

Policy and Procedure on risk assessment in pregnancy

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1. Policy

It is the policy of Malvern Special Families to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all employees, including particular measures to protect the health and safety of those who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

Malvern Special Families will fulfil its obligations by carrying out risk assessment for such staff and by putting appropriate measures in place to protect their health and that of their unborn child(ren).

The legislation pertaining to this is The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) which put a specific responsibility on employers to assess and control the risks on new and expectant mothers. The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) also applies, as discrimination on grounds of pregnancy (including a failure to conduct risk assessment under health and safety regulations) will be considered as unlawful sex discrimination.

2. Procedures and Guidance

2.1 Staff

An initial risk assessment will be carried out by the line manager of the pregnant member of staff, at the same time as discussion concerning maternity leave, maternity pay etc. where applicable. Employees are encouraged to advise their line manager of their pregnancy at an early stage, particularly if there may be health and safety concerns due to the nature of their work.

To facilitate the process of risk assessment, employees are encouraged to look at the risk assessment document in advance (see appendix 3) and to identify the hazards which may apply to them.

Where there are particular risks identified (e.g. Keywork with children who have challenging physical behaviour or substantial manual handling) a more detailed risk assessment will be carried out by the line manager, including discussion with the individual.

As part of the risk assessment, the line manager will identify any necessary control measures. These will be reported back to the manager/trustees, who will have responsibility for ensuring that they are implemented and that the situation is kept under review as the pregnancy progresses.

The risk assessment will need to be reviewed if the employee returns to work within 6 months of the birth of her baby, or if she is still breast feeding when she returns to work.

Control measures may involve making temporary changes to an individual's job or working conditions. In some cases, this may involve changes to an individual's role. In extreme cases, where suitable safe work can not be found, the law requires that the employee be suspended on full pay;

it is extremely unlikely that this situation will arise within the clubs due to the wide span of alternative work available.

Assessment process.

2.2 Responsibilities

The **employee** should:-

- Notify their line manager of their pregnancy at the earliest opportunity.
- comply with any measures identified through risk assessment which are necessary to reduce the risks to their health and that of their unborn child(ren); and
- advise their manager if the risk assessment needs to be reviewed during pregnancy due to changes in their health or to their role; and
- Notify their line manager, in writing, if they return to work within 6 months of the birth of the baby, or if they are still breast feeding when they return to work.

The **line manager** should:-

- carry out risk assessment in discussion with the individual; and
- recommend control measures as appropriate to reduce risk; and
- record these on the appropriate form, and copy this to the staff file, the individual; and
- refer to H&S regarding any areas of concern.
- review all risk assessments carried out; and
- carry out more detailed risk assessment where appropriate; and
- keep appropriate records of the above; and
- provide general guidance on safe working during and after pregnancy; and
- implement any recommended control measures; and
- Monitor the situation throughout pregnancy; and
- refer back to the manager if the risk assessment needs to be reviewed.

Health risk assessment in pregnancy – Guidance Notes

Nature of risk in pregnancy and control measures to consider

1. For low risk chemicals such as disinfectants regularly used by cleaners, the risk is relatively low and usual control measures such as wearing gloves will be adequate.
2. Some diseases such as chicken pox or German measles pose particular risks for pregnant women. Clubs should be vigilant about not taking ill or infectious children.
3. Work in small areas may increase the risk of musculoskeletal problems, particularly in later pregnancy when the body shape changes. Consider changing duties to avoid this, especially in late pregnancy.
4. Work on slippery or wet surfaces - the likelihood of falling may be higher especially in later pregnancy when the body shape changes. Falling carries a risk to mother and baby. Implement usual good practices to minimise slipping risks (e.g. clear signage, regular cleaning of wet areas).
5. Prolonged sitting and standing increases the risk of back pain, tiredness and varicose veins. Consider additional breaks, regular short walks, provision of a stool or chair if appropriate.
6. Repeated bending or stretching may increase the risk of back pain, especially in later pregnancy and also of fatigue. Consider additional breaks

7. Lifting and carrying poses increased risk of back pain in pregnancy due to softening of the ligaments. This is an issue right from the beginning of pregnancy. In later pregnancy, the risks are increased due to the changed posture. Consider additional breaks. Review tasks; reduce lifting and carrying as far as possible.
8. Working alone for long periods when pregnant holds increase in risk of ill-health requiring assistance. Review usual lone working policies, consider additional means for raising assistance if needed etc.
9. Overtime fatigue may be an issue; growth of the baby may be reduced if working long hours or very tired. Review working hours if indicated, consider whether work demands are excessive.
10. Work in hot conditions may make fatigue an issue, also risk of increased blood pressure. This may be an issue even in ordinary offices in particularly hot weather. Consider extra breaks in a cooler area if appropriate, ensure drinking water is available. Consider alternate duties if severe.
11. More frequent toilet breaks may be required during pregnancy. Consider redeployment if adequate toilet facilities are not available; consider whether a rest area is required.
12. Particular risks to keywork with children with challenging physical behaviour must be addressed as soon as Malvern Special Families are informed that a member of staff is pregnant. Consider alternate Keywork and duties.

Pregnancy risk assessment – process and responsibilities

Individual to inform line manager of pregnancy as early as possible.

A copy of the Pregnancy Risk Assessment form (Appendix 1) will be given to the individual.

Individual and line manager to meet and carry out risk assessment:-

- Review of form, discussion of possible risks
- Identification of control measures
- Completed form to be sent to the office to be kept in the individual's file and a copy is given to the individual

Line Manger to review risk assessment

- Contact with individual by phone/face to face if appropriate
- Identification of any additional control measures required
- Line manager gives advice to individual if additional control measures are identified
- The manager and trustees seek confirmation that the line manager will implement any recommended control measures.

Manager:-

- To ensure control measures are implemented;
- To ensure ongoing review and refer back if any concerns arise
- to ensure further review is carried out if the individual returns to work within 6 months of the baby's birth, or whilst breastfeeding

Appendix 1 Malvern Special Families - Checklist and Risk Assessment for new and Expectant Mothers

Step 1

The checklist should be completed first: this will help you to identify any hazards to the new or expectant worker.

Step 2

Enter Hazards onto the risk assessment form. Put any control measures in place to eliminate the risk, or reduce it to an acceptable level.

Note

The risk assessment should be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the pregnancy and any necessary control measures put in place.

Employee's name:	Job title:	Date:
Form completed by:	Line Manager's Name:	Review date:

Recommendations made by Doctor and/or Midwife including gestation period:-

1. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)		Yes/No	Further Action Required
1.1	Does the employee use a computer for long periods of time?		
1.2	Is the DSE work equipment and furniture such as the chair, suitable and comfortable for the employee?		
1.3	Has a DSE risk assessment been completed for the employee?		
<p><u>Risk</u> Inappropriate size, layout, or space in relation to the workstation or work area due to increasing size and reduced mobility, dexterity, balance during pregnancy.</p>		<p><u>How to Avoid the Risk</u> DSE assessments should be revised for new and expectant mothers to avoid problems caused by stress and anxiety and workstation size and set up.</p>	

2. Driving (Occupational Road Risk)		Yes/No	Further Action Required
2.1	Does the employee do a lot of driving as part of their job, such as to make home visits to clients or visiting other workplace establishments?		

<p>Risk Risks include fatigue, vibrations, stress, static posture, discomfort and accidents. These risks can have a significant effect on the health of new and expectant mothers.</p>	<p>How to Avoid the Risk New and expectant mothers should avoid sitting in static postures for prolonged periods. Prolonged periods of vibration should also be avoided.</p>
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3. Lone Working		Yes/No	Further Action Required
3.1	Does the employee work alone in the building or out in the community?		
3.2	Are control measures in place for lone working? Such as panic alarms, buddy systems?		
<p>Risk New or expectant women are more likely to need urgent medical attention.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk Lone working should be avoided.</p>	

4. Manual Handling		Yes/No	Further Action Required
4.1	Is the employee expected to carry or move heavy loads?		
4.2	Is the employee expected to carry or move children?		
4.3	Is the employee aware of safe moving and handling techniques?		
4.4	Has a moving and handling risk assessment been completed for the employee?		
4.5	Does the employee experience backache associated with moving and handling activities and poor work postures?		
<p>Risk Moving and handling injuries. Hormonal changes increasing susceptibility to injury, and postural problems may increase as the pregnancy progresses. After a caesarean section there is likely to be a temporary limitation on moving and handling capability.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk Alter the nature of the task to reduce risks from moving and handling. Specifically reduce the amount of physical work she undertakes, or providing mechanical aids to reduce the risks.</p>	

5. Physical Agents		Yes/No	Further Action Required
5.1	Is the employee exposed to whole body vibration? (from machinery)		
5.2	Is the employee exposed to excessive noise? (such as noisy machinery)		
5.3	Is the employee expected to work in awkward/confined spaces?		
5.4	Is the employee exposed to excessive heat?		
5.5	Is the employee exposed to excessive cold?		
5.6	Does the employee have to sit or stand for long periods of time?		

<p>Risk Confined Spaces – Working in confined spaces may lead to sprain or strain injuries. Dexterity, agility, reach and balance increased risk of accidents. Sitting – Constant sitting during pregnancy poses a relatively high risk of thrombosis or embolism and backache. Standing – Standing for a prolonged periods causing dizziness, faintness and fatigue. Extremes of heat and cold –Suffering from heat stress or extreme cold may pose a hazard.</p>	<p>How to Avoid the Risk Confined spaces –Redesign the job content. Sitting – Avoid sitting for long periods. Regular rest breaks should be provided. Standing – Avoid standing for long periods of time. Extremes of heat and cold – Adequate rest breaks and unrestricted access to drinking water.</p>
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6. Slips, trips and falls		Yes/No	Further Action Required
6.1	Is the employees work area free from slips trips and fall hazards? (Such as trailing wires, uneven flooring, spilt substances?)		

7. Violence and aggression		Yes/No	Further Action Required
7.1	Is the employee exposed to potentially violent situations from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children? • Adults? • Members of the public? 		
<p>Risk Violence can lead to miscarriage, premature delivery and underweight birth, and it may affect the ability to breastfeed.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk All face to face contact with service users where there is believed to be a significant risk should be assessed. Change the design of the job – avoid lone working, reduce/remove the face to face client contact, reassign difficult cases.</p>	

8. Welfare		Yes/No	Further Action Required
8.1	Is there a rest room or a suitable area for the employee to rest?		
8.2	Has the employee received any advice from the doctor or midwife that has any bearing on her role?		
8.3	Are there any other specific welfare issues mentioned by employee?		
8.4	Is the employee allowed regular breaks?		
8.5	Is the employee allowed to take a comfort break when needed?		
8.6	Does the employee suffer from morning sickness? This may be relevant where early morning shifts are worked, or where there may be exposure to nauseating smells.		

8.7	The employee's posture is also significant if varicose veins and/or haemorrhoids develop – the latter also being linked with a hot work environment.		
8.8	Can nursing mothers frequently re-hydrate?		
8.9	Do nursing mothers have a facility for privately expressing milk?		
<p>Risk Rest facilities – Tiredness may be exacerbated by work related factors. Hygiene facilities – new or expectant women often have to go to the toilet more frequently and urgently than others. Breastfeeding women may also need to, due the increased fluid intake to promote breast milk production.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk Rest facilities – There must be facilities to sit in comfort and in privacy. Access to drinking water should also be available. Hygiene facilities – If necessary measure should be put in place to ensure that new and expectant mothers can leave their workstations at short notice.</p>	

9. Working at Height		Yes/No	Further Action Required
9.1	Does the employee have to carry out any work that requires them to work from height? (Such as putting up displays, ladder use).		
<p>Risk It is hazardous for new or expectant women to work at heights, for example for short duration work off of ladders.</p>		<p>How to avoid the Risk Working at height should be avoided by new and expectant mothers.</p>	

10. Stress at Work		Yes/No	Further Action Required
10.1	Is the employee exposed to undue stress?		
<p>Risk Difficult to organise work and private life, especially where other family responsibilities are involved. Where women have recently suffered loss through stillbirth, miscarriage, adoption at birth, or neonatal death, they will be especially vulnerable to stress, as will women who have experienced serious illness or trauma associated with pregnancy or childbirth.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk Protective measure may include adjustments to working conditions or working hours, and ensuring that the necessary understanding, support and recognition is available when the women returns to work, while her privacy is also respected.</p>	

11. Biological		Yes/No	Further Action Required
11.1	<p>Is the employee exposed to any infectious diseases particularly the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubella (measles) • Chickenpox • Slapped cheek disease • Chlamydia Psittaci (from lambs) <p>Other (specify)</p>		
11.2	Is the employee exposed to any bodily fluids? (Protective gloves should be worn)		
<p>Risk</p> <p>There will be an increased risk of exposure to staff who have contact with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human blood and body fluids - Infected animals including parrots, turkeys, pigeons, ducks, cats, rodents and sheep as well as household pets. - Water or food contaminated by human or animal faeces - First aid duties <p>In some cases, the infection may be more severe in pregnancy and if the mother does become infected, some infections may be dangerous for the baby.</p>		<p>How to Avoid the Risk</p> <p>Follow policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infection Control Policy - Bathroom Management Policy - Health and Safety Policy - Sick Children Policy <p>Extra care on animal visits, outings to farm parks etc.</p>	

12. Chemical Agents		Yes/No	Further Action Required
12.3	Is the employee exposed to any chemical agents?		
12.4	Is the employee exposed to cigarette smoke?		
12.5	Is the employee exposed to Ionising Radiation? (Work procedures should be designed to keep exposure of the new or expectant woman as low as reasonably practicable and certainly below the statutory dose limit for new or expectant women.)		
Risk Hazardous Substances –may cause harm to the unborn child. Ionising Radiation –harmful to the foetus.		How to Avoid the Risk All hazardous substances should be locked away, keep exposure of the new or expectant woman as low as is reasonably practicable,	

13. Any other issues		Yes/No	Further Action Required
13.1	Increasing size presents problems with personal protective clothing and uniforms		
13.2	Impairment of dexterity, agility, co-ordination, speed of movement and reach		

If a risk has been identified, indicate below the action to be taken to remove the hazard or reduce the risk.

PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT

Employee's name:	Establishment:	Assessor:
Line Manager's Name:	Date:	Review date:

Source of Hazard	Persons Affected	Control measures in place now	Still high risk?	Still medium risk?	Still low risk?	Further action required, by whom, timescale or reference to other assessments

Signed by Line Manager:

Signed by Employee: