

NURSDOC

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COSHH

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COSHH POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure that Nursdoc Limited follows the COSHH law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health.
- 1.2 To support Nursdoc Limited in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

KEY QUESTION	KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?
SAFE	S4: How does the provider ensure the proper and safe use of medicines?
SAFE	S5: How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?
WELL-LED	W2: Does the governance framework ensure that responsibilities are clear and that quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements are understood and managed?
WELL-LED	W4: How does the service continuously learn, improve, innovate and ensure sustainability?

- 1.3 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Nursdoc Limited is registered to provide:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances and Mixtures Regulations 2015 (CLP)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- Care workers
- Registered Manager
- Other management

- 2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

- 2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Commissioners
- External health professionals

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To keep staff and Service Users at Nursdoc Limited safe by providing data sheets of ingredients of hazardous substances and up-to-date risk assessments.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 COSHH is the law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health. Nursdoc Limited must prevent or reduce workers' exposure to hazardous substances by:

- Deciding what the health hazards are
- Gauging how to prevent harm to health
- Providing control measures and making sure they are used
- Regularly monitoring control measures
- Providing information and training for employees and other relevant individuals

- Providing monitoring and health surveillance in appropriate cases
- Planning for emergencies

4.2 COSHH substances can take many forms and include:

- Chemicals and products containing chemicals
- Fumes, vapors, dusts and mists
- Gases and asphyxiating gases
- Biological agents – (packaging will have a hazard symbol)
- Nanotechnology

4.3 Nursdoc Limited understands that using chemicals or other hazardous substances at work puts people's health at risk. The law requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill health. They must protect both employees and others who may be exposed by complying with the COSHH Regulations. Control measures must be determined by the level of risk to health and must take into account:

- Elimination and/or use of alternative, less hazardous substances and materials where possible
- Modification of the use or process to eliminate, isolate or reduce exposure
- Elimination and/or reduction of numbers of people exposed to the hazardous substance
- The outcome of any environmental monitoring, as appropriate, which has been undertaken by a competent person
- The provision, maintenance and use of any control equipment required
- Preparing plans and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies
- Ensuring employees are properly informed, trained and supervised
- The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce or control exposure to hazardous substances/materials. PPE should be regarded as a 'last resort' in providing protection from exposure to substances hazardous to health

Failure to comply with the identified control measures may result in disciplinary action.

4.4 **Managing Director**

The Managing Director has specific accountability to ensure that responsibilities for Health and Safety, including the management of hazardous substances, are effectively assigned, accepted and managed at all levels in Nursdoc Limited consistent with good practice. This duty is delegated to others within Nursdoc Limited.

4.5 **Health Safety and Infection Control Lead**

The Health Safety and Infection Control Lead is responsible for:

- Providing competent advice, information and training on health and safety legislation relating to hazardous substances
- Ensuring that occupational hygiene monitoring arrangements are in place for identified staff and teams
- Liaising with others, e.g. Occupational Health, Infection Control Lead as appropriate
- Reporting any significant exposure to a substance to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as required under the Reporting of Incidents, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Ensuring competent advice and support in relation to the control of infection arising from hazardous substances are provided to employees
- Ensuring that managers are made aware of any relevant advice required to enable continued safe working practice
- On request, assisting in investigating incidents relating to biological agents

4.6 **Clinical Leads and Care Leads**

Clinical Leads and Care Leads have delegated responsibility for implementing the policy within their areas of responsibility. This includes but is not limited to:

- Bringing this policy to the attention of staff within their area of responsibility
- Compiling an inventory of hazardous substances
- Ensuring that COSHH assessments are carried out in their area of responsibility and are accessible to staff using the hazardous substances to which they relate
- Ensuring that staff have appropriate information, instruction and training before using hazardous substances and are familiar with how to use any control measures
- Selecting the correct type and specification of PPE where the risk assessment indicates that it is needed. The correct type and specification should be made using manufacturers' guidance. Further guidance about the selection and use of PPE can be found in the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure
- Carrying out or arranging appropriate exposure monitoring and/or health surveillance where required

4.7 **Care Worker Responsibilities**

Candidates must:

- Be aware of the contents of any COSHH Assessment relating to any substance that they may encounter in the workplace
- Follow any safe systems of work that have been identified in the assessment
- Take steps to minimise exposure to themselves and others
- Make full and proper use of control measures including reporting any defects
- Wear any PPE provided, including Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE), correctly and in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions
- Co-operate with any health surveillance or monitoring as requested
- Promptly report all incidents concerning the use, storage, disposal or accidental release of hazardous substances in accordance with the Accident and Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure at Nursdoc Limited

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 In order to comply with the requirements of the COSHH Regulations, Nursdoc Limited must:

- Carry out risk assessments
- Prevent or control exposure to hazardous substances
- Identify and select suitable control measures
- Provide information and training in the use of controls
- Ensure that there are arrangements to deal with accidents and emergencies
- Carry out exposure monitoring where required
- Carry out health surveillance where appropriate

5.2 COSHH and PPE

Clinical Leads at Nursdoc Limited are responsible for ensuring that PPE is suitable for its intended purpose, appropriately maintained, cleaned, inspected, stored and replaced as required.

Care workers at Nursdoc Limited are required to use the PPE provided in accordance with the training they have been given and report any faults/defects or concerns regarding PPE to their manager.

5.3 COSHH Assessment

A COSHH assessment must identify the hazards and risks associated with the use of substances. It will also contain details of precautions to be taken to control the risks associated with their use.

The COSHH Assessment Form at Nursdoc Limited must be completed for all substances in use. The form, together with the Product or Material Safety Data Sheet (PSDS / MSDS), should be retained in a suitable file or a designated computer-based folder.

5.4 Identify which Substances are Hazardous

- Compile a list of the substances used in a particular area. This will create an inventory
- Obtain PSDS or MSDS from product suppliers
- Identify from the data sheets which substances are hazardous and why
- Consider whether the substance will be in the form of liquid, gas, dust, fume or mist. The data sheets will provide information about the type of hazard in the form of hazard symbols as required by the European Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances (CLP) Regulation
- If the substance has been assigned a safe exposure limit in the HSE'S EH40 document, this will also indicate that a substance is hazardous in nature
- Include biological hazards such as bodily fluids (e.g. blood, vomit, urine)
- Include substances created by the process, including waste products

5.5 Decide who Might be Harmed and How

- Consider who might be exposed to the substance and for how long. This will include staff working directly with the substance, other staff working in the area, such as cleaners and maintenance staff as well as contractors or visitors who pass near to or enter the work area
- Examine work activities and work out what substances a member of staff may be exposed to, how often and for how long
- A separate risk assessment should be carried out for groups of employees who may be at increased risk, such as pregnant workers, young people under the age of 18 and members of staff with increased susceptibility due to allergies or health conditions, e.g. asthma or dermatitis

5.6 Prevent or Control Exposure

The main aim is to prevent exposure to hazardous substances, but where this not possible or practicable, Nursdoc Limited must adequately control exposure. The priority for addressing exposure is based on the level of risk. This should take into account:

- How hazardous the substance is
- How often individuals are exposed and for how long

Substances with low, short-term exposure limits, based on 15 minutes of exposure that are identified in the EH40 document, generally have a more rapid or serious impact on health than those with a higher exposure limit.

5.7 The COSHH Regulations advocate a hierarchy of controls that must be considered in the following order:

PREVENT EXPOSURE:

- **Elimination:** The COSHH Regulations state that the most effective method of preventing exposure to hazardous substances is not to use the substance or to eliminate the production of hazardous waste or by-products. This could be achieved by changing or modifying the method of working so that the process causing exposure is not required
- **Substitution:** If the process cannot be eliminated, could an alternative, less hazardous substance be used instead? If not, could the same substance be used in a different form? For example, could a solid be used instead of a liquid or could pellets be used instead of a powder? These actions are a good step towards reducing exposure

Caution should be exercised when selecting alternative substances and any decision should be based on a balance between the existing and any newly created risks. For example, a new substance with a lower level of toxicity but increased flammability might be a greater risk than the original substance.

5.8 Control Exposure

ENGINEERING CONTROLS AND WORK PROCESSES

This would include using processes that minimise the amount of the substance used or produced, or equipment that totally encloses the process. Engineering controls separate the individual from the process. Exposure can be minimised by controlling hazardous substances at their source, rather than once they have been dispersed into the workplace. For example, local exhaust ventilation (LEV) may be used to control airborne contaminants.

WORKER SPECIFIC CONTROLS

These controls include the use of PPE such as protective clothing, face masks and respirators and limiting worker exposure by job rotation. Although a risk assessment may identify PPE as being necessary, other means of control should be given preference and, wherever possible, PPE must not be relied upon as the only means of protection. It is too user-dependent to be fully reliable and protects only the user.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

These include safe operating procedures, access permits, training and supervision. These are essential controls that do not sit in isolation but are used in combination with other controls. Staff must be provided with information about the hazards and risks associated with their work, and about the means of controlling those risks. Inexperienced staff may require close supervision to ensure that they understand the risks and the need for the controls (and how to use them). The level of supervision is a risk control which should be determined by the local manager.

5.9 Safety Data Sheets

- A data sheet must always be obtained for all hazardous substances. This will either be supplied to Nursdoc Limited with the delivery note or can be found on the website when clicking on the item ordered. If one is not available, the supplier must be contacted directly to obtain one
- By law, suppliers of chemicals must provide an up-to-date Safety Data Sheet if a substance is dangerous for supply
- The data sheet will be the base for the risk assessment

5.10 COSHH Folder

- Nursdoc Limited must have an emergency plan in place for when incidents happen with hazardous substances. Instructions on what to do will be stated on the data sheet and must be followed in the case of an emergency
- A dedicated COSHH file must be available with all data sheets and risk assessments in alphabetical order
- Staff at Nursdoc Limited must be aware of where the folder is kept in case of an emergency
- If an incident occurs where Nursdoc Limited or Service Users are involved in a hazardous substance incident that requires hospital treatment, a copy of the data sheet must be sent with them to help the medical team

5.11 Managing Accidents and Emergencies

The Product Standard Data Sheet (PSDS) or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) will provide information about suitable first aid responses for contact with the substance, any fire hazards and fire-fighting measures and how to deal safely with an emergency situation, such as a spillage.

5.12 COSHH Training

- Staff at Nursdoc Limited must be shown where the COSHH folder is and how to use it as part of their induction and training record
- COSHH should be discussed and documented in meetings to inform the team of any changes in legislation
- New hazardous substances at Nursdoc Limited and safe ways to use them must be discussed with all team members

5.13 COSHH and COVID-19

Regulation 6(1)(a) requires that Nursdoc Limited should not carry out work that is liable to expose employees to substances hazardous to health until all risks have been evaluated and minimised as set down in the regulations.

This risk assessment must be regularly reviewed, and immediately if there is any reason to believe it is no longer valid, there has been a significant change in the work to which the risk assessment relates or the results of health monitoring show it to be necessary. Any risk assessment and advice on suitable prevention and control measures must be carried out by a competent person. A COVID-19 risk assessment will consider:

- The hazardous properties of COVID-19
- The level, type and duration of any employee's exposure to COVID-19
- The circumstances of the work undertaken by the health care worker
- Any additional circumstances that give rise to a high risk of exposure (e.g. non-availability of PPE)
- The effect of any preventative and control measures that have been, or will be, taken
- The results of "health surveillance" (as to which, see further below)
- The results of the monitoring of exposure
- Any further information the employer requires in order to complete the risk assessment, e.g. limitations on cross-infection control measures as a result of limited availability of PPE

5.14 COVID-19 and Duty to Adequately Control Exposure under COSHH

It is the duty of Nursdoc Limited to ensure the safety of its employees and this requires Nursdoc Limited to take measures to prevent the risk of its employees' exposure to COVID-19 (e.g. social distancing measures in the workplace and working from home where possible).

Nursdoc Limited will design and use appropriate work processes (e.g. work rotation systems to minimise the time exposed to risks from COVID-19) and provide suitable work equipment appropriate to the activity and consistent with the risk assessment. Staff must ensure that the policies in the QCS COVID hub on cleaning, clinical waste, testing, infection control and PPE are read alongside this policy.

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 COSHH

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. COSHH law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health

6.2 Product or Material Safety Data Sheet (PSDS / MSDS)

- A Safety Data Sheet (SDS), Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS), or Product Safety data Sheet (PSDS) are documents that list information relating to occupational safety and health for the use of various substances and products

KEY FACTS – PROFESSIONALS

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- Data sheets and risk assessments for hazardous substances must be readily available
- New stock must be monitored for hazardous substances and new risk assessments implemented where needed
- New COSHH measures must be discussed in meetings to keep all the team up to date
- Risk assessments must be carried out for all hazardous substances
- The COSHH folder must be regularly maintained by a responsible person and any changes reported to the team

KEY FACTS – PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE SERVICE

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- Nursdoc Limited keeps you safe by keeping records and risk assessments for any substances that have potential to cause harm

SIGN OFF DATE:	17/06/2026
REVIEW DATE:	17/06/2027
SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director