

Health and Safety Policy

NHS Devon

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Policy Lead	Director of Estates
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01/07/2022	New Policy	1.0	New Policy
10/11/2023	Policy Amendment	1.1	Amalgamated Display Screen Equipment policy and updated for NHS Devon.
01/12/2023	Policy Amendment	2	Review and feedback from Staff Partnership forum and Independent Health and Safety Advisor.
15/07/2025	Policy Review	3	Reference to Pomona House removed.

Equality, diversity and inclusion statement

NHS Devon is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities, addressing health inequalities and fostering of good relations between people protected under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and Human Rights legislation. We are equally committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To demonstrate this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies, strategies and operating procedures. Every effort is made to ensure that patients, employees, contractors or visitors do not experience discrimination; either directly or indirectly, because of their vulnerability; disadvantage; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex (gender) or sexual orientation.

All staff must comply with this policy. Compliance must reflect our organisational commitment to and policy on, equality, diversity and inclusion. In addition, each manager and member of staff involved in implementing this policy must give due regard to the needs of those protected under law.

If you, or any other groups, believe you are discriminated against under the terms of the Equality Act, the Health and Care Act 2022 or Human Rights legislation by anything contained in this document; or you need this document in an alternative format, for example, large print, Braille, Easy read or other languages; please

contact our Patient Advice and Complaints Team (PACT):

Tel: 0300 123 1672

Email: d-icb.patientexperience@nhs.net

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1. Introduction

The Devon Integrated Care Board (NHS Devon) is fully committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all staff in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulatory guidance.

NHS Devon has appointed an independent health and safety adviser and has identified the Estates team to keep under review the NHS Devon Health and Safety Policy, co-ordinate matters of Health and Safety management and provide an annual report in accordance with the corporate calendar to the Executive Committee and Staff Partnership Forum.

NHS Devon is a tenant of:
Aperture House, Pynes Hill, Exeter, EX2 5AZ

NHS Devon has the responsibility for health and safety within their own working areas within Aperture House. Communal areas within buildings are the responsibility of the landlord or their appointed agent as determined in relevant lease agreements held by the Director of Estates.

2. Purpose and objectives

NHS Devon attaches great importance to the health and safety of its staff and recognises its legal obligations to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff, so far as is reasonably practicable.

This policy supports NHS Devon to:

- provide and maintain standards of health, safety and welfare, which comply fully with Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and any other statutory provisions, or approved codes of practice relevant to the nature of the business
- provide and maintain equipment and systems of work that are suitable, safe and without risk to health
- provide all staff with sufficient instruction, information and supervision to develop and encourage safety awareness in order to work in a safe manner
- provide a safe place of work including safe access and egress.
- establish joint consultation on matters of Health and Safety in order to help identify risks and to assist in the prevention of accidents; and
- ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, that the operations of NHS Devon are safe and without risk to the Health and Safety of visitors and the local community.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff of NHS Devon and for whom NHS Devon has a legal responsibility. For those staff covered by a letter of authority/honorary contract or work experience, the organisation's policies are also applicable whilst undertaking duties for or on behalf of NHS Devon. Further, this policy applies to all third parties and others authorised to undertake work on behalf of NHS Devon.

4. Definitions

Terms	Definition
DATIX	Internal incident reporting tool for NHS Devon staff
COSHH	Control of substances hazardous to health
ESR	Electronic Staff Reporting system
DSE	Display screen equipment
FRA	Fire Risk Assessment
PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

5. How Health and Safety is supported in NHS Devon

5.1 Fire and emergency evacuation

NHS Devon will ensure a fire risk assessment is conducted (in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) for the premises it occupies and ensure that appropriate control measures have been implemented and maintained.

Instruction regarding fire prevention and emergency procedures will be provided for all employees during induction. Details of fire procedures will be located around the premises, and staff should familiarise themselves with these

Emergency evacuations prompted by incidents other than fire will have the same essential principles for fire evacuation, although may not be signalled by an audible alarm, but via fire wardens / senior staff who will provide instructions of escape routes. Specific instructions will be issued to staff as the need arises.

Personal Emergency Evacuation plan (PEEP's) will be undertaken where required in conjunction with the staff member their line manager and the Building Coordinator and overviewed by either the Health & Safety Competent person or Health and Safety Lead for NHS Devon.

5.2 Electrical Safety

NHS Devon will liaise with the landlord to ensure that all fixed electrical systems are in compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations, and where a defect is found, will ensure that the fault is rectified, either by repair, or removal/replacement.

Portable electrical equipment and testing is completed on a regular basis coordinated by the Building Coordinator. All authorised personal electrical equipment must have undergone testing before use.

All staff should report any defects to their line manager with immediate effect and raise an incident via [DATIX](#). The installation or tampering of any electrical equipment by employees/workers is not permitted.

5.3 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Risk assessments will be undertaken to ensure staff and other persons do not become harmed in any way from exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace. Where elimination of that substance is not possible, effort will be made to find a lower risk substitute.

Any potentially hazardous substances identified will be suitably stored and labelled correctly. Appropriate information will be readily available relating to the natural characteristics of a particular substance, and suitable control measures and contingency plans will be in place to ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of an accident or injury.

Full training and information will be given to all staff that are required to handle hazardous substances. For further guidance on COSHH regulations please refer to the Health and Safety Executive COSHH Regulations.

5.4 Manual Handling

All NHS Devon staff are required to undertake mandatory Manual Handling training every 3 years via the e-Learning tool on ESR.

Consideration is given to the elimination of significant manual handling activities wherever practicable with provision of risk assessment for significant risks, and special equipment where appropriate.

Training, supervision and information can be given to staff by competent people prior to work being carried out.

5.5 Display Screen Equipment

All staff who are dependent on the daily and prolonged use of Display Screen Equipment are classed as “display screen users”. NHS Devon will ensure that risk assessments are carried out to identify any workstation hazards and risks that a display screen user maybe exposed to.

New starters are asked to complete a self-user DSE assessment (appendix 1). If desk accessories are required upon completion of a DSE Assessment NHS Devon will liaise with the line manager to purchase the appropriate equipment as far as is reasonably practical.

A workstation exists wherever there is DSE (including portable DSE in prolonged use, such as laptops). The workstation as defined is the assembly including the screen, keyboard, other parts of the computer and its accessories (such as the mouse or other input device), the desk, chair and the immediate work environment.

It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure they adhere to the same health and safety requirements both in the office environment and if working from home. For those staff who work from home a [Homeworker Assessment](#) is also available for completion, this includes a risk assessment of the workstation and surroundings and identifies any Display Screen Equipment required.

All DSE users should carry out an annual self-assessment of their workstation both within the office environment and if working from home as part of their appraisal, taking into account their physical characteristics, the display screen equipment, the furniture and the working environment.

Staff who have been advised by occupational health to purchase specialist workstation equipment for a long-term condition / disability under the Equality Act 2010 .i.e. specialist chair or height adjustable desk, will be supported by their line manager and the health and safety team to procure these items followed receipt of the occupational health review report. This is to ensure that the correct equipment is purchased. NHS Devon is unable to follow up a request for specialist equipment without the relevant clinical recommendation. The recommendation should be discussed and approved by the person's line manager in the first instance.

The likelihood of experiencing problems due to DSE use is related mainly to the frequency, duration, intensity and pace of continuous use of DSE, allied to other factors such as, the amount of discretion the user has over the extent and methods of display screen use.

Eye and eyesight tests are available free of charge for permanent staff who use Display Screen Equipment (DSE) as defined above. NHS Devon will incur the cost of corrective appliances (normally spectacles) needed to meet the requirements of the DSE Regulations up to the value of £100. Please refer to DSE Guidance at appendix 2 for further details.

For further guidance on working with visual display units please refer to the Health and Safety Executive Regulations 1992

5.6 General Safety and Environmental considerations

NHS Devon will work with the landlord at each site to ensure that:

- electrical and fire control systems are correctly maintained.
- control measures are in place to ensure communal walkways are free from obstruction at all times.
- control measures to deal with ice and snow are in place at our premises
- control measures are implemented in the event of any incident and risk assessments undertaken by qualified staff.

5.7 Building Maintenance

The Director of Estates will have arrangements in place for planned preventative maintenance for all key building services such as air-conditioning, hot and cold-water supplies, lighting, cleaning, fire equipment in the communal areas and alarm systems, security systems, sanitary facilities and general decoration. A review of these form part of a quarterly building check.

Agreements will be made with the landlord and Director of Estates where financial limits allow for such maintenance, and appropriate records will be kept of all maintenance, breakdowns and repairs.

In the event of emergency breakdowns, the reporting officer must make essential information available to the relevant Building Coordinator / landlord or other designated persons at NHS Devon with senior officer powers for that site.

5.8 Working Environment

NHS Devon will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the working environment is a safe and healthy one. Provisions will be made in order to comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations. Where staff have any concern, this must be highlighted to the relevant line manager, the Building Coordinator and the Director of Estates.

ICB staff must only park their cars in designated areas and adhere to any local or national guidance as required. The roadways must not be obstructed. Any traffic cones to prevent obstructive parking must not be removed.

5.9 Lone working

NHS Devon acknowledges its duty to make adequate provisions for the Health and Safety of lone workers in the workplace. Lone working is acknowledged as a significant risk and all foreseeable risks associated with lone working should be identified, assessed and controlled as appropriate. Further information can be found in the [Flexible Working Policy](#).

5.10 Security

NHS Devon has security measures in place for its premises. These will be actively monitored and reviewed to ensure the safety of staff, visitors, and equipment. Any issues or concerns should be reported to the Building Coordinator.

5.11 Mobile Telephones

In line with guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) the use of handheld mobile phone whilst driving is strictly forbidden. It is the advice and strong recommendation of NHS Devon that mobile phones, even when legally used, should not be used when driving and preference should be given to only using mobile phones when stationary. Guidance is available from the Health & Safety Executive.

Consideration must be given to proper rest breaks and staff must not be contacted involuntarily outside normal working hours. Mobile phone users are therefore entitled to switch off their phones during rest breaks, whilst driving and when they are not working.

5.12 Health Surveillance

NHS Devon will endeavour to promote and maintain the highest practicable degree of physical, mental and social wellbeing of its employees. All health aspects of work process and procedures, which may adversely affect the relationship of work on health, will be regularly reviewed.

Health monitoring is conducted, normally at beginning of employment and through line management arrangements. Where an employee advises of a particular impairment, NHS Devon will conduct a risk assessment to ensure that risks from work activities are minimised. A referral to occupational health services will be provided where required.

5.13 Third Party Contractors

Third party contractors are managed by NHS Devon (for their remit only) together with the Landlord; therefore, it is the duty of both parties to retrieve and retain all third-party contractors' safety documentation for work undertaken under their responsibility. This will include documents confirming appropriate competency (training certificates, qualifications), liability insurance, and where appropriate, copies of risk assessments/method statements.

All contractors that attend NHS Devon premises out of hours will be provided with Health and Safety arrangements and guidance and issued with permits for work where applicable. Responsibility for management of the contractors out of hours will be that of the landlord for work being undertaken on their behalf. Management of contractors for any work undertaken on behalf of NHS Devon out of hours will be coordinated by the Director of Estates, and the Building Coordinator informed of any works to be undertaken.

5.14 Visitors

All visitors to NHS Devon premises will be required to sign in at reception and adhere to any health and safety control measures that have been implemented. Whilst on NHS Devon premises, the visitor will become the responsibility of the host they are visiting, and who will remain responsible for the visitor's health, safety and welfare whilst they are on site. The host is to ascertain in a sensitive manner whether the visitor might have any perceived difficulty in responding to an emergency evacuation.

In the event of an emergency alarm, the host is to ensure that the visitor is evacuated from the building in line with the relevant local procedures.

5.15 Risk Assessments, Inspections, and Audit

Quarterly workplace inspections

The assessments cover areas of compliance including chemical, contractor control, display screen equipment, electrics, environmental, fire, first aid, housekeeping, lone working and security, manual handling, training records and statutory notices. Assessments are undertaken by the Building Coordinator.

Annual Risk Assessments / Safety Audit

Annual site risk assessment / audit is carried out by the Competent Advisor and the Building Coordinator to identify hazards at our premises. The assessment states what the hazards are, the risks associated with them, who might be harmed and how. Appropriate control measures will be put in place to reduce risks and regular reviews will be undertaken.

5.16 Training

Provision will be made ensuring staff receive adequate information, instruction and training with respect to Health and Safety where appropriate. It is a requirement of the ICB that all staff complete the mandatory e-learning Health & Safety module, every 3 years via the e-Learning tool on ESR.

5.17 Reporting an incident (accidents & near misses)

It is NHS Devon policy to report any incidents, accidents and near misses in order for an investigation to be conducted to eliminate/minimise the possibility of such an event occurring again in the future. Further information can be found in the [Internal Incident and Accident Management Policy](#).

In the event of an accident or incident relating to a health and safety matter, the injured party (staff / visitor / contractor), or another person on their behalf must report using [DATIX](#). The Datix icon can be found on each ICB employees' desktop.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) is the law that requires employers, and other people in control of work premises to report and keep records of:

- Work related accidents that cause death
- Work related accidents which cause certain specified injuries
- Diagnosed cases of certain occupational diseases; and
- Certain “dangerous occurrences” (incidents with the potential to cause harm).
- Any other requirements as set out by national guidance which are included in NHS Devon's [DATIX](#) system

The Director of Estates and / or NHS Devon's independent competent advisor will agree whether an accident is reportable via the criteria as set by RIDDOR and in line with any additional national requirements that may be implemented at any given time.

All reportable events under RIDDOR shall always be thoroughly investigated by the Line manager, and/or Director of Estates.

Learning from all reportable events (anonymised) will be shared through staff bulletins as appropriate.

6. Accountabilities, Duties and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer	The Chief Executive Officer has ultimate accountability for the strategic direction and operational management of NHS Devon, including compliance with all legal, statutory and policy requirements.
Policy Sponsor	The Policy Sponsor is responsible for: - ensuring that policy is appropriate for consideration for approval; - endorsing this policy ahead of submission for approval; - with the Policy Lead, maintaining and updating procedures/protocols and other supporting documents for this policy;
Policy Lead / Author	It is the responsibility of the Policy Lead / author to: - ensure as far as possible that the policy is in line with Department of Health and Social Care guidance, legal requirements and advice from clinical bodies; - to complete a QEIA and Implementation Plan where required - undertake a fair and proportionate consultation period with the relevant stakeholders as part of the document's development - to ensure that the policy is in alignment with NHS Devon's strategy and values - ensure that the policy is developed, approved, disseminated and monitored as set out in the document; with Policy Sponsors, maintaining and updating procedures / protocols and other supporting documents for this policy.
Director of Estates	The Estates team is responsible for ensuring that the organisation has robust systems and processes in place to ensure effective health and safety. The team, as directed by the Chief Finance Officer, will: - liaise with other staff members to provide appropriate advice when required. - provide organisational analysis to inform the Executives on a quarterly basis for assurance and the staff partnership forum bi-annually.
Building Coordinator	The Building Coordinator will support by: - Consulting with local managers and staff on Health & Safety matters - Co-ordinating risk assessments, reports and other information as appropriate for feedback to the Health and Safety Lead as appropriate. - Ensuring safety inspections and relevant records are maintained for relevant premises.

	• Ensuring that the necessary work equipment is adequate, available, properly maintained and used appropriately • Ensure essential equipment such as first aid boxes and fire extinguishers are in date and available • Arrange necessary health and safety training where applicable such as first aiders and fire wardens • Attend as appropriate Staff Partnership Forum meetings • Bring any health and safety issues to the attention of their line manager and NHS Devon's Director of Estates as soon as possible
Executive Committee	Receives assurance on NHS Devon's compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act.
Staff Partnership Forum	Has a role in reviewing the systems and processes in place to ensure this is up to date and accessible for all staff.
Line Managers	Line managers have a responsibility to ensure their staff comply with NHS Devon policies and standards within their areas of responsibility.
All Staff	Employed or engaged staff have a duty to comply with NHS Devon policies and standards as outlined in their contracts of employment and codes of conduct.

7. Implementation

All staff will be informed of the approval of the Policy via the Staff Bulletin which will provide a link to the document on the NHS Devon Intranet.

NHS Devon Senior Managers, or their designated representatives, will implement this policy by:

- Notifying all staff of its existence. New staff will be informed of this policy as part of their induction.
- Destroying all superseded paper-based versions of the policy and electronic versions retained in their area.
- Having adequate knowledge of, and / or access to, all relevant legislation in order to ensure that compliance with such legislation is maintained.
- Discussing with staff as part of their regular one-to-ones how they seek to achieve their individual objectives around policy review and maintenance.

8. Approval and Review

The approval route for this policy will be via the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Communications and Corporate Affairs Officer.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, in order to ensure that it is current, relevant and reflects the strategic aims, objectives, organisational structures and responsibilities of NHS Devon.

9. Monitoring compliance and effectiveness

The policy will be monitored by the Health and Safety Lead, supported by the Building Coordinator by ensuring the regular monitoring takes place in line with the risk assessments and inspections.

Review of this policy should be every year or should there be any significant changes to legislation or if there has been a reportable incident which requires the policy to be amended.

10. Quality & Equality Impact Assessment (QEIA)

A QEIA has been completed and the following findings have been identified.

- The policy does not discriminate against any protected groups of staff within NHS Devon
- The policy has a positive impact on all groups of staff within NHS Devon

11. References

Other related policy documents

- 11.1 NHS Devon Flexible Working Policy
- 11.2 NHS Devon Internal Incidents and Accident Management Policy

Legislation and statutory requirements

- 11.3 [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
- 11.4 [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- 11.5 [Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](#)
- 11.6 [Health and Safety Executive](#)
- 11.7 [The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013](#)
- 11.8 [COSHH Regulations](#)

Appendix 1 DSE Self-Assessment check list

Displace Screen Equipment Self- Assessment Check List			
Employee Name		Date	
Department / Directorate			
The completion of this checklist will enable you to carry out a self-assessment of your own workstation. It is important to complete this form as accurately as possible in order to ensure your health & safety at work.			
Display Screen	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Can you easily adjust the brightness and contrast between the characters on the screen?			
Does the screen tilt and swivel easily?			
Is the screen image stable and free of flicker?			
Is the screen at a height which is comfortable for you?			
Is the screen free from uncomfortable glare?			
Keyboard			
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?			
Is the keyboard able to tilt?			
Can you easily see the symbols on the keys?			
Is there enough space in front to rest your hands and wrists?			
Work desk or surface			
Is the desk surface large enough to allow you to place all equipment where you want it?			
Is the height of the desk suitable?			
Does the surface have a matt finish (non-reflectance)?			
If you have a document holder, is it stable and adjustable?			
If you do not have a document holder, would one be of benefit?			
Chair			
Is the chair stable?			
Can you adjust the height of the seat whilst sitting?			
Can you adjust the height and angle of the back rest?			
Does it allow movement?			
Is the chair in good state of repair?			
If your chair has arms, do they get in the way?			
Can you place both feet flat on the floor? If the answer is No, is there a foot rest provided?			

Environment			
Have you enough space to allow you to change position and vary your movements?			
Do windows have adjustable blinds?			
Is the lighting suitable for you?			
Are you distracted by noisy equipment?			
Is the temperature/ventilation comfortable all year round?			
Are storage facilities safe, secure and adequate?			
Is the cabling tidy? I.e. not presenting a trip hazard.			
Are precautions in place to enable patient and/or staff confidentiality to be respected			
Signature		Date	
If this self-assessment has identified any problems or you are experiencing any aches or discomfort which may be associated with your workstation, raise these concerns with your line manager. Advice is also available from the Health and Safety Team d-icb.healthandsafety.nhs.net and support available from the HR Team. Forward your completed assessment to HR for inclusion on your personnel file. Should any issues be identified please ensure that your line manager is informed at the earliest convenience and where necessary contact the Health and Safety Lead d-icb.healthandsafety@nhs.net			

Appendix 2 – DSE Guidance

DSE Workstation Self-Assessment checklist.

The DSE Self-Assessment checklist (Appendix A) is the first stage in the assessment process and for the majority of staff will be sufficient to ensure you are avoiding exposure to risks of disorders or strains due to poor posture or a badly set up workstation. Most people will be happy to do the self-assessment but if you need assistance please ask your manager or a colleague.

For further information or advice on this policy please contact:
d-icb.healthandsafety@nhs.net

Employees are encouraged to undertake a DSE self-assessment at least annually and/or when their office environment changes and to report health problems to their line manager as soon as possible to ensure that any mitigations and corrective action can be considered and implemented.

DSE Homeworking Checklist

The ICB has taken a proportionate, pragmatic and risk-based approach to consider employees needs to ensure reasonable steps have been taken to accommodate both working from home arrangements and on site arrangements. All staff are encouraged to complete a homeworking self assessment to ensure staff welfare is paramount. When completing the form, it should be completed in full and discussed with your line manager in the event of any considerations to improve your workstation at home be identified. ([Homeworker Assessment](#))

Making adjustments to suit your needs. What can I do to help myself?

Make full use of the equipment provided and adjust it to get the best from it and to avoid potential health problems. *Here are some practical tips:*

Getting comfortable

- Adjust your chair and visual display unit (VDU) to find the most comfortable position for your work. As a broad guide, your forearms should be approximately horizontal on the worktop, and your eyes the same height as the top of the VDU.
- Make sure you have enough workspace to take whatever documents or other equipment you need.
- Try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents to find the best arrangement for you. A document holder may help you avoid awkward positioning.
- Arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections on the screen. This will be easiest if neither you nor the screen is directly facing windows or bright lights.
- Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent unwanted light or glare.
- Make sure there is space under your desk to move your legs freely. Move any obstacles such as boxes or equipment.

- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of your seat on the backs of your legs and knees. Use of a footrest may be helpful.
- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position. A space in front of the keyboard is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not keying. It would be useful to have a gel pad strip to rest on whilst typing or resting, so that the wrists are not at an acute angle.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when keying. Keep a soft touch on the keys and don't overstretch your fingers. Good keyboard technique is important.
- The image below illustrates good posture at your workstation:



Reading the screen - *Using a mouse*

- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with the wrist straight.
- Sit upright and close to the desk, so you don't have to work with your mouse arm stretched. Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support your forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly. Rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.
- There are different sizes of mouse's available to suit larger and smaller hands.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- In setting up software, choose options giving text that is large enough to read easily on your screen, when you are sitting in a normal, comfortable working position. Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice-versa).
- Individual characters on the screen should be sharply focused and should not flicker or move. If they do, the VDU may need servicing or adjustment.

Posture

Don't sit in the same position for long periods. Make sure you change your posture frequently. Some movement is desirable but avoid repeated stretching to reach things you need (if this happens a lot, rearrange your workstation).

Breaks

Most jobs provide opportunities to take a break from the screen, e.g. to do filing, photocopying or to make a drink ensure that you make use of them. If there are no such natural screen breaks in your job, your manager should plan for you to have rest breaks. Frequent short breaks are better than fewer long ones. Ideally when using VDUs a 5-10 minute break each hour would be advantageous to health

What do I do if problems remain?

Where your self-assessment identifies problems that cannot be easily and quickly resolved by you adjusting your workstation; or where you are experiencing muscle pains, strains, stress or visual disturbance which could potentially be linked to the workstation, working pattern or equipment, your manager will discuss in more detail and where necessary arrange for a referral to Occupational Health. To arrange this please copy your self-assessment to your manager and ask that a referral is made. As your employer we will take steps to reduce any risks identified.

Care is to be taken when using specialist equipment that has been bought for individual needs such as adjustable desks and chairs. These should be labelled so to let their colleagues know either not to change the settings or to return to that individual's set up. Where possible, chairs or small items can be removed to a designated area or locker.

Corrective Appliances

Corrective appliances (normally spectacles) provided to meet the requirements of the DSE Regulations will be designed to correct vision defects at the viewing distance used specifically for display screen work. *It should be noted that in most working populations only a minority (usually less than 10%) will need special corrective appliances for display screen work (1).* Those who need special corrective appliances may include users who already wear spectacles or contact lenses, or others who have uncorrected vision defects.

Corrective appliance includes the provision of specialist chairs, mice and keyboards which can be supplied without the requirement of an occupational health assessment at a reasonable cost to the ICB.

Employer's liability for costs

Eye / eyesight tests

The duty on the ICB is to provide an eyesight test on recruitment, on request, periodically (no more than annually) and when a member of staff changes roles. If you believe you should be classified as a DSE user you should ask your manager, if this is agreed according to the criteria in section 3.2. A DSE form for use by line managers and finance (Appendix B) should be completed before any arrangements are made with an optometrist. The ICB will reimburse the reasonable costs afterwards, in line with the detail in section 7.5.

‘Special Corrective Appliances’ (spectacles)

Where a DSE user’s own standard spectacles / contact lenses are sufficient for their DSE use, these should be used and the employer does not become liable for the cost of these or for future replacements.

The ICB’s liability for helping with the cost of spectacles is limited to situations where *an employee’s need for the spectacles / lenses is created by their use of DSE at work*. The majority of people who require spectacles / lenses in order to use DSE at work will already use spectacles / lenses in everyday life for reading small print, using computers at home, etc. Therefore, it is not usual for the above condition to be met and the ICB will not be liable for help with costs of spectacles.

If an optometrist confirms that you specifically require spectacles for your DSE use at work (*not for everyday life*) you must obtain written, signed confirmation of this from the optometrist.

In those circumstances the ICB’s liability is restricted to payment of the cost of basic spectacles, i.e. of a type and quality adequate for your work in this instance. The ICB is required to meet the costs associated with providing a basic frame and standard single vision lenses. The ICB will not reimburse the costs of special lenses such as high-index (‘thinner’) lenses, bi-focals, varifocals or treatments such as tinted or coated lenses *unless specifically identified as a requirement for visual stress (in which case, as a reasonable adjustment under the equality & diversity Act 2010, a referral should be made by a specialist advisor (e.g. Access to work) for colorimetry testing. Supportive evidence from an optometrist or orthoptist with expertise in this field would be required)*. Similarly, the ICB will not pay for higher-cost ‘designer’ frames. As a guide, a *maximum total* cost of £100 would be payable if you meet the criteria and with a supporting letter from your optometrist.

If users choose spectacles to correct eye or vision defects for purposes which include the user’s work but go wider than that, the ICB need contribute only the costs attributable to the requirements of the job.

If users wish to choose more costly appliances (for example with designer frames, or lenses with optional treatments not necessary for the work), the ICB will not pay for these but will meet the costs associated with providing a basic frame and the prescribed lenses. In these circumstances’ managers will ask for a detailed invoice in order to identify the elements of the costs which the employer is liable for.

Reimbursement of costs.

In all cases, obtain agreement from your manager before committing to any costs. It must be clear that: You meet the DSE user criteria in section 3.

If spectacles are required specifically for DSE use at work, rather than only the standard spectacles you would normally wear, the ICB will make a contribution towards the cost of spectacles required for DSE work and refund the cost of an eye test that is not greater than the value of an NHS sight test. It will not exceed the cost shown on the receipt if less than this.

‘Normal’ corrective appliances are at the user’s own expense, but users needing ‘special’ corrective appliances will be prescribed a special pair of spectacles for display screen work. The ICB’s liability for the cost of these is restricted to payment of the cost of a basic appliance, i.e. of a type and quality adequate for the user’s work, this has been agreed by the ICB Executives as £100. However, users are permitted to choose spectacles to correct

eye or vision defects for purposes which include the user's work but go wider than that, the ICB will contribute only the costs attributable to the requirements of the job.

A refund equivalent to the cost of a basic pair of spectacles can be claimed via your manager authorisation & finance. The user is at liberty to choose spectacles more costly i.e. designer frames but any additional cost must be paid by the user. For the purpose of this policy the ICB uses the cost of a pair of basic corrective appliances available from a national reputable ophthalmology service provider at the time as the maximum re-imbursement.

- If you do not meet these criteria your claim will not be met.
- Where it has been agreed that the ICB is liable for costs the following method of reimbursement shall be followed:
- Submit your claim to your manager for authorisation. You should pay all costs to the optician and obtain receipts for the payment/s.
- You must also obtain signed confirmation from the optician that the spectacles are specifically required for your workplace DSE use.
- Receipts for all amounts claimed, along with signed confirmation from the optician, should be submitted on the expenses system.

Appendix 2 – Eye test letter

Date :

Dear Optician

NameDirectorate.....

The person presenting this letter is an employee of Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and requires an eye sight test which must specifically ensure that the examination includes the test for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) use. Would you kindly therefore please confirm this examination has been carried out by completing the section below.

Iam conversant with the standards recommended by the Association of Optometrist for VDU / DSE operators and in my opinion the above named patient.

Does / Does not satisfy the standard without spectacles / contact lenses.

Does / Does not require spectacles to be provided with the prescription solely for use with a VDU / DSE.

Does / Does not require spectacles to be provided with a combined prescription which include use with a VDU / DSE

Additional comments

.....
.....
.....

An eye test is recommended again in

Cost of eye test £

The cost of the budget frames & single vision lenses to fill the requirement of spectacles solely for the use of DSE / VDU equipment is prescription total £

Please attached a copy off the full invoice to this letter

Yours sincerely

NHS Devon CCG

Manager's authorisation for reimbursement

ManagerDepartment.....

Amount authorised.....

*Please note that claims will only be valid for 6 months from the date on the receipt.
Requests for reimbursement will not be processed after that period.*