

## ORCHID HEALTH AND ORCHID SAFETY

Your health and your safety is not about just adhering to the law - the law **does insist** you follow guidelines and it **does say** what you must do and how you must behave within your place of work. Health and Safety is also about looking after you, looking after your colleagues, looking after the workplace and looking after the people you care for, this means if you are on any medication that could affect your judgment or your alertness, or you are not feeling well, then you must inform your Manager who will make the decision on whether you can work or not.

All workers, whether they are permanent staff, agency workers or contractors, need to be aware of issues that may affect their health and safety at work. You all need to become more aware of the health and safety issues that affect you and your responsibilities, this will help us all to play our part in improving health and safety in the workplace.

For Hospital workers there are now available two new specific risk assessments one for the HCA and one for the qualified nurse, the generic risk assessment which you are all aware of, which is on the reverse of your timesheet, should be filled in each and every time you go to work, if only where the comments/feedback section is, as this keeps Orchid aware all the time of what is going on and, if we see the same risk or problem appearing more than once we will investigate the situation.

If you get involved in a violent situation then please tell us, write it down on the reverse of your timesheet. If you suffer abuse please let us know as this is all Health and Safety. We appreciate that violent situations and abuse are potentially different subjects, but remember your risk assessment is important here, as it can be done at the time.

### **Did you know that:**

- All workers have a right to work in places where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. The primary responsibility for this is down to the employer.
- Workers will always be represented by Orchid providing they have followed guidelines and following our investigation, if it is serious, possibly a legal representative.
- Both workers and employers have a legal responsibility to look after health and safety at work together.
- Workers who contribute to health and safety at work are safer and healthier than those who do not.

### **Prevention:**

Health and Safety is about preventing injury and disease at work on an ongoing basis. 'Orchid' work closely with all our agency staff to help them secure their rights to a safe working environment.

Remember, employers and employees have statutory duties to protect people from risks caused by the work place. Health and Safety law requires employers to assess health risks and to decide what actions need to be taken. As you know there are specific regulations covering such issues as: lifting and handling, VDUs, work equipment, asbestos and its risks in the workplace, as well as personal protective equipment

## Agency workers' health and safety



Agency workers can face particular problems because for example, they may not be familiar with the business they are working in, or its particular hazards. The risks can be reduced through effective partnership and co-operation between the employment business in this case 'Orchid' and the user business, which is the Home or Hospital and importantly by you the worker, following best practice in areas such as risk assessment and communicating health and safety information to us.

### So could you all please

- Understand your duties in relation to 'health and safety'
- Use your Health and safety risk assessment
- Co-operate with 'Orchid' so we can protect our agency workers' health and safety'
- Remember and put into practice all your health and safety information and training
- Ensure you follow procedures when using equipment and follow Health and Safety instructions and guidelines.
- Using your risk assessments will help 'Orchid' monitor your ' health and safety' as an agency worker.
- 'Orchid' have a duty to control agency workers' working hours, so please tell us if a home books you directly, not only so we can pay you, but also because we must know for your sake.

### Health and Safety law

Health and Safety law is very extensive. The basis of UK health and safety law is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This sets out the general principles of health and safety compliance and is supplemented by various Regulations, some of which apply to all industries and some of which apply to specific industries, types of premises or specific health and safety issues.

There are Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) which are published from time to time containing guidance, examples of good practice and explanations of the law. Orchid do research and make every effort to inform you of any new changes.

The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) is the body responsible for health and safety policy and its executive arm, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for enforcement of health and safety law. In recent years the European Union has been influential in adopting health and safety measures which are implemented by member states, including, of course, the UK.

Health and safety law creates rights and obligations on employers and workers and protection extends beyond an employer's own employees to other workers also and visitors the employer's premises.

The employer's duties are to ensure, "so far as is reasonably practicable" the health, safety and welfare of workers, including stress at work. This has to be done by carrying out a risk assessment, not only by 'Orchid' initially and at interim periods but also by you our work force, this provides a chain of information, which in turn will be turned into providing on-going training to workers and others.

'Orchid' work hard at Health and Safety not only for our workers safety but also because failure by an employer (ie Orchid) to comply with health and safety law is an offence and may lead to prosecution by the HSE.

We hope that in addition to our Mandatory Health and Safety document always displayed in your Handbook that this additional document will encourage you to fill in your Risk Assessments and make you realise that to communicate awareness for all the right reasons is important.

REMEMBER BE ALERT, BE AWARE AND COMMUNICATE IN THE RIGHT MANNER

Linked docs: