. Failure to do so will be managed in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy (Managing Conduct and Performance) which could result in dismissal.

6.2.3 'Non-Responders' to the Hepatitis B Vaccination

Where results indicate that an Hepatitis B immunity level is of less than 10miu/ml despite multiple vaccinations then individuals are likely to be deemed as 'Non-Responders'. Such individuals will be required to have a six monthly HbsAg blood tests and respond to the reminder letters issued by Occupational Health within the stated time period. Failure to do so will be managed in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy (Managing Conduct and Performance) which could result in dismissal.

6.2.4 Employees will be required to provide evidence of immunity to Measles, Rubella and Chicken Pox. Evidence accepted by Occupational Health includes print outs from GP, red book or previous OH departments. Employees who do not have evidence will be offered a blood test to confirm their immunity. If they are not immune, then they will be offered/required to complete a vaccination course via OH.

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6.2.5 Employees are advised to have had 5 doses of Tetanus (DTP) and show evidence to OH. They will be offered a booster if required.

6.2.6 Employees are required to show evidence of a BCG vaccination for immunity to Tuberculosis. A scar check can be accepted as evidence. Those who have not had a BCG will be required to have a blood test to ensure that they are not an active or latent carrier of TB.

6.2.7 Patient facing staff in non EPP roles will be offered the opportunity to have a test for HIV and Hep C as appropriate to their role

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/382152/health_clearance_tuberculosis_hepatitis_hiv.pdf

6.3 Exposure Prone Procedures

Exposure prone procedures (EPPs) apply to employees/volunteers where there is a risk of them bleeding into a patient's open tissue. East Of England will follow the national Public Health England (PHE) guidance regarding who requires EPP clearance, and will monitor/reviewing accordingly.

The Occupational Health Service are required to confirm to Recruitment when a candidate is fully EPP cleared prior to that candidate's date of commencement of employment with the Trust.

Where applicable the OH Service will inform an employee of the date their EPP clearance will expire which should be within one month of the expiry date to allow sufficient time to attend an appointment for further tests. At the same time

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OH Service will notify the employee's line manager that their member of staff's EPP status is about to expire.

Staff are reminded that they have a personal responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and this includes ensuring that their EPP status does not expire.

The OH Service will comply with PHE guidance on immunity and vaccination requirements for EPP clearance.

Further information can be found in the Trust's Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Policy and the IPC Safe Practice guidelines.

6.4 **Blood Borne Virus (BBV) Transmission**

BBVs include Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV. The OH Service will aim to minimise the risk of BBV's in accordance with PHE guidance according to the risks identified for a specific job role.

All Trust employees and volunteers have a professional duty to report instances where the transmission of BBVs may have occurred so that testing may be performed, appropriate treatment commenced, if required, and restriction to practice applied if advised necessary by the OH Clinician. OH will advise employees or volunteers who have been exposed to BBVs as a result of a 'sharps' incident or a body fluid splash of the appropriate course of action. In relation to the process for the management of inoculation incidents managers and employees should refer to the Trusts guidance document 'Prevention and management of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses' which is available on the Trust intranet.

OH will report all reported cases (anonymised) of BBV exposure and their causes to the Infection Prevention and

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Control (IPC) Group for possible changes in practice and for any lessons to be shared.

The Training Team, through the IPC group, identifies training needs for employees in relation to inoculation incidents and utilises this information to draw up a training needs analysis.

All clinical employees are required to attend mandatory, corporate and local inductions which include information on the safe handling and disposal of sharps and the prevention and management of occupational exposure to blood-borne viruses.

7.0 Statutory Requirements

- 7.1 NHS organisations are required to ensure that employees and volunteers have access to an Occupational Health Service as defined in the NHS Plus Standards which can be found at www.nhsplus.nhs.uk
- 7.2 The statutory requirements that apply to OH Services include clinical, health and safety, data protection and relevant workplace legislation.
- 7.3 It is within these legislative requirements and guidelines, that the Occupational Health Service will base its service provision.
- 7.4 The Occupational Health Service will also be mindful to ensure future compliance with other relevant guidelines, which may come into existence, further legislative developments and relevant Government and Department of Health (DoH)/PHE Guidance.

8.0 Additional Services Provided By Occupational Health

8.1 In addition to, and in support of, the Trust's mandatory and statutory requirements, Occupational Health will undertake the following:

- Provide advice in the event of ill health relating to its employees;
- Provide advice on rehabilitation for work and/or redeployment within the Trust;
- Provide advice on applications for ill health retirement;
- Provide information about the Trust's Health and Wellbeing Department including its Occupational Health Services as part of the Trust's corporate induction for new staff;
- Provide advice and information aimed at promoting the benefits of physical, social and mental wellbeing to its service users;
- Undertake job specific individual health assessments as necessary and advise managers and individuals accordingly if any modifications or adjustments are required to fit the job or workplace to the individual;
- Contribute to Trust policies and procedures where Occupational Health advice is required;
- Support the annual programme of flu vaccinations if required;
- Contribute to the delivery of proactive wellbeing activities which promote physical and mental wellbeing if required.

9.0 Support to Staff

The services below are provided on an equitable basis to all employees from the first day in post with the aim of assisting employees to maintain good health, assist in keeping employees at work or facilitate their timely return to work

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after a period of absence. The following support is offered
and available to our employees.

9.1 Absence Reporting

All employees are required to contact their local management team on the first day of absence or as soon as it is known they are unwell. This would usually be directly to their line manager or through the use of a nominated local duty manager telephone number for absence reporting.

9.2 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Access to a comprehensive EAP is available to all employees. The service provides a variety of support mechanisms ranging from debt management, career support and dependent care advice.

Should an individual require counselling support the employee may self-refer to the EAP and access either face-to-face or telephone counselling.

Should a manager identify an employee experiencing difficulties that may benefit from access to counselling support a referral may be made to the EAP only with the employee's consent. Referral forms are available on the Trust's intranet.

9.3 Crisis Line

Access to a crisis line to support someone in severe emotional distress in the moment; extreme stress reactions, suicidal thoughts. It is vital that staff use this number only if in severe immediate crisis.

9.4 Body fluid exposure line

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Access to a dedicated phone line to report and seek advice on body fluid exposure, including needlestick injuries

9.5 Medication advice line

Access to a dedicated line to seek advice regarding personal medications

9.6 VDU Glasses

On receipt of the completed Habitual VDU user form found as part of the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users Policy Including Visual Display Unit the wellbeing team Occupational Health will issue a corporate eye care voucher to be redeemed by the employee at the Trust's chosen Optician.

10.0 Monitoring

The Wellbeing Lead and their team will be responsible for liaising with, and monitoring the performance of, the OH provider. The OH provider will provide regular management information to facilitate this, and regular contract meetings will be held to monitor and make performance improvement where required.

11.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or amended in the light of new legislation and/or guidance.

12.0 References

- {1} Brazier M. Medicine, Patients and the Law. 3rd Edition Ch 3
- {2} Data Protection Act (2018)

Monitoring Table – Occupational Health Policy

What	Who	How	Frequency	Evidence	Reporting arrangements	Acting on recommendations	Change in practice and lessons to be shared
What key element that need monitoring	Role or group who will lead on this aspect of monitoring?	What tool will be used to monitor/ check/ observe/ asses/ inspect/ authenticate that everything is working according to	How often is monitoring needed How often should a report be completed?	What type of evidence will be presented	Who or what committee will the completed report go to and how will this be monitored. How will each report be interrogated to identify the	Which committee, department or lead will undertake subsequent recommendations and action planning for any or all deficiencies and recommendations within reasonable timeframes?	How will system or practice changes be implemented lessons learned and how will these be shared.

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		this key element	How should a report be shared?		required actions and how thoroughly should this be documented in e.g. meeting minutes		
<i>OH Contract performance against agreed Key Performance Indicators and provision of services outlined in contract</i>	<i>The Wellbeing Team led by the Health and Wellbeing Manager and supported by the OH Contract and Projects Lead</i>	<i>Monthly MI report from OH provider</i>	<i>Reported monthly</i>	<i>Monthly MI report from OH provider</i>	<i>Workforce Committee The lead or committee is expected to read and interrogate any report to identify deficiencies in the system</i>	<i>Acting on recommendations will be the responsibility of the Wellbeing Team, led by the Health and Wellbeing Manager, supported by the OH Contract and Project Lead.</i>	<i>Required changes to practice will be identified and actioned within a specific time frame. The OH contract Lead and Projects Lead will liaise with the OH contract provider lead to take each</i>

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					<i>and act upon them</i>	<i>Required actions will be identified and completed in a specified timeframe.</i>	<i>change forward where appropriate. Lessons will be shared with all the relevant stakeholders.</i>
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Equality Impact Assessment



EIA Cover Sheet	
Name of process/policy	Occupational Health Policy
Is the process new or existing? If existing, state policy reference number	V7.0
Person responsible for process/policy	Equality Impact Assessment Panel Members
Directorate and department/section	Health and Well-Being
Name of assessment lead or EIA assessment team members	EDI MANAGER
Has consultation taken place? Was consultation internal or external? (please state below):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Union - HR Policy Sub Group - Heads of Operations - Health and Well-being Team

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<p>The assessment is being made on:</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Guidelines</td> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Written policy involving staff and patients</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 5%;">X</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Strategy</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Changes in practice</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Department changes</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Project plan</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Action plan</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;">Other (please state)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;">Training programme.</td> </tr> </table>	Guidelines		Written policy involving staff and patients	X	Strategy		Changes in practice		Department changes		Project plan		Action plan		Other (please state)		Training programme.	
Guidelines																			
Written policy involving staff and patients	X																		
Strategy																			
Changes in practice																			
Department changes																			
Project plan																			
Action plan																			
Other (please state)																			
Training programme.																			

Equality Analysis
<p>What is the aim of the policy/procedure/practice/event?</p> <p>This policy outlines the purpose and functions of the Occupational Health Service in meeting the Trust’s organisational needs in the context of its commitment to the Health and Wellbeing of its staff as well as its legislative and Department of Health (DH) guidance requirements.</p> <p>This Policy Applies to: All Trust employees;</p>

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Prospective employees;
Volunteers.

This policy outlines the purpose and functions of the Occupational Health Service in meeting the Trust's organisational needs in the context of its commitment to the Health and Wellbeing of its staff as well as its legislative and Department of Health (DH) guidance requirements.

Who does the policy/procedure/practice/event impact on?

Race	✗	Religion/belief	✗	Marriage/Civil Partnership	✗
Sex	✗	Disability	✗	Sexual orientation	✗
Age	✗	Gender re-assignment	✗	Pregnancy/maternity	✗

Who is responsible for monitoring the policy/procedure/practice/event?

Health and Wellbeing Department

What information is currently available on the impact of this policy/procedure/practice/event?

- Reasonable Adjustments Guideline
- Disability Tool kit
- Disability Policy
- Permanent Medical Redeployment
- Sickness Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Line Managers Working Guide on Supporting Hybrid Working

Do you need more guidance before you can make an assessment about this policy/procedure/ practice/event?

NO

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Are there any concerns that this policy/procedure/practice/event could have a negative impact on any of the following characteristics? Yes/No, if so please provide evidence/examples:

- | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Race | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/belief | <input type="checkbox"/> | Marriage/Civil Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> | Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sexual orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gender re-assignment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pregnancy/maternity | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please provide evidence:

No evidence of negative impact has been identified as yet that would have an effect on the protected characteristics mentioned above.

Action Plan/Plans - SMART

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time Limited

Evaluation Monitoring Plan/how will this be monitored?

Who

How

By

Reported to