Display Screen Equipment Policy

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<tr>
<td>Approval Committee:</td>
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<td>Date of Approval:</td>
<td>13 August 2014</td>
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Director of Nursing |
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Revision of the information for home working and the use of VDUs at home (page 15) |
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The Trust strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all, both as a major employer and as a provider of health care. This Display Screen Equipment Policy has therefore been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness and consistency for all those covered by it, regardless of their individual differences.
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Executive Summary

The legal requirement placed on University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) is to provide a safe and healthy working environment for employees and is instigated by managers/supervisors, including particular measures to protect their health and safety when they are working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) as laid out by the requirements under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as Amended.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) places a significant emphasis on the requirement for a formal system that covers Display Screen Equipment Assessment. Such a system is a statutory duty designed to prevent many of the failures that lead to accidents, incidents and prosecutions.

The Trust acknowledges that health and safety hazards may arise from the use of display screen equipment and as a result will ensure that risks are eliminated, reduced and controlled “so far as is reasonably practicable”.

The principal health risks that may arise whilst working with DSE are musculoskeletal disorders of the arm, shoulder and neck, often described as a ‘work related upper limb disorder’. These symptoms can range from temporary fatigue, cramp or soreness in the limbs to chronic soft tissue disorders such as tendonitis or carpal tunnel syndrome. As with other sedentary tasks, DSE work can also give rise to back pain or exacerbate existing back pain.
1 Introduction

The Policy sets out the principles and arrangements on which University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) base their commitment to the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (DSE) 2002.

1.2 Scope

This policy encompasses all workers employed by the organisation, including permanent, temporary, bank, volunteer workers and home workers. It applies to all workstations used for NHS work activities, regardless of who has provided them.

1.3 Purpose and expected outcomes

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To minimise the risk to staff arising from the use of Display Screen Equipment.
- To ensure that Visual Display Unit Assessments are carried out on all users and are reviewed at least annually, if there is change in the working environment or if the user has been involved in an accident or suffering from ill health directly associated with VDU work.
- To complete an action plan where risks are identified to ensure the risk is eliminated or reduced to what is considered a reasonably practicable level.
- The Trust recognises and accepts its responsibility to its employees to ensure that the requirements of the DSE Regulations are satisfied. The Trust will enforce this through a cycle of risk assessment, training where required, staff awareness, monitoring and review.

1.4 Definitions

- **Display Screen Equipment**: any alphanumeric or graphic display screen.
- **Workstation**: this includes Display screen equipment, any associated accessories including keyboard, mouse, printer, furniture etc and the immediate work environment around the Display screen equipment.
- **User**: an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his or her normal work. Someone who uses DSE for an hour or more at a time, on most days would generally be considered as a user.
- **Employee**: means any member of staff who holds a contract of employment directly with the Trust.
- **Hazard**: something with the potential to cause loss, harm, injury or damage.
- **Risk**: the likelihood that the hazard will actually cause harm, injury or damage; it also considers the consequences, extent and outcome of a hazardous event occurring.
- **Work experience**: is a period of activity in a work setting (whether paid or voluntary). Students and trainees, including children, on work experience are regarded in health and safety law as employees. Students on work experience placements must be
provided with the same health, safety and welfare protection given to other employees. Restrictions will probably be applied to the types of work which young and inexperienced people, including pupils on work experience or below MSLA (Minimum School Leaving Age) are allowed to do.

- **Young person:** is anyone under eighteen years of age (young people). The law on working time defines a *young worker* as being below 18 years of age and above the MSLA.

### 1.5 Related Trust Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Moving and Handling of Loads Policy
- Risk Management Policy and Procedures
- Incident Reporting, Analysis, Investigation and Management Policy

### 2 Roles and Responsibilities

The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** has overall responsibility for the organisation and the DSE Policy in accordance with current legislation, guidance and policies. He/she will ensure that the requirements specified within the Policy are resourced and implemented within the organisation.

The **Executive Director of Nursing & Organisational Development** - has delegated responsibility for health and safety and is the Board-level Director responsible for ensuring the DSE Policy is implemented.

The **Health and Safety Manager** will:

- Provide advice on the workstation assessments carried out at a local level if required.
- Facilitate training for managers via the face to face Risk Assessment training available via Development and training Department

**Southampton Eye Unit** will ensure that:

All Trust employees will be able to have an eye examination in the Southampton Eye Unit

DSE users may be entitled to a free examination and corrective spectacles if eligible.

UHS will be responsible for:

- The cost of eye examinations for employees holding Trust ID cards.
- That part of the cost for the provision of basic corrective appliances for DSE use only.
- The cost of replacement single vision lenses only, necessary to clearly view the DSE screen at the habitual working distance (see Appendix A).

The **Occupational Health Service** will direct enquiries about eye examinations, to the Optometry Department, Southampton Eye Unit, ext 5708
Managers will:

- Decide who is covered by the Regulations (who uses a computer for their work) and identify the workstations they use—an updated list should be provided within the departmental H&S file. This should include not only users employed by them but also users employed by others (agency / temps). If employers require their employees to use workstations at home these too will need to be assessed.
- Facilitate through a competent person the recording and reviewing of DSE risk assessments (see Appendix C).
- Provide general advice and guidance to DSE users on the possible health effects relating in particular to musculoskeletal problems, visual fatigue and mental stress using (Appendix F) HSE Working with VDUs.
- If an employee experiences visual difficulties which might reasonably be considered to be caused by working with DSE a workstation assessment should be undertaken and a referral to Southampton Eye Unit Optometry Department considered (see Appendix B).
- Managers must ensure once a referral is completed that they make every effort to support the employees attendance at any subsequent appointment.
- Incorporate breaks from DSE work as appropriate to prevent fatigue (see Appendix D).
- Respond to all reported incidents related to DSE by:
  1) Taking necessary steps to investigate.
  2) Completing an incident form using the electronic reporting process
  3) Taking corrective measures where appropriate.
  4) Advising the employee of actions taken.

All employees have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the Trust DSE Policy.

Employees must assist the competent person in undertaking a DSE risk assessment (see Appendix C) on their workstation and refer to the guidance contained within this document to ensure the safe set up their workstations.

Employees will in all cases in which a problem arises in the use of DSE:

- Inform their line manager immediately
- Manager to review DSE assessment and consider seeking advice from occupational health.
- In the case of an adverse health condition seeks advice from his/her own general practitioner.

It is the employee’s responsibility to attend any appointment made by themselves or their line managers at Southampton Eye Unit Optometry Department

All employees who during their work require access to medical images on Display Screen Equipment please refer to local guidance and recommendations for the care and use of image viewing monitors.

3 Implementation

The Display Screen Equipment Policy will be displayed on the Staffnet. The Trust Health and Safety Adviser will provide updated information to nominated group leads at bi-monthly health and safety meetings where applicable.
The nominated care group leads will disseminate Display Screen Equipment information through departmental co-ordinators as appropriate and ensure that this information is passed on to all employees using DSE.

4 Process for Monitoring Compliance/Effectiveness

Compliance and effectiveness will be monitored through:

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<th>Tool/Method</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Who will undertake</th>
<th>Where results will be reported</th>
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5 Arrangements for review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed and validated before the end September 2017 and sooner if new evidence demonstrates a need for a change to current practice.

6 References

- Great Britain’s Health and Safety Regulations available from: http://www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002
- Working with VDUs - INDG36 - Working with VDUs. Revision 4
- The law on VDUs: An easy guide: Making sure your office complies with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002) HSG90 HSE Books 200 ISBN 0 7 76 2602 4
- The College of Optometrists - Examining Patients who work with Visual Display Screen Equipment 2005
- The Trust Visual Display Unit Checklist Assessment Form http://staffnet/Media/Governance/Patientsafety/HelpAndGuidance/VDUchecklist.pdf
Appendix A:

Vision Screening and Eye examinations.

All Trust employees and DSE users will be able to have an eye examination in the Southampton Eye Unit. DSE users may be entitled to corrective spectacles at a reduced cost if eligible.

Urgent referrals by line managers will be considered by Southampton Eye Unit Optometry Department who will assess them on a case by case basis.

UHS will be responsible for:

- The cost of eye examinations for all employees holding Trust ID cards.
- That part of the cost for the provision of basic corrective appliances for DSE use only.
- The cost of replacement single vision lenses only, necessary to clearly view the DSE screen at the habitual working distance.

Staff members who feel they are DSE users should make their request to their manager, using the application form below. If the manager confirms the member of staff is a DSE user then they should countersign the form and send it to the Optometry Department VDU clinic for an appointment to be arranged.

All Trust employees will have access to the Optometry VDU clinic in the Eye Unit at the Southampton General. Notices will be posted on Staffnet to publicise the service and how to access it. All staff will be responsible for booking an appointment and attending their appointment time as arranged and a booking system will be made available for this.

The DSE User

A DSE user, as defined by the DSE Regulations, is an employee who:

- Is dependent on a computer to do their job.
- Have no discretion on the use of a computer.
- Needs significant training and skills.
- Uses a computer for an hour or more at a time as part of their work.
- Uses a computer more or less daily.
- Needs rapid input and output of information.
- Needs high levels of attention and concentration.

Typically only a minority of the working population (usually less than 10%) will need special corrective appliances for display screen work. Where a clear need for corrective spectacles to help with VDU use is demonstrated during the eye examination, the Trust will provide these at no cost to the employee.

Where the eye examination shows that the DSE User requires spectacles specifically for VDU i.e. spectacles prescribed to correct vision defects at the viewing distance or distances specifically for the display screen work concerned, the user will be able to choose single vision spectacles, from a restricted range, at no cost to themselves or their department.
The cost of varifocal, bifocal, coated or special lenses or more expensive frames will be borne by the individual employee. However, if frames are not chosen from the free range, a discount of equivalent value will be applied to the paid for range.

**Alternative Opticians**

Staff may choose to use an alternative Optician of their choice but will not be able to claim the cost of the eye test or assistance towards the cost of any prescribed spectacles.

Trust Staff do not have to purchase their spectacles from the Optometry department and may take their prescription to another Optician of their choice but there will be no payment/assistance towards the cost of any alternative spectacles or eye tests.
Appendix B-
DSE User – Request for Eye Examination

To be completed by employee:

Name (Block) ……………………………………………………………………………………………
Department…………………………………………………………………………………………
Job Title……………………………………………………………………………………………
Base……………………………………………… Extension/Bleep………………………………

I confirm that having read the Trust Policy I meet the criteria as a DSE ‘User’
Signed ……………………………………………………..   Date………………………………

To be completed by Manager: Advice on Display screen equipment (DSE) users

A DSE user, as defined by the Health and Safety Regulations, is an employee who:

- Is dependent on a computer to do their job
- Has no discretion on the use of a computer
- Needs significant training and skills
- Uses a computer for an hour or more at a time as part of their work
- Uses a computer more or less daily
- Needs rapid input and output of information
- Needs high levels of attention and concentration

I confirm that having read the Trust DSE User Policy I agree / Disagree that the applicant meets the criteria of ‘DSE User’

Managers must ensure once a referral is completed that employees attend any subsequent appointment made on their behalf

Signed……………………………………………………….  Date………………………………
Name………………………………………………………..
Title…………………………………………………………..

Please send to:
The Optometry Department VDU clinic
Southampton Eye Unit
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD
Appendix C:

The Visual Display Unit Checklist Assessment Form is available via a PDF document on the Health and Safety Page on the SUHTranet.

http://staffnet/Media/Governance/Patientsafety/HelpAndGuidance/VDUchecklist.pdf
Appendix D:

Rest Break

The purpose of a break for DSE work is to prevent the onset of fatigue. To achieve this objective, the Trust will seek to incorporate changes of activity into the working day. There is no prescribed frequency or duration of breaks from DSE work. Where possible, users will be given the discretion to decide the timing and extent of off-screen tasks. Any employee who believes that his or her DSE workload does not permit adequate breaks should bring this to the attention of the management.
Appendix E: Working with Portable Display Screen Equipment

Laptop Computers

As in many organisations, the use of laptops is increasing, with employees working in a variety of locations, including at home, few of which may have been designed and planned for display screen work. If a laptop is used for long periods of time it will be classed as an item of DSE. If a laptop is used for prolonged periods, an attempt should be made to find a sensible compromise that retains the benefits of mobile working but removes the risk of causing harm to staff.

For prolonged use of a laptop in a fixed location, such as an office where the user is constantly present and using the laptop, the provision of ‘docking stations’ or laptop risers should be considered because these enable full size, good quality display screens and full size keyboards and mouse to be used.

Such an arrangement allows the laptop to be used as a portable in the normal way; but, when in the office, the laptop user has access to a full size keyboard and screen, using only the laptop's processor and disc drive, and effectively turning the laptop into a fixed workstation. This will offer the user the flexibility inherent in using a laptop but remove problems that can occur such as back, shoulder, neck and wrist pains.

As a result, it is Trust policy that laptops will be used according to the following guidelines:

- Laptops are recommended to be used outside the office where no desktop computer or docking station is available
- When carrying to and from the office don’t overload your laptop bag and distribute the weight as evenly as possible
- Wherever possible the laptop should be positioned on a firm surface, which is the right height for its use
- You are advised to angle the computer screen to minimise reflections
- Ensure that you have enough space in front of the laptop to rest your wrists and forearms whilst working minimum 50mm(2 inches)
- Keep the use of a laptop to a minimum and take regular breaks, at least ten minutes in every hour
- If any discomfort is experienced whilst using a laptop, it must be reported immediately to their Manager/Supervisor.
- **Remember:** It is best to avoid using a laptop and other portables if full sized equipment is available
Home Worker Additional Information

The risks of working at home with DSE are the same as using DSE in the workplace. The risks are increased if the home workstation equipment can’t be adjusted to achieve good posture. This may not be significant if the User is working at home infrequently however, regular home working in these circumstances will significantly increase the risk of upper limb disorders, back ache, fatigue, stress, temporary eyestrain and headaches.

If an employee works at home on an infrequent basis or at his or her request then the home workstation must be assessed:

- Managers to issue a VDU checklist self assessment form (appendix c)
- The home worker completes the assessment and returns to the manager for action if required
- Managers are not expected to visit the User at home
- If the User assessment identifies issues that need to be addressed then the following methods can be used to resolve them:
  - Telephone discussion, email etc
  - Photographs of workstation i.e. equipment and/or layout and/or posture

A review of the home working environment is required to ensure that the VDU set up meets the correct standards, particularly for longer periods of home working. Where the standards are poor then a decision has to be made as to if working from home in these conditions can continue.

If the Trust requests that individuals work from home or work remotely from some other identified location, then the responsibility lies with the Trust to provide the appropriate equipment to do the job. The home workstation will be assessed using the criteria highlighted above. If there are any actions identified following the completion of the VDU checklist that cannot be resolved then in these cases the line manager or a nominated representative must be prepared to visit homes and remote workplaces in order to undertake assessments in exactly the same way as they would if the person was working on site.

It is the responsibility of the individual home worker to manage the balance between work and home appropriately. This includes fulfilling contractual requirements within an agreed process, taking appropriate work breaks and avoiding the risk of becoming a ‘workaholic’.

The home worker will be responsible to ensure that they comply with Trust Health and Safety Policies. This includes ensuring that the home working environment and workstation are maintained in a safe manner, that a VDU checklist has been completed and that any incidents, accidents, near misses and faults with equipment etc are reported immediately. The employee has a duty to ensure they maintain appropriate working hours and taking appropriate rest breaks in line with The Working Time Regulations (1998).
Figure 2 Seating and posture for typical office tasks