

Health, Safety and Wellbeing topic - Laboratory Safety

Things to look out for



Chemicals

Hazardous substances which can cause health risks such as skin irritation

Reduce the risk:

- Carry out Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) risk assessments
- Store chemicals in appropriate chemical cabinet
- Display the COSHH inventory on the door of the chemical cabinet above head height

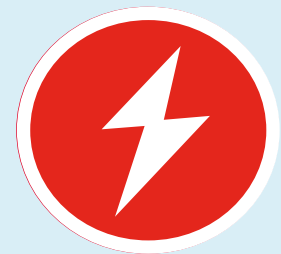


Blood Contamination

Infection via a blood splash or open wound from a biological agent

Reduce the risk by:

- Appropriate protection is worn when handling blood / tissue eg gloves, lab coat
- Cover open wounds with a plaster
- Lab coats or gloves changes asap when contaminated
- Report to Sharpsline



Equipment

Risk of electrical hazards

Reduce the risk by:

- Risk assessments
- Cleaning, maintenance and inspection in line with manufacturer / supplier guidance
- Before all maintenance by an engineer the equipment should be decontaminated
- All broken / faulty equipment removed and labelled correctly



Waste

inc clinical waste which can cause of risk of infection

Reduce the risk:

- Segregate all waste correctly, stored and removed from lab
- Ensure you are using the correct clinical waste contained for the waste
- Do not overfill clinical waste containers



Lab environment

Risk of slips, trips and falls

Reduce the risk:

- Practice good housekeeping
- Lab seating suitable for the flooring used on
- Using only designated cleaning products and follow clear cleaning procedures



Re-observation

Re-visit colleagues with whom hazards were identified in your previous observation to reinforce behavioural change

Reduce the risk:

- Discuss with colleagues why the hazard has not been removed
- Organise for your local Health and Safety advisor to provide best practice examples

A behavioural safety observation is the key to identifying hazards in the way people carry out tasks before an accident happens.

The idea is to visit your team and observe the work for a few minutes, identifying things that are good as well as bad and then discuss the points with your team. The information on the other side of this sheet may provide some guidance on what to look for.

Below is advice on how to carry out the conversation and what to look for in the observations.

Introduce yourself

- Advise the observee who you are if they don't know and why you are there
- Advise all observations are anonymous
- Watch the whole process you are observing
- Record good and poor practice
- Only interrupt if there is an immediate danger of injury or worse

Immediate feedback

- Feedback directly to the person you have observed
- Reinforce POSITIVE behaviour by telling them what they did well
- Have an open and honest conversation with the observee

Do this by asking the right question in the right way

- Highlight what they have done correctly and present any issues as a question for them to answer:

Q. Does everyone do it that way?

Q. What is slow / inconvenient uncomfortable about doing that safely?

Q. What is the worst thing that could happen with that approach?

Q. How would that affect your spouse, children, partner, children, friends, colleagues?

Q. What could be done to address the issue highlighted?

Date	What was observed?
What went well?	
What didn't go well? <small>- Please report all issues as near misses</small>	
What could be better?	
How can we improve?	