



## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

**Revised March 2013**

# Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

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## Policy Statement

### 1. General Statement

Wellbeing Residential acknowledges that no substance can be considered completely safe. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees, residents and visitors to substances hazardous to health is prevented or at least controlled to a level that is the lowest that is reasonably practicable.

Wellbeing Residential undertakes to control exposure by the best means that are workable within the home. In addition, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided free of charge after consultation with employees or their representatives.

All employees will be provided with understandable information and instruction on the nature and likelihood of their exposure to substances hazardous to health.

The implementation of this policy requires the total co-operation of all members of management and staff. The person responsible for implementing this policy is the registered manager.

### 2. Arrangements for Securing the Health and Safety of Workers

Wellbeing Residential will, in consultation with workers and their representatives, implement the following.

- a. An inventory of all substances hazardous to health kept on site will be maintained, with appropriate hazard information.
- b. Competent persons will be appointed to carry out risk assessments of the exposure to substances hazardous to health and advise on their control.
- c. All operations which involve, or may involve, exposure to substances hazardous to health will be assessed and appropriate control measures will be taken if elimination or substitution of the substance is not possible.
- d. Any system of work, supervision system or any other similar measure will be reviewed at suitable intervals and revised if necessary.
- e. All employees and others who may work in the affected areas will be informed of the purpose and safe operation of working procedures and equipment.
- f. PPE will only be used as a last resort, or as a back-up measure to be used in conjunction with other safety arrangements.
- g. The type and use of PPE will be carefully assessed and maintained according to manufacturers' instructions. If possible, the number of different types will be minimised to prevent mistakes in servicing or replacement.
- h. Each assessment will be reviewed at least annually.
- i. Qualified professionals, where indicated to be necessary by the assessment, will carry out health surveillance.
- j. Employee health records of all exposures to substances hazardous to health will be kept for a minimum of 40 years.
- k. All employees will be provided with understandable information and appropriate training on the nature of the hazardous substances they work with. Employees will be informed about any monitoring and health surveillance results.

- I. All changes to control measures and changes of PPE will be properly assessed and no new substances will be introduced into the workplace without prior assessment.

### 3. **Procedures for Dealing with Health and Safety Issues**

When an employee raises a point related to the use of substances hazardous to health, the care home will:

- a. ensure the hazard associated with the substance has been correctly identified
- b. ensure the assessment of the substance is correct and up to date
- c. ensure controls in place are adequate
- d. correct any observed deficiencies in the control of the hazards
- e. inform the employee, and their representative if appropriate, of the results of the investigation and actions taken.

If an identified exposure has taken place, those affected and their managers and representatives will be informed immediately. Possible health effects will, in addition, be communicated to the care home's occupational health physician and the employee's general practitioner.

### 4. **Information and Training**

The care home will give sufficient information and training to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace and the importance of the control measures provided. Information will also be given to others who may be affected, such as:

- a. contractors
- b. temporary staff
- c. visitors.

Managers and supervisors of areas which use substances hazardous to health will be given additional training to ensure the proper management of the risks.

### 5. **Safe System of Work**

Safe working procedures will be devised for all activities that involve potential exposure to a hazardous substance.

Employees must be encouraged to report defects and systems must be in place for prompt repair and for the provision of temporary replacement controls, eg PPE. The following steps can be taken to minimise the risk.

- a. Ensure hazard information is kept up to date.
- b. Ensure assessments are reviewed at least annually or when changes are made.
- c. Ensure employees are trained in the nature of the hazards and use of control measures.
- d. Ensure controls are maintained and monitored.
- e. Ensure documentation is comprehensive and understandable.
- f. Encourage employees to report faults and problems.

### 6. **Summary Policy Statement**

Modern working methods involve the exposure of people to substances and biological agents, which may pose a risk to the health of people using them.

If the hazards are known, specific steps can be taken. The seven most important steps are to:

- a. identify the hazard
- b. assess the risk
- c. eliminate, prevent or control the risk
- d. maintain and monitor the controls
- e. monitor the health of the workforce
- f. ensure assessments and controls are up to date
- g. inform and train the workforce.

## *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health*

*This policy has been written as a guidance document for staff who use chemicals which come under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH). All controlled substances are entered onto the*

*Homes Register of Controlled Substances - (COSHH). The register is kept at the front of the COSHH file. Only substances listed on the register should be used in the home.*

*If you are concerned that a substance being used in your workplace is not in the COSHH file, or if you notice incorrect containers or labels being used, report it to the Safety Officer or in his/her absence your supervisor.*

*All substances, which come under the COSHH regulations, will have a risk assessment carried out, the results of the assessment are recorded. All staff are trained in the safe use of these chemicals; the training includes what personal protective equipment to use.*

*The risk assessment forms and Data Sheets supplied by the manufacturer/supplier are kept in the COSHH file, the file is available to employees at anytime.*

*If any member of staff has difficulty in understanding any COSHH file information, ask the Safety Officer to clarify.*

*COSHH File Location within the home : office and cleaning cupboard/laundry room*

### *General Guidance*

*1. Avoid decanting bulk materials into smaller containers unless*

they are fully labelled as the original.

2. All chemicals must be kept in either the storeroom or the cleaning cupboard when not in use.
3. Wear protective clothing as appropriate – gloves, aprons, eye protection etc.

#### Note

Gloves and eye protection are available in both the kitchen and cleaners cupboard.

4. Never mix two or more chemicals together – toxic gases may be produced.
5. Dispose of all chemicals and their containers in accordance with the risk assessment instructions.
6. Never puncture full or empty aerosol containers or expose them to heat.

#### **Training**

A requirement of the Health & Safety Executive, and Environmental Health Department, is that all staff should be aware of COSHH. To comply with this instruction all staff are trained during induction or when a new substance is introduced for use in the home.

## **Homes Register of Controlled Substances (COSHH)**




**COSHH RISK ASSESSMENT OF CONTROLLED  
SUBSTANCES**



1<sup>st</sup> - Assessor's Name: ..... Job  
 Title: .....

2<sup>nd</sup> Assessor's Name: ..... Job  
 Title: .....  
 (if applicable)

Date of assessment: ..... Review  
 Date: .....

Name of Hazardous  
 substance: .....

What is the substance used for in the home:  
 .....  
 .....

What are the risks involved with using the substance:  
 .....

.....  
*What control methods must be used to handle the substance safely:*

.....  
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*What personal protective clothing/equipment is to be used when handling the substance:*

.....  
.....

*Emergency procedures to be used in the event of an accident:*

.....  
.....

*Storage Location (s).....*

*Disposal Requirements:.....*