

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH NEWSLETTER

NHSF, Workplace Health & Wellbeing Unit, HR, Issue 05.

LOOKING FOR HELP



Visit the website

www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing

For specific health and safety support and advice

[log your request](#) or

contact the Helpdesk on

1850 420420

10:30 –12:00

14:00 - 15:30

For Occupational Safety and Health training,

complete your [training request form](#) and attach to your [helpdesk request](#)

A Happy Healthy and Safe Christmas

The National Health and Safety Function wishes you all a happy, healthy and safe Christmas.



Through a dedicated website www.winterready.ie, the [Office of Emergency Planning](#) has released a series of publications “*Be Winter Ready*” as part of their winter ready campaign.

This information can help you prepare for winter and the unique hazards presented by the harsh weather. If you intend to travel; ensure your car is prepared for winter motoring, plan your journey, look at the weather forecast and remember to drive safely taking into account the rules of the road.

At this time of the year our homes can be more at risk from fire. Many local Councils post advice on the web to help keep everyone safe. The HSE has many tips to help keep your family safe at Christmas, please go to the HSE [Child Safety at Christmas](#) webpage to find out more.

Don't let your fitness routines lapse — get up and keep active. For tips and more information why not go to the [Get Ireland Active](#) homepage.

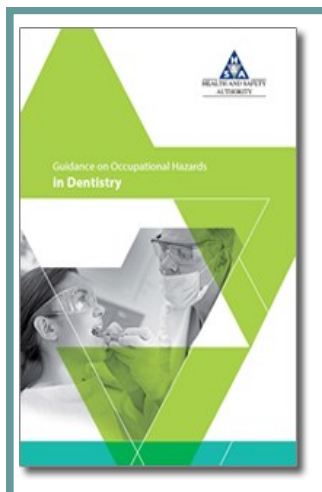


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WHAT'S NEW?

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has launched a new guide to assist in the systematic identification of occupational hazards in **dentistry** and to highlight preventative and protective control measures that could be adopted in order to mitigate the risks posed to workers to as low a level as reasonably practicable.



The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) launched a free short on-line course, aimed at helping employers to **manage safe driving for work**, on its e-learning portal <http://hsalearning.ie>.
Go to page 3 for more details.

A new Fast Fact 009:01 has been developed that provides simple guidance for new managers on where to go for health and safety information, support and advice. It can also be used by existing managers as part of their review systems.

Where to Start Guide for Managers
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Knowledge Base for Managers

Learning You Must Have

Source: [HSE LanD e-Learning](#)

1. [Managing Health and Safety in the Healthcare Setting](#) online course will provide an initial insight into a managers responsibility.

If you need more information about Risk Assessment, why not sign up for a RA workshop through the National Health and Safety Function (NHSF) [Helpdesk](#).

Risk Assessment is the continuous improvement of safe systems of work which will lead to a reduction in the number of workplace accidents and episodes of ill health.

A Risk Assessment Workshop will clarify what is the expected outcome from the risk assessment process.

2. [Systems Analysis Training](#) *(QPS Division) will provide investigative skills when incidents occur.

3. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) [DSE e-Learning](#) programme.

4. [Manual Handling Training e-Learning](#)

Documentation You Must Read

Source: [National Health and Safety Function \(NHSF\) Website](#)

Read and familiarise yourself with the HSEs' Corporate Safety Statement.

Get to know the key elements of a successful safety and health management programme.

Make sure there is a signed site/service specific safety statement in your area to include current risk assessments for example, this is a non-exhaustive list:

- General Risk Assessment
- Electrical Safety
- Equipment
- Chemical safety
- Sharps
- Biological Agents
- Pregnancy Risk Assessment
- Manual handling
- Environmental
- Slip, trips and falls
- DSE Risk Assessments

Ensure all incidents are recorded, investigated and reported via the NIMS system to the State Claims Agency and that learning takes place.

Ensure all necessary health and safety records are maintained for when we visit.

Review and audit to continue improving. We can help you with this.

Communicating about this with others

Source: [National Health and Safety Function Website](#)

Consulting with your staff is really important.

Make sure your management/team meetings always have health and safety as an agenda item.

Think about the need for a specific health and safety committee/meeting for your area.

Involve staff in the risk assessment process and give them feedback on risk assessments, inspections audits and meetings.

Ideas for Communication:

- Notice Board
- Shared folders
- Links
- Make Health & Safety part of your conversation.

Don't Forget We Are Here.

For Further Advice contact the Helpdesk and request support



Or call 1850 420 420, 10:30 -12:00hrs

and 14:00 – 15:30hrs

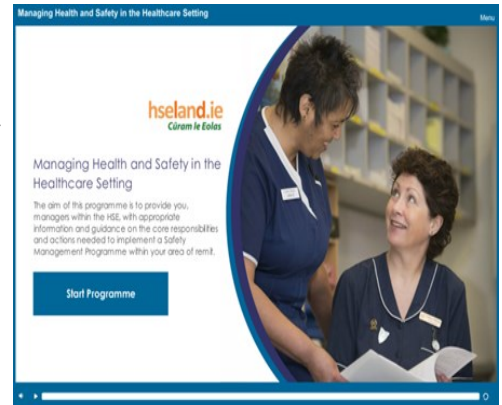
You're only a click away from Expert Advice

LAUNCH OF e-LEARNING PROGRAMME FOR MANAGERS

In order to support managers in carrying out their roles and responsibilities when managing health and safety in the workplace, the National Health and Safety Function has developed and launched an e-learning programme which is available on HSELand titled *“Managing Health and Safety in the Healthcare Setting”*.

Each topic in the programme addresses a key aspect of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the steps involved in successfully managing occupational safety and health and welfare in the HSE. This programme is informative, interactive and includes insightful interviews with managers within the HSE who share their experience of managing health and safety when implementing a Safety Management Programme in their place of work. The programme also provides a useful overview of the information and guidance available through the National Health and Safety Function and its website.

Additional information on accessing the programme can be found on the website or you can go directly to HSELand (located under National Health and Safety Function catalogue) Health and Safety Function catalogue) and enrol.



DRIVE SAFELY FOR WORK

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) states that “At least a quarter of all road collisions involve people driving for work.” The HSA has launched a free on-line course on its e-learning portal <http://hsalearning.ie> aimed at helping employers to *“Manage Safe Driving for Work”*. The 30 minute online course was developed in partnership with the Road Safety Authority (RSA) and An Garda Síochána. It will assist managers to understand their legal obligations and manage the main risks associated with driving for work.

On completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Recognise the key considerations when managing driving for work risks
- Outline the key factors in managing driver behaviour
- Identify the main risk factors in managing vehicles
- Understand the importance of journey management practices.

LEARN AND SHARE

A Care Home operator has been fined £1.5m after an elderly resident died following a fall down a set of steps. The care home manager received a nine-month jail sentence, suspended for two years.

The 76-year-old resident died from severe head injuries days after falling down

an unlit internal concrete fire escape in November 2012.

At an earlier hearing in July, the court heard that the resident, who was intermittently confused and unsteady on his feet, had previously opened fire escape doors to exit the home.

The Care Home had no risk assessment for stairway safety, which meant there were no controls to stop a resident wandering through an unsecured fire door into an unlit stairwell which had no handrail.

The home’s manager was charged with failing to take care of others affected by

her work.

Shortly after the incident, the company restricted access to fire doors by fitting suitable devices.

When completing your risk assessments ensure you take account of all persons in the workplace.



Wishing you a Happy Healthy and Safe Christmas



Health and Safety Consultation

In the HSE's People Strategy under Priority 2 "Staff Engagement", the HSE has committed to prioritising "effective two way communication as a core enabler of meaningful staff engagement".

In line with this commitment, the HSE actively promotes and supports employee engagement when establishing arrangements for securing co-operation in the workplace on all matters pertaining to safety, health and welfare.

The National Health and Safety Function has produced [guidance documents](#) on the establishment of local Health and Safety Committees.

The guidance includes a sample terms of reference including; roles, memberships, accountability and reporting relationships of the committee.

It also states that where integrated committees exist, staff safety, health and welfare is afforded appropriate time to address all relevant issues at each meeting and receives appropriate action.

ERSI REPORT ON COMMON WORK-RELATED ILLNESSES

Newly published research undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) identifies the two most common types of work-related illnesses as:

- work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)
- work-related Stress, Anxiety and Depression (SAD)

Risk factors associated with Work-related MSD (50% of work-related illnesses).

- No gender difference after factors such as sector and work conditions (e.g. hours) are accounted for
- 35 to 64 year olds are 2.5 times more likely to experience MSD than workers aged less than 25 years
- Highest risk in the construction, agriculture and health services sectors
- Lowest risk in the education sector and in "other services" (finance, information and communications)
- No strong link to working hours
- Shift workers and night workers have a greater risk
- New recruits face a greater risk compared to more experienced

workers

- The research shows that the risk of MSD's was lower in the years where there was a high health and safety inspection rate

Risk factors associated with Work-related Stress, Anxiety and Depression (SAD) (18% of work-related illnesses).

- 5.8 per 1,000 of female workers experience this type of illness compared to 4.0 per 1,000 of male workers
- 6 per 1,000 workers aged 35 to 54 years experienced SAD illnesses
- Highest risk in the education sector, followed by health, public administration, transport and "other services" (finance, information and communications)
- Lowest risk in the agriculture, construction and industry
- Greater risk for those working over 50 hours/week (three times more likely than those working less than 30 hours/week)
- Shift workers at greater risk
- New recruits have a higher risk of SAD

Implications to consider

- Ensure that you include MSD's and SAD's in your risk assessments.
- Older workers are most at risk of MSD. In the context of an ageing workforce, it is important to consider measures that minimise the risks of MSD and assist those experiencing such illnesses
- Employers find it difficult to assess and manage mental health risks, therefore further information and supports, such as [stress management tools](#) may prove useful
- There is a necessity to monitor work-related illnesses in sectors with greater risks of SAD and MSD and in organisations which operate shift work and night work. Addressing the "long-hours culture" in workplaces is likely to reduce SAD
- Specific measures are required to assist new recruits, who face higher risks of SAD and MSD illnesses, such as training and supervision.

HSE Resources:

[Stress Management Tools](#)
[Manual Handling Training, HSE Land](#)
www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing
[ESRI report](#)