

New and Expectant Mothers in the Workplace

This Management Process Description replaces
MPD368/1.1

Copy Number

Effective **12/02/16**

Summary of Significant Changes
Reference to Awareness Record (FRM3408) removed as it is no longer active.

Policy

It is the policy of NHSBT to ensure the health and safety of: new and expectant mothers; women of child bearing age; and, the born and unborn child.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to enable NHSBT to protect the health and safety of: new and expectant mothers employed by NHSBT; women of child bearing age employed by NHSBT; and, the born and unborn child.

Responsibilities

Line Managers (Managers) are responsible for the effective implementation of this procedure within their Department.

Human Resources (HR) are responsible for providing information on any risks as part of the recruitment process.

New and Expectant Mothers must notify their Manager of their condition as soon as possible and co-operate with them in relation to any modifications made to their work to ensure their health and safety.

Definitions

Must

This is the minimum criteria that is to be met. Any standard below this is not acceptable.

Should

Where reasonably practicable this criteria is to be met.

New or Expectant Mother

An employee who is pregnant; who has given birth in the previous six months; or who is breast feeding.

Woman of child bearing age

Any female employee who is of an age where she may conceive a child.

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Applicable Documents

The legislation applicable to new and expectant mothers includes the Health and Safety at Work Act, and the following regulations and codes of practice:

Regulations and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
- Employment Rights Act
- New and Expectant Mothers at Work (HSG 122)

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Process Description

Certain work activities may have adverse health effects on New and Expectant Mothers and their children at work and women of child bearing age who may be trying to conceive. By identifying these activities, NHSBT can protect these individuals from any adverse health effects from work activities they undertake.

General Requirement – Current Staff

Managers must ensure that risk assessments in respect of new or expectant mothers are carried out for all work activities undertaken by women within their Department. A competent Risk Assessor must carry out all the risk assessments. These risk assessments must identify whether there is a health and safety risk to new and expectant mothers or women of child bearing age who may be trying to conceive, from specific work activities.

Where a risk assessment identifies a health and safety risk to new and expectant mothers, the risk must be made known to all women of child bearing age within the Department. Line Managers must ensure that this is undertaken and an appropriate record of this must be kept.

No other requirements are necessary at this stage. However, once a female member of staff formally notifies her Line Manager in writing of her pregnancy, the next section 'On Notification of Pregnancy' will come into effect.

On Notification of Pregnancy

The Manager must go through the risk assessments with the expectant mother, completing a separate risk assessment specific to the expectant mother taking into account her current capabilities.

The Manager must review the assessment with the individual on a regular basis, as a minimum monthly, to ensure work patterns are altered as necessary to take into effect the continuing pregnancy and for the first six months when she becomes a new mother or is breast feeding. This review must be formally recorded.

The Manager must forward copies of these risk assessments to Human Resources (HR) for inclusion on the individual's personnel records.

Where the risk assessment, specific to the individual, identifies that working conditions need to be modified, the Manager, with HR if necessary, must ensure this is undertaken and should document what has been done. Where it is not possible or feasible then the individual may need to be suspended from work for as long as necessary to avoid the risk, and they must remain on full pay during this time.

If the expectant mother undertakes night work and the Manager receives a certificate from a medical practitioner / registered midwife stating that the individual should not work at night for health and safety reasons, then the Manager must stop the individual carrying out night work whilst retaining the individual on full pay.

The Manager and HR have the right to request, in writing, to view the medical practitioner's / midwife's certificate confirming the pregnancy. If the employee fails to submit this within a reasonable time there is no obligation on the Line Manager to change the employee's work patterns / conditions to accommodate their condition.

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Recruitment of New Staff

Managers must forward information relating to any significant health and safety risks to new and expectant mothers identified in the risk assessments to HR for inclusion with all job specifications.

HR must, as part of the recruitment process, forward this information to any prospective female employee of child bearing age to ensure they are aware of any health and safety risks relating to the job they intend to do.

On commencing work, the Line Manager must remind female employees of any issues as part of their Departmental induction and should keep a record of this.

Exclusions

None.