

M10-EN.2 ADMINISTRATION

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M10-EN.2.1 Admission and Records

During patients' admission records are taken with their medical background. Keeping records will help to keep trends in illness and injury at work, or develop information regarding the causes and prevention of occupational accidents and diseases.

Personnel at the administration can be exposed to **hazards** such as:

- Work related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) from excessive reaching above shoulder height while filing
- Use of carbonless paper
- Workplace stress or violence during admission processes
- Infectious diseases during admission processes (precaution measures when patients with infectious diseases arrive, use of gloves, or masks, etc)

M10-EN.2.2 Computer Workstations - Ergonomics

When a computer is used (e.g. at admittance area, data entry clerk, secretary, etc) intensively for four or more hours per day, musculoskeletal disorders of hand/arm, shoulder, neck, and back, are possible to be developed.

Employers can provide the administration employees with:

- Adjustable desk chairs that offer support and are padded, in order to give support to the forearms, legs and low back. Arm rests should allow the elbows to hang normally at the side of the body
- Head sets for answering phones
- Keyboards with mouse support (**M10.2.1.jpg**)

For the prevention of developing MSDs, the personnel working at the administration department can examine their workstation layout and:

- Arrange materials in front of their body, so they can be easily reach them
- Use the adjustable keyboard with mouse support that can be easily reached from a keying position. Wrists must stay straight while typing and wrist pads must be used to rest the wrists on when they are not (**M10.2.2.jpg**)
- Arrange their monitor so that the most frequently viewed area is a little lower than the horizontal eye level, and can be seen without looking up or leaning forward
- Reduce awkward positions by trying to:

- Keep most of their work activities within repetitive access area (**M10.2.3.jpg**)
- Maintain straight wrist postures

Safety Precautions

- Use lower filing cupboards, that can be easily reached while keeping the elbows close to body
- Use powered filing cupboards that adjust to any height
- Use ladders or stools in order to access high files rather than reaching overhead

M10-EN.2.3 Carbonless Paper

Another potential hazard for those working at the administration desks is their exposure to carbonless paper. This kind of paper is used everyday for checks, credit-card receipts and medical forms. When sheets are pressed together, tiny micro granules of dyes and resins are released. These released chemicals can be absorbed through the skin or inhaled from the air, having as a result mild to moderate symptoms of skin irritation and/or irritation of the mucosal membranes of the eyes and upper respiratory tract. These **symptoms** include among others:

- Headaches
- Sinus infections
- Bronchitis
- Eye, and skin irritations
- Shortness of breath and hives
- Allergic contact dermatitis (rarely)

Adequate good industrial hygiene and work practices can reduce or eliminate these symptoms, such as:

- Sufficient ventilation, humidity, and temperature controls
- Appropriate housekeeping (e.g. keeping desks clean and tidy, never leave food on the desks, etc)
- Minimisation of hand-to-mouth and hand-to-eye contact, as well and periodic cleansing of hands

M10-EN.2.4 Work related stress

Health care personnel are exposed to critically ill patients and must deal with emotional life/death situations on a daily basis, increasing their risk for work related stress, and work exhaustion.

In general, the causes of work related stress vary due to the following factors:

- The person itself
 - demographic characteristics (age, sex, nationality, education, work post, etc)
 - personal characteristics (motivation, expectations, self-estimation, etc)
 - previous experiences (professional, private nature)

- Health care facility working environment
 - Working conditions (nature of work, contact with pain, death, etc)
 - Organisation/management (working hours, work load, payment, etc)
 - Colleague relations (communication, problems of cooperation, etc)
- Contact with patients and their relatives

Work related stress can increase a worker's risk for cardiovascular disease, psychological disorders, workplace injury, etc. Early warning signs include headaches, sleep disturbances, difficulty in concentration, job dissatisfaction, and low self-confidence.

At the administration, work related stress occur usually when:

- very seriously injured or critically ill patients arrive
- patients or their relatives react with anger or pain
- small children arrive at the hospital, etc

Safety Precautions

Some general precautions for the health care institution are:

- Workload must be in line with employees' capabilities and resources
- Work must be designed to provide meaning, stimulation, and opportunities for employees to use their skills
- Employees must know exactly their roles and responsibilities
- The stressful aspects of work (e.g. excessive workload, conflicting expectations), must be identified and been reduced or eliminated
- Employees should be given the opportunities to participate in decisions and actions affecting their jobs

Employers are required to provide their personnel with:

- Proper education on work related stress management, in order to improve their ability to cope with difficult work situations. Stress management programs can teach employees about the nature and sources of stress, the effects on their health, and personal skills reducing it (e.g. time management or relaxation exercises)
- A consultant to recommend ways to improve working conditions

When it comes to admissions, the employees there can follow the precautions below:

- Be properly trained and prepared on how to react in emergency and stressfully situations, such as heavy injuries, children's admission, etc
- Have two employees working at the same time, in case the one does not feel well with a situation

M10-EN.2.5 Hazardous drugs during administration

Sometimes antiviral drugs are used from the personnel at the administration, for the treatment of infants and young children with lower respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

infections. These drugs are aerosolized and are usually given to the patient in an oxygen tent or face mask.

Safety Precautions

- Only trained personnel must administer hazardous drugs
- The personnel administering hazardous drugs should wear disposable gowns, latex gloves, and chemical splash goggles or equivalent safety glasses
- Additional precautions can be respirators, adequate ventilation, etc
- Pregnant or breast-feeding personnel are not allowed to come in contact with these drugs