

OHS

instructions



OHSI 3.4 Pre-Employment Health Assessment

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1. Purpose and Scope

To ensure that employees' health is assessed prior to employment or transfer to establish whether:

1. They are medically fit to perform their proposed duties and are reasonably likely to remain so, taking into account company policy on disability and attendance.
2. There is any pre-existing condition or impairment that would necessitate a restriction of duty or adjustment in the workplace, or might later be confused with the effects of future employment.
3. Any periodic health assessment or health surveillance will be required in the future.
4. They are medically eligible for company benefits e.g. pension or healthcare.
5. The employee would be classed as a disabled person under the Equality Act 2010.
6. The employee consents to communication of relevant information to line management.

Applies to all departments and operating units.

2. Definitions

Occupational health nurse

Registered general nurse with a post-registration specialist qualification in occupational health nursing recognised by the statutory nursing bodies of the UK or:

Registered general nurse who has received specific training from and is under the supervision of an occupational health nurse or occupational physician.

Occupational health physician

Registered medical practitioner with diploma or higher qualification in occupational health (AFOM, MFOM, FFOM or specialist accreditation)

Health assessment

Any assessment of an individual's health that is intended to determine whether the individual is fit to perform a particular task or whether the individual's health has been (or may be) affected by performing a particular task.

Health surveillance

A form of health assessment that is a statutory requirement under health and safety Regulations and is intended to detect adverse health effects at an early stage, thereby enabling further harm to be prevented. Additional benefits include the facility to check on the effectiveness of control measures, provide feedback on the accuracy of risk assessments, and identifying individuals at increased risk.

Disabled person

A person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The terms "disabled person", "condition", "impairment" and "adjustment" will have the same meaning as in the Equality Act 2010 and associated Regulations and Guidance.

3.Principles

Pre-employment and pre-transfer health assessment will

1. Take place after successful interview or selection process but before a final offer of employment is made.
2. Take into account the outcome of any risk assessment, in order to protect health and safety.
3. Include an assessment of fitness to perform night-work, where relevant.
4. Not have the effect of treating disabled persons less favourably in seeking or retaining employment, unless this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Contractors, agency staff and self-employed persons must be able to show that their health has been assessed to a similar standard as employees.

Medical confidentiality must be maintained and any pre-employment health questionnaire must be forwarded directly to occupational health.

Health Records must be kept, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.Responsibilities

4.1. First line manager / HR manager

Ensure that employees' health is assessed prior to employment or transfer. Applicants living a significant distance from a company occupational health department may be permitted to attend their General Practitioner for a medical examination; the results to be forwarded to occupational health.

Ensure that the person performing the health assessment is provided with details of:

1. Job title and duties to be performed.
2. Hours and shift pattern to be worked.

3. Any specific health risks that could give rise to a requirement for health surveillance.
4. Person to be contacted with results.

Make sure that any agreed work restrictions are adhered to.

The Human Resources procedure for requesting pre-employment health assessment is set out in Appendix 2, see references for suitable forms.

4.2. Occupational Health Nurse

Conduct a pre-employment or pre-transfer health assessment in accordance with Appendix 1. In certain cases part of the assessment will have been delegated to the employee's GP.

Explain the occupational health confidentiality and data protection arrangements.

Where appropriate, initiate any periodic health surveillance or health assessment programme, administering additional questionnaires and performing examination / tests in accordance with the relevant policies.

Notify the employee and relevant manager of the outcome of the health assessment with a written statement of fitness to work including any restrictions on work activities.

Consult with the site occupational physician when there is doubt about an individual's ability to meet the required standard.

Update any recall list or bring-up system so that the employee will be recalled for periodic health assessment and/or health surveillance at the correct intervals.

Ensure that all employees who attend for health assessment are reminded of the reasons for doing so, the symptoms that should be reported and confidentiality arrangements.

4.3. Occupational Health Physician

Make additional enquiries / carry out examinations as appropriate when there is doubt about an individual's ability to meet the required standard.

Inform the manager, occupational health adviser and employee, in writing, of the outcome and any work restriction.

5. Audit Criteria

Do health assessments take place after the applicant has passed a selection process and prior to commencing employment?

Is information concerning proposed job and associated risks provided to occupational health?

Is medical confidentiality maintained?

Have health assessments been carried out correctly in accordance Appendix 1?

Did management receive clear, written, information concerning the outcome of the assessment?

6.References

OHS Instructions:

OHSI 2 – Medical Records and Confidentiality
OHSI 4 – Driver fitness
OHSI 5 – Screening Audiometry
OHSI 6 – Asthmagens and Spirometry
OHSI 7 – Foreign travel
OHSI 8 – Skin Surveillance
OHSI 9 – Food Handlers
OHSI 10 – Hand Arm Vibration
OHSI 11 – Anaphylaxis
OHSI 12 – First Aid Training

OHS forms:

PreEmQ.doc – HR referral form and pre-employment questionnaire.
PreEmpOutcome.doc – form to notify outcome of health assessment to management.
Consent.doc – Access to Medical Reports consent form.
Confidentiality.doc – Details of data protection and confidentiality arrangements.
DearDr.doc – Covering letter for GP performing pre-placement medical.

7.Revision History

Author	Issue	Date	Reason for revision	Review by
David Shackleton	1	March 2000	First Issue	March 2001
David Shackleton	2	March 2001	Incorporate Data Protection	March 2003
David Shackleton	3	October 2010	Incorporate Equality Act	October 2012
David Shackleton	4	September 2011	Minor	September 2013

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Appendix 1. Health Assessment - Pre-employment or transfer

1. Criteria for inclusion

All prospective employees and persons transferring to a new position who have:

- Received an offer of employment, subject to medical assessment.

AND at least ONE of the following applies:

- Employment will be 3 months or more in duration.
- A specific fitness standard must be met.
- The person may be exposed to significant health risks in the course of their work.

Contractors, agency staff and self employed persons may also be included if their own arrangements are inadequate, subject to local agreement.

2. Frequency of assessment

After an offer of employment or transfer has been made but before commencing work.

A similar, but voluntary, health assessment may be offered near to the time of retirement or leaving employment.

3. Content of assessment and fitness standard

Questionnaire, height, weight, pulse, blood pressure, visual acuity (each eye, distance and near, with and without correction), colour vision (City test or Ishihara), hearing (conversation and screening audiometry), general mobility and flexibility, skin check (hands, face), urinalysis, spirometry.

Specific groups: - Any additional examination or tests associated with specific health surveillance, fitness for work assessment or entry into company benefit schemes as appropriate.

Assessment	Standard
Questionnaire	No positive response
Vision – acuity	6/9 distance and N8 near, binocular, with correction if worn. Snellen and near vision charts OR a vision screener may be used
Colour vision	Record result of City University test or Ishihara
Cardiovascular	Pulse regular 50 – 90 at rest Blood pressure not consistently above 180/100
Mobility and co-ordination	No obvious impairment of joint movement, co-ordination or mobility that would prevent safe performance of intended duties.
Hearing	Able to hear normal conversation. Record HSE audiometry category.
Spirometry	FEV1 80% of predicted or more FVC 80% of predicted or more FEV1/FVC 75% or more
Skin	No significant skin lesion
Urinalysis	No glycosuria or proteinuria.

Notes:

1. The table gives a basic standard and additional criteria may apply for specific occupational groups – see references.

2. At some locations Office Workers may be accepted on the basis of a negative questionnaire alone.

Office workers are clerical, administrative and managerial personnel whose normal duties are confined to an

office environment. They are not office-based personnel who may be regularly exposed to occupational health risks because they work outside the office as a normal part of their duties e.g. quality assurance, inspection, health and safety, production management.

3. Initial audiometry may be delayed until shortly after commencement of employment if the employee attended their GP for examination, unless a specific audiometric standard must be achieved to be declared fit.

4. Local rules may include a requirement for drug and alcohol screening, special tests or immunisation in certain groups e.g. safety critical or business critical employees.

4. Criteria for Referral

Applicants will be considered fit for employment or transfer if they give a negative response to the questionnaire, meet the standards listed above and any specific standard that may apply in the circumstances.

A positive response to the questionnaire may be disregarded if it is clearly of no occupational significance.

Where the above standard cannot be met the occupational health nurse will discuss the case with the occupational physician who may:

- seek additional information from the applicants GP or Specialist, having obtained consent under the Access To Medical Reports Act and / or
- arrange to examine the individual

before passing a medical opinion on the person's fitness for work and any restrictions or adjustments that may be necessary.