NHS
Yorkshire
Ambulance Service
NHS Trust

Health and Safety Risk Assessment Policy

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1.1	March 2024	Risk Team	A	Extension approved within February Strategic Health and Safety Meeting. Policy formatted to Trust new Visual Identity.
1.2	May 2025	Risk Team	A	Extension approved in May 2025 TEG
1.3	April 2026	Shelley Jackson	D	Reviewed in line with review date – No changes made, current Policy and process remains fit for purpose. Significant changes will be made to process in the next 6-12 months.
2.0	May 2026	Risk Team	A	Policy approved within May 2026 Strategic Health and Safety Group.
2.1	Aug 2026	H&S Manager	D	Full review following internal audit findings and incorporating the transition to a new YAS H&S risk assessment process.
2.2	September 2026	Risk Team	D	Formatted to Trust template.
3.0	September 2026	Risk Team	A	Approved in September 2026 Strategic H&S group.
3.1	October 2026	Risk Team	A	Hyperlink added to section 3.8
A = Approved D = Draft				
Document Author = Shelley Jackson – Health and Safety Manager				

Associated Documentation:

A list of Health and Safety related policies and procedures, which form an important part of the Trust's Health and Safety Management system, are listed below along with other policy and procedural documents that are linked to or support an element of health and safety management.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures

- Moving & Handling of Loads Policy
- Safer Patient Moving and Handling Policy
- Slips, Trips & Falls Policy
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER) Policy
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy
- Contractor Control Policy
- Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Health and Safety Consultation with Employees Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy (Buildings)
- Water Safety Policy
- Asbestos Policy
- Preventing and Managing Stress in the Workplace

- RIDDOR Standard Operating Procedure
- CAS Alert / Field Safety Notice and Care CERT Process
- Moving and Handling Patients with Complex Needs - SOP

Supporting / Linked Policy and Procedural documents

- Employee Wellbeing Strategy & Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Risk Management Policy
- Incident Management Policy
- Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy
- Safety & Security Policy
- Violence Prevention and Reduction Policy
- Lone working and personal safety guidance
- Infection Prevention and Control Policy – this incorporates:
    - *Exposure to biological agents*
    - *Sharps / needlestick injuries*
    - *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*
- Driving at Work Policy – this incorporates:
    - *Occupational road risk*
- Maternity Care Policy – this incorporates:
    - *Pregnancy risk assessment*

Please see Appendix 2 – Associated policy, procedure, or guidance – for which type of risk assessments are linked to which policy or procedures.

Section	Contents	Page No.
	Staff Summary	5
1.0	Introduction	5
2.0	Purpose / Scope	5
3.0	Process	6
4.0	Training Expectations for Staff	10
5.0	Implementation Plan	11
6.0	Monitoring Compliance with this Policy	11
7.0	References	11
8.0	Appendices	11
	Appendix A – Definitions	13
	Appendix B – Roles and Responsibilities	14
	Appendix C – YAS Proactive Health and Safety Risk Assessments	16
	Appendix D – Associated Policy, Procedure or Guidance	19
	Appendix E – Performing a Health and Safety Risk Assessment	20

Staff Summary

YAS is committed to ensuring health and safety risk assessments are completed
YAS will implement safe working practices as a result of health and safety risk assessments
YAS will record health and safety risk assessments using risk assessment templates
YAS will share proactive health and safety risk assessments with staff through the risk assessment library
YAS will train staff to identify hazards and carry out health and safety risk assessments where necessary
YAS will assess and mitigate health and safety risks for staff, patients and others using health and safety risk assessment processes
YAS will comply with CQC standards regarding health and safety risk assessments
YAS will comply with health and safety legislation relating to health and safety risk assessments
YAS will monitor processes for the completion of health and safety risk assessments to ensure continued improvement
YAS will ensure that appropriate roles and Groups have responsibility for monitoring

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) Trust Board is committed to ensuring that normal day to day operational activities are undertaken, as far as is reasonably practicable, in a safe manner. In order to reduce the number of avoidable incidents and injuries affecting its employees, patients and any other persons, the Trust will carry out a range of health and safety risk assessments to identify sources of harm and put measures in place to control them. This will effectively be achieved by compliance with the requirements of this document.

2.0 Purpose / Scope

2.1 It is the aim of this policy to protect the health and safety of staff, patients, and the public (i.e. all those affected by Trust business) by embedding the concepts and ideas of health and safety risk assessment into the day to day working practices of all Trust employees. By doing this it will enable the Trust to fulfil its legal responsibilities with regards to health and safety legislation and achieve compliance with other regulatory standards i.e. the Care Quality Commission registration process.

2.2 The general requirement to carry out proactive health and safety risk assessments is contained in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, however several other subject specific health and safety regulations also specify the requirement of health and safety risk assessments.

2.3 To identify sources of harm and control them, the Trust will integrate health and safety risk assessment techniques and procedures into Trust activities. It will ensure that patient and staff needs, in relation to health and safety risk reduction, are identified and that the correct controls are put in place to reduce incidents and injuries. It will raise staff awareness, knowledge, and skills, in relation to the completion of risk assessments both for themselves and patients, and ensure controls are developed in line with the findings of risk assessments. This document details the process' through which these things will be achieved.

3.0 Process

3.1 Risk Assessment

3.1.1 A health and safety risk assessment is nothing more than having a careful look at what you are doing to ensure that you have adequate controls in place to prevent people from being harmed.

3.1.2 The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify the measures needed to remove or control the health and safety risks.

3.1.3 Risk assessments must be 'suitable and sufficient,' and records should be kept to show that:

- A proper check has been made.
- Those affected have been identified.
- All the obvious and significant hazards have been covered.
- The controls are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.

3.2 Process Change

3.2.1 The Trust is currently transforming how it manages health and safety risk assessments. Whilst the fundamental process of health and safety risk assessment remains the same, changes have been made to the overall structure with the addition of high-level topic specific risk assessments linked to a new Trust health and safety hazard register. Improvements are also being made through the digitisation of risk assessment forms and their storage, which will enable standardisation and better monitoring of completion and review process.'

3.2.2 As the Trust is currently in a state of transition from its existing process to a new process, this policy continues to detail the unchanged fundamental process of YAS health and safety risk assessment alongside the new process.

3.2.3 Where a section or appendix needs to reflect both existing and new processes, they will be labelled "EXISTING" or "NEW" as appropriate.

3.2.4 The transition period from existing to new is expected to be gradual and therefore, this policy will be updated as progress is made.

3.3 Proactive Risk Assessment

3.3.1 Proactive risk assessments are carried out to identify and control foreseeable risks. They are normally performed for situations where health and safety hazards are predictable and routine, or there are generic elements of a work situation or task.

3.3.2 There is requirement for several different types of proactive risk assessments within YAS. Please see Appendix C for a full list of assessment types and the circumstances for when they are required.

3.3.3 To facilitate and record these assessments, a range of health and safety risk assessment templates have been created. All health and safety risk assessment templates are available on the Trust intranet.

3.3.4 A number of the proactive risk assessment templates are also embedded in or associated with a subject specific policy, procedure, or guidance document. Where applicable, these associated documents should always be referred to when completing a relevant health and safety risk assessment. Please see Appendix D for a full list of associated procedural documents.

3.3.5 A manager's guidance document titled "Performing a health and safety risk assessment" covers the process for completing a risk assessment. A copy is available on the intranet and is also attached as Appendix E.

3.4 Consultation, Information Sharing and Quality

3.4.1 Risk assessments, with the exception of patient and individual staff specific ones, are published on the Trust intranet and are accessible to all staff.

3.4.2 An intranet library is in place which has named folders for each type of risk assessment along with a folder containing risk assessment template forms and a managers' health and safety risk assessment guide.

3.4.3 Staff notices are issued when new risk assessments are added or significant changes have been made to existing risk assessments. Notices may also be issued where a particular risk issue has been identified, and staff action is required as a control measure e.g. staff directed to use vehicle harnesses unless there is a clinical reason not to.

3.4.4 Patient specific risk assessments are discussed and agreed with patients and their carers to highlight any issues that have been identified and to gain co-operation regarding the prevention of incidents. Patient specific risk assessments are also registered on the central control systems for Emergency Operations Centre / Patient Transport Service to better inform the service of current or future patient needs. The findings of patient risk assessments are shared with staff attending the patient to inform their activities on scene and help with safe transportation.

3.4.5 Certain types of risk assessment are discussed at the Strategic Health and Safety Group, which is attended by Union Health and Safety Representatives who consult with the Trust on behalf of staff. Risk assessments relating to vehicles and equipment are discussed at the Trust Procurement Group and Vehicle Design Group and Moving and Handling assessments are discussed at the Moving and Handling Group. Local Health and Safety groups also exist where risk assessments may be discussed as appropriate. All these groups are attended by Union Health and Safety Representatives. Other assessments may be discussed with Union representatives outside of the Health and Safety Groups.

3.4.6 The Health and Safety Team will review and advise on any risk assessment if requested, however, certain types of assessment will automatically be submitted to a Health and Safety Manager for a quality check following completion.

3.4.7 Please see Appendix C for full details of consultation, information sharing and storage requirements and risk assessment quality checks.

3.5 EXISTING - Proactive Risk Assessment – Process Flow Chart

3.5.1 When completing a proactive health and safety risk assessment the following process should be followed:

3.5.2 Reference should be made to Appendix C, D and E when following the flow chart.

Requirement for risk assessment is identified *(See Appendix C)*

↓

Person responsible for completing assessment identified *(See Appendix C)*

↓

Selection of **appropriate risk assessment template** *(See intranet risk assessment library)*

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Refer to associated **procedural document where applicable** *(See Appendix D)*

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Responsible person **completes risk assessment** *(See Appendix E for assistance)*

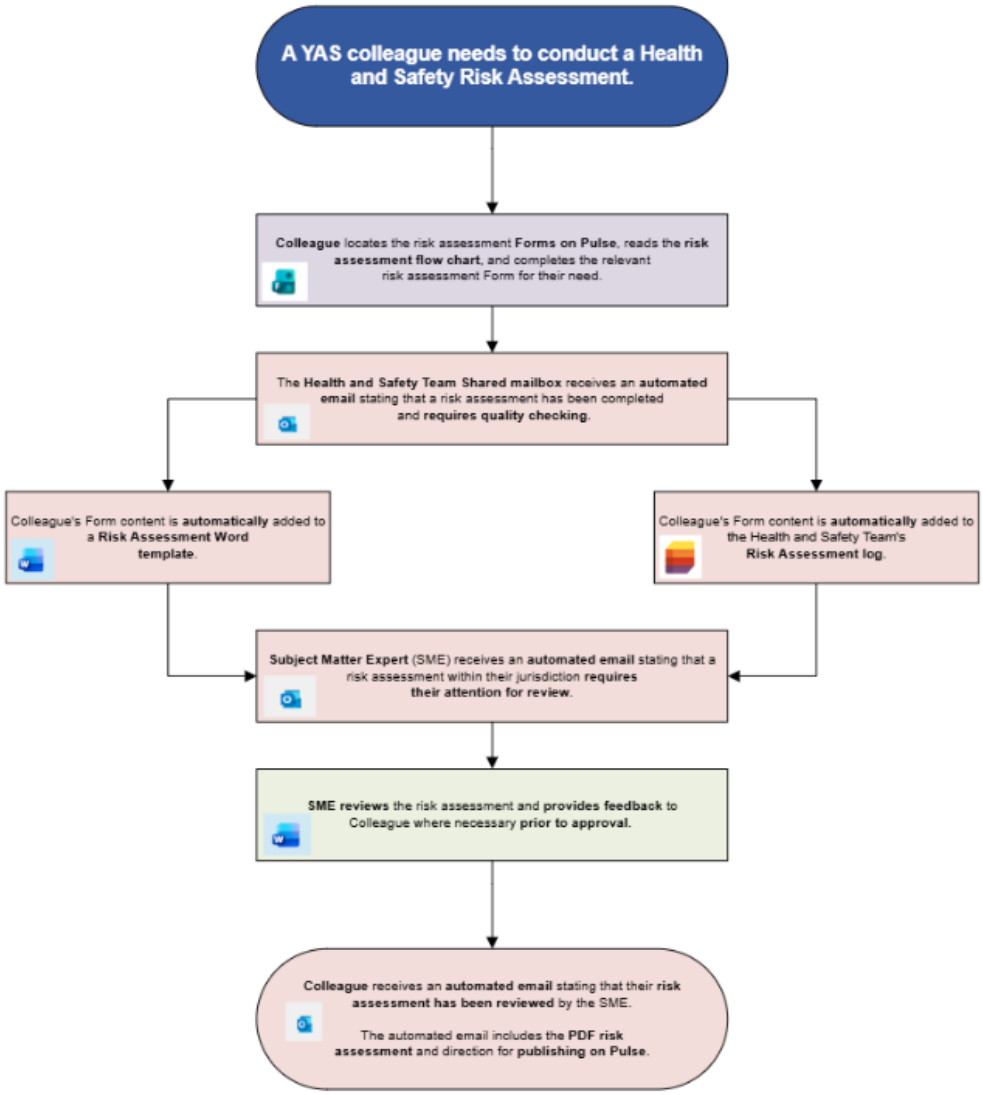
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Responsible person forwards risk assessment to quality check where applicable (*See Appendix C)*

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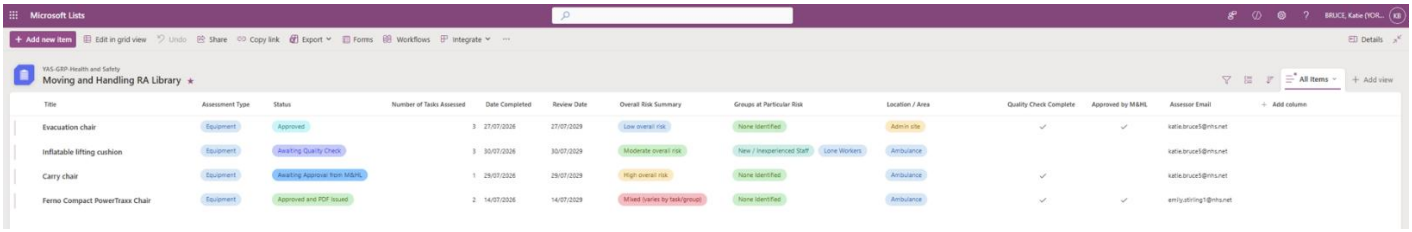
Responsible person - or SME if they have quality checked / completed the document - fulfils the consultation requirements *(See Appendix C)*

3.6 NEW - Proactive Risk Assessment – Process Flow Chart



3.6.1 The new process for proactive risk assessment includes the standardisation of risk assessment forms into a digital format using Microsoft Forms. Following submission, these forms are integrated into an electronic process that automatically progresses the form to the Health and Safety Team for quality checking by a subject matter expert. This check is to ensure the assessments are suitable and sufficient, to provide best practice advice to the colleague where needed and to enable escalation of any issues identified.

3.6.2 Once a final version of the assessment is agreed, a copy is sent to the colleague and a copy is retained by the Health and Safety Team, which corresponds with an entry onto the health and safety risk assessment log, stored in Microsoft Lists. A test environment example of this is shown below:



3.6.3 As well as cataloguing the Trust's Health and Safety risk assessments, the Microsoft Lists environment will also allow the Health and Safety Team to monitor completion, ensuring they are in date and compliant with legal requirements. An automated process will also monitor review dates and alert the assessment author when a routine review is required.

3.7 <u>Dynamic Risk Assessment</u>

3.7.1 It is not reasonably practicable for YAS to proactively assess each and every task or issue facing employees/ volunteers as they go about their working activities due to the dynamic and mobile settings in which they operate. Therefore, staff and volunteers are expected to undertake dynamic risk assessments as part of their normal daily activities in order to prevent injury and ensure that risks relating to staff, patients and others are minimised to the lowest level practicable.

3.7.2 Frontline operational staff in 999 often enter buildings and premises where the condition of their working environment is largely unknown until they arrive on scene. This includes private dwellings that are not covered by health and safety legislation or perhaps other workplaces/ environments where systems have failed and become unsafe. Accidents, incidents, and instances of ill health involving patients can produce a wide variety of hazards or can occur in locations where hazards are present.

3.7.3 Whilst some of the on-scene hazards maybe foreseeable and the Trust can produce a generic health and safety risk assessment for controlling these, e.g. attending an infectious patient can be controlled by providing PPE, risks can present in different ways and be subject to constant change making each situation attended unique and unpredictable. Therefore, it is vital that staff perform a dynamic risk assessment when entering a situation and constantly review this throughout their attendance to ensure appropriate controls are utilised at all times to prevent harm.

3.7.4 Frontline operational staff in PTS also enter private dwellings, and whilst their work is planned, there will still be occasions where they encounter unexpected circumstances or hazards. Therefore, dynamic risk assessment should be performed.

3.8 Dynamic Risk Assessment Methodology

3.8.1 The dynamic risk assessment process (DRA) is an on-the-spot, risk assessment tool used to rapidly process a presenting risk, threat, or hazard. The Trust's methodology for conducting a dynamic risk assessment is detailed in the course outline document: *Making Safe Decisions in Dynamic Environments.*

3.8.2 The aim of the course, which is an e-learning package, is to provide staff with the fundamental knowledge of how to conduct a dynamic risk assessment that can then be applied to any workplace situation. Instruction on its practical application is then incorporated into face-to-face training courses with particular emphasis on its use with violence and aggression and moving and handling hazards.

3.9 Consultation and Quality Checking for Dynamic Risk Assessment

3.9.1 Due to the nature of dynamic risk assessments, i.e. on the spot and fast changing, such risk assessments cannot be consulted on and shared in the same way as written proactive risk assessments. However, ongoing discussion and information sharing form a part of dynamic risk assessment and therefore discussion between colleagues when dynamically assessing risks is encouraged.

3.9.2 The quality and effectiveness of dynamic risk assessments can only be checked after the process has been deployed as part of a work activity. As dynamic risk assessment is a continuous, on-the-spot mental process it is not practical to complete a full record for review each time one is performed in the same way as would be done for a proactive risk assessment.

3.9.3 Dynamic risk assessment details are therefore captured when there has been an adverse outcome or near miss incident. Where such incidents occur, these are recorded in the Trust's incident management system (Datix) and include a description of events and details of the reporter's thought processes. The *Making Safe Decisions in Dynamic Environments* training course includes a section on how to record a dynamic risk assessment as part of an incident or near miss.

3.9.4 Datix incidents form a significant part of the Trust's learning processes through the identification of themes and trends. The details of these learning processes are included in the Incident Management Policy and the Health and Safety Policy.

3.9.5 Where incident themes and trends are identified, relating to a specific hazard, this learning will be incorporated into organisational and departmental risk assessments by SMEs, as appropriate.

4.0 Training Expectations for Staff

4.1 The Trust undertakes training needs analysis (TNA), which includes health and safety related training. The TNA is reviewed annually, and the process is covered by the Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy.

4.2 Health and Safety risk assessment training relating to specific risk subjects e.g. violence and aggression or moving and handling, is provided to staff through the People and Organisational Development Directorate (YAS Academy) and is integrated into wider staff training programmes as deemed appropriate by training managers and relevant subject matter experts.

4.3 General health and safety risk assessment training needs are identified by the Health and Safety Manager and provided through YAS Academy, who may commission external training provision where necessary.

4.4 Training will be provided in a variety of formats, for example, in-house, external, work-based, team briefing or e-learning.

4.5 Refresher training is available where employees are identified as benefitting from such during their personal development review.

4.6 The Trust will ensure that all staff have the appropriate level of training and education to fulfil their duties in respect of health and safety risk assessment completion.

5.0 Implementation Plan

5.1 The latest ratified version of this Policy will be posted on the Trust Intranet site for all members of staff to view. New members of staff will be signposted to how to find and access this policy during Trust Induction.

6.0 Monitoring Compliance with this Policy

6.1 Compliance with the requirements of this policy is monitored in a number of ways:

Monitoring subject	Methodology	Frequency	Monitored by
Review of health and safety incidents	All low and no harm health and safety incidents reviewed by Health and Safety Manager	Weekly	Health and Safety Team
Review of RIDDOR reportable incidents	All potential RIDDOR reportable incidents reviewed by Health and Safety Manager	On-going	Health and Safety Team
Identification of incident trends in relation to Health and Safety	Incident reports submitted for review	Quarterly	Strategic H&S Group
Monitoring of proactive risk assessment completion	Health and Safety work plan submitted to Strategic health and safety Group	Quarterly	Strategic H&S Group
Monitoring of consultation and information sharing	Attendance at Strategic and local H&S Groups	Quarterly/ Monthly	H&S Manager

7.0 References

7.1 HSE Webpages providing practical advice and guidance on risk assessment - Managing risks and risk assessment at work: Overview - HSE

8.0 Appendices

8.1 This Policy includes the following appendices:

- Appendix A – Definitions
- Appendix B – Roles and Responsibilities

- Appendix C – YAS Proactive Health and Safety Risk Assessments
- Appendix D – Associated Policy, Procedure or Guidance
- Appendix E – Performing a Health and Safety Risk Assessment

Appendix A – Definitions

Proactive risk assessment	A pre-planned written risk assessment which includes an action plan to mitigate risks identified.
Patient specific risk assessment	A pre-planned written risk assessment that is carried out by the Trust for patients identified as having specific health problems which pose risks to themselves or YAS staff.
Individual staff risk assessment	A pre-planned written risk assessment that is carried out by the Trust for staff who have specific health problems which pose a risk to themselves or patients.
Dynamic Risk Assessment	An on-the-spot risk assessment which includes the performance of immediate actions to mitigate risks identified and undergoes constant review.
Reasonably Practicable	Balancing the level of risk to patients or staff against the time, trouble, cost, and physical difficulty of taking safety measures. An ambulance trust must take sensible, proportionate steps to reduce risk unless the cost or effort of doing more is grossly disproportionate to the benefit

Appendix B – Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for health and safety management. The Trust Board requires that the Chief Executive, the Executive Directors and their staff implement the requirements of this policy within all areas of the organisation covered by their portfolio.

In addition, the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 confirms that everyone within the Trust has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of themselves and others whilst conducting their day-to-day activities within the organisation.

The specific health and safety responsibilities for all Trust staff, which incorporates the completion of any necessary health and safety risk assessments, are detailed in the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.

Specific duties and responsibilities for health and safety risk assessments are shown below:

Strategic Health & Safety Group

The Strategic Health & Safety Group (H&SG) is the expert level group for YAS relating to health and safety, and as such, considers policies relating to health and safety risk assessment in line with its policy development role.

The H&SG receive reports relating to investigations, considers changes to work procedures and/ or the introduction of new technology, carries out and receives the findings from health and safety risk assessments, monitors the relevant health and safety risks and reports to the Trust Executive Group (TEG).

The H&SG is established in partnership with Staff Side Worker Representatives who have agreed to also represent the interests of non-union affiliated employees within the Trust.

Head of Health and Safety (Nominated Competent Person for Health and Safety)

The Head of Health and Safety is responsible for ensuring the Trust has arrangements in place for the completion of health and safety risk assessment.

The Head of Health and Safety will ensure that all matters relating to health and safety risk assessment are dealt with appropriately.

Particular responsibilities will include:

- Driving continuous improvement in relation to the completion of health and safety risk assessments
- Ensuring the promotion of health and safety risk assessment completion where necessary
- Ensuring the involvement of trade union representatives in health and safety risk assessments.
- Ensuring the Trust has access to competent advice regarding health and safety risk assessment including the Trust's legal responsibilities.
- Ensuring the Trust has in place a policy for health and safety risk assessment which includes a clear process.
- Ensuring the Trust is aware of its duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 with regards to general risk assessment and all other risk assessment duties contained in risk specific health and safety legislation.

Health & Safety Manager

The Health & Safety Manager will provide general advice and practical assistance in all matters relating to the completion of health and safety risk assessments.

Particular responsibilities will include:

- Maintaining suitable recording arrangements for health and safety management purposes.
- Ensuring the completion of health and safety risk assessments where required.
- Ensuring incidents are reported to the Health and Safety Executive where appropriate.
- Supplying appropriate information in a timely manner.
- Encouraging reporting and monitoring of all incidents and injuries to staff or other affected parties.
- Supporting the completion of health and safety risk assessments within the scope of their health and safety expertise.

Occupational Health Service

Where a specialist health and safety risk assessment is required and is outside the capabilities of internal advisers i.e. a health and safety risk assessment is required by a health professional, the Trust's Occupational Health advisers will provide the relevant service on request.

Health & Safety Representatives

Health & Safety Representatives are recognised by their trade union and accepted by the Trust to carry out health and safety duties in line with the requirements of the Safety Representatives and Safety Groups Regulations.

The Trust Board, via appropriate Executive Directors, will ensure that they are:

- Involved in the completion of health and safety risk assessments where appropriate.
- Consulted on health and safety risk assessment matters affecting staff.
- Involved with any equipment/ vehicle evaluation and health and safety risk assessments prior to introduction.

All Employees

Every employee has a personal responsibility for their own health and safety and has a duty to:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and has a duty of care toward other persons affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with management in reviewing rules and safe working practices following risk assessments.
- Report all incidents, near misses, hazards, work related illnesses or injuries.
- Correctly implement dynamic risk assessment processes as necessary and in line with their training
- Correctly use equipment or items provided in the interest of health and safety, as identified through health and safety risk assessment procedures.

Appendix C – YAS Proactive Health and Safety Risk Assessments

Type of Risk Assessment	When required	Responsibility for completion	Quality check Y/N By Whom	Consultation requirements	Storage and sharing requirements
NEW Strategic risk assessments					
Organisational	A H&S hazard affecting the Trust is identified and added to the YAS H&S hazard register	YAS subject matter expert	Yes - Head of Health and Safety	Strategic H&S Group	Stored on the intranet Share with relevant groups
Departmental	As above but where the hazard presents a different level of risk depending on departmental activities	YAS subject matter expert	Yes - Head of Health and Safety	Strategic H&S Group	Stored on the intranet Share with relevant groups
EXISTING risk assessments					
Job specific *(to be withdrawn under new process)*	For all job titles within the Trust	Line Managers with H&S Manager support	Yes - Health and Safety Manager	Strategic H&S Group	Stored on the intranet Shared with relevant staff groups
Task risk assessments – subject specific					
Moving and Handling – non patient	For routine/ generic moving and handling tasks not involving patients	Moving and Handling Lead	No	Moving and Handling Group	Stored on the intranet Shared with relevant groups
Moving and Handling – patient	For routine/ generic moving and handling tasks involving patients	Moving and Handling Lead	No	Moving and Handling Group	Stored on the intranet Shared with relevant groups
New vehicle	For new vehicles being introduced into the Trust.	Head of Fleet	Yes - Health and Safety Manager	Vehicle Design Group	Stored on the intranet Shared with relevant groups
New equipment	For new equipment being introduced into the Trust.	Head of Procurement	Yes - Health and Safety Manager	Trust Procurement Group	Stored on the intranet

		In conjunction with: H&S Manager IPC Practitioner Academy representative Head of Fleet/ Medical Devices Union representative			Shared with relevant groups
COSHH	For routine tasks using hazardous substances covered by the Controls of substances hazardous to health regulations	Departmental Manager	Yes - Health and Safety Manager	Local H&S Group	Stored on the intranet Shared with relevant groups
Task risk assessment – non-subject specific					
Simple risk assessment	When a simple task/ issue requires a record of risk assessment	As appropriate	As appropriate**	As appropriate	As appropriate
General risk assessment	When a complex task/ issue requires a record of risk assessment	As appropriate	As appropriate**	As appropriate	As appropriate
Bespoke risk assessment*	When none of the above risk assessment templates are suitable or a subject specific template is required	As appropriate	As appropriate**	As appropriate	As appropriate
Individual / Person specific risk assessments					
Individual	Individual has health issues/ needs that may present risk to self or others.	Line Manager	No – available if required**	With individual	Stored locally Shared with individual
Pregnant worker	Individual is pregnant.	Line Manager	No – available if required**	With individual	Stored locally Shared with individual
Young person	16 - 18-year-old is working for the Trust.	Line Manager	No – available if required**	With individual	Stored locally Shared with individual

Patient	Patient has health issues/ needs that may present risk to self or others.	Operational Manager or Team Leader	No – available if required**	With patient/ carer	Stored locally – in dispatch and scheduling systems. Shared with patient/ carer. Shared with attending staff
DSE	Member of staff is a Display Screen Equipment user	Line Manager and individual	Yes - in line with DSE Policy	With individual	Stored locally Shared with individual
Stress	Individual feels they are suffering from signs of stress	Line Manager	No – available if required**	With individual	Stored locally Shared with individual

**** Bespoke risk assessment document to be created in conjunction with Health and Safety Team***

***** A Health and Safety Manager will review and advise on any risk assessment if requested***

Appendix D – Associated Policy, Procedure or Guidance

Type of Risk Assessment	Associated document
Individual	• Supporting Attendance Policy and Guidance
Pregnant Worker	• New Parent Support Policy • New Parent Employee Guidance
Patient	• Safer Patient Moving and Handling Policy • Moving and Handling Patients with Complex Needs SOP • Slips, Trips and Falls Policy
Display Screen Equipment	• Display Screen Equipment Policy (DSE)
Vehicle	• Vehicle Design Group Terms of Reference
Equipment	• Trust Procurement Group Terms of Reference
Moving and Handling – Patient	• Moving & Handling of Loads Policy
Moving and Handling – non-patient	• Safer Patient Moving and Handling Policy • Moving and Handling Patients with Complex Needs SOP
COSHH Assessment	• Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (COSHH)
Stress	• Preventing and Managing Stress in the Workplace Guidance

Appendix E – Performing a Health and Safety Risk Assessment

Advice for Managers Performing a Health and Safety Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is nothing more than having a careful look at what you are doing to ensure that you have adequate controls in place to prevent people from being harmed. Therefore, the purpose of a risk assessment is to identify measures to remove or control the risks.

Risk assessments must be 'suitable and sufficient,' with records kept showing that:

- A proper check has been made.
- Those affected have been identified
- All the obvious and significant hazards have been covered.
- The controls are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.

A **Hazard** is something with the potential to cause harm, such as:

- Working at height
- Oil on floor
- Fire
- Electricity
- Vehicles
- Hazardous substances
- Manual handling activities

The **Harm** caused will vary in severity, such as by:

- Death
- Major injury – fractures, amputations, serious burns etc.
- Minor injury – cuts, bruises, MSK injury, sprains etc.
- Psychological – stress, anxiety, trauma etc.
- Ill health or disease – infection etc
- Short or long-term incapacity – personal, service, or organisational

The level of **Risk** is therefore concluded by combining the severity of harm with the likelihood of it happening. This is then used as the basis for prioritising actions, with the higher the level of risk giving a higher priority for action.

The level of risk is associated with a risk score, which is calculated by multiplying the scores given to the severity of potential harm and the likelihood of occurrence.

Carrying out Risk Assessments - Basic Principals

The basic principles provide a simple structure to refer to when conducting a risk assessment:

Identify the hazards – ignore trivial hazards and concentrate on obvious and significant hazards.

Decide who might be harmed and how – evaluate the risks and decide if existing controls are adequate or if more should be done. This can often be achieved by understanding what up-to-date good practice looks like.

Record the significant findings – bringing your findings together into a risk assessment form. Other policies and procedures can be quoted to support your findings.

Review assessments – this should be annually or when circumstances change, ensuring that revisions are made if necessary, and an up-to-date risk assessment made accessible to the relevant groups of people.

Risk assessment is not meant to be a theoretical exercise. To do it most effectively you must look at what is actually there in the workplace. You may want to do this by systematically going from work area to work area, identifying the hazards associated with equipment and activities in each area; another approach is to shadow employees to see what hazards they meet while going about their work. Make sure you talk to employees, use their experience, and listen to their concerns.

Once you have decided what you are going to assess and have viewed the activity/ object/ location, and gathered any information you require, you can complete your assessment. Remember to review the Health and Safety Policy, codes of practice and other relevant documentation, such as training materials, to give a full account within your assessment.

You must record the significant findings.

Actions to Remove or Control Risks – Where possible, the hazard should be eliminated - there can be no risk without a hazard. Where this is not possible consider less hazardous options, such as using a less hazardous substance, tool, or process.

When controlling the remaining risks, apply the principles below in the following order:

- Combat risks at source by using physical means. For example, separating vehicles and pedestrian routes or installing interlocked guarding/ isolation to prevent access to dangerous parts of equipment.
- Implement systems and procedures to control the risk in conjunction with training, supervision, and personal protective equipment for employees where appropriate.

Ideally, any actions to remove or control the risks should be implemented by the manager carrying out the assessments.

You will have to decide, for each hazard identified, whether you have done enough to control the potential harm from it or whether you need to do more and, if so, what. In most cases, it will be relatively straightforward for you to decide, as you will be able to compare the controls you have got with good practice set out in the relevant guidance. If you cannot find guidance covering a particular hazard and/ or you are uncertain what to do, contact the Health and Safety Team on yas.healthandsafety@nhs.net

Finally, when a risk assessment has been undertaken and risks/ precautions identified, it is incumbent on the manager to ensure action is taken to successfully implement the control measures identified. Where this is not possible, the issue must be reported to the relevant manager through the established management channels.

Completing the Risk Assessment Form

Once you have identified what you will be assessing, you can start to fill out the risk assessment form. To do this you should take the following steps:

Access the Health and Safety Pulse page and select the appropriate risk assessment form for your activity – if you are initially unsure which form to choose, read through the flow chart that is in place to help you identify which form to complete.

Complete the initial questions to identify who has conducted the risk assessment, when it took place, what the assessment covers and when the activity will be reviewed. The review date will normally be annually, however if changes are identified through any related accident investigation, a change in procedures or work equipment, then the assessment will need to be reviewed earlier. The review is not complex – the assessor will review the existing assessment and complete another risk assessment form as before, providing only new information or improvements where necessary.

Carefully consider the activity from start to finish and whenever you think there is a hazard (thing with the potential to cause harm) presented, note it down as a new hazard in the form. You will note each separate hazard is required to be noted separately as there are subsequent questions for each one.

Complete each question asked of you around the individual hazards, including the likely harm/ loss for each. You will then be asked to identify the existing control measures for each hazard and whether you have any further recommendations – listing these as actions to be taken.

One you have identified the hazards and groups at risk; you will need to consider the severity and likelihood of the harm occurring. These should be multiplied together to give a combined risk value (risk score). You will need to do this for each group identified as at risk withing the assessment.

To ascertain the risk score, make sure to refer to the YAS Risk Matrix, as below.

YAS Risk Matrix

	Likelihood score →				
Severity score ↓	**1 Rare**	**2 Unlikely**	**3 Possible**	**4 Likely**	**5 Almost certain**
5 Catastrophic	**5**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**
4 Major	**4**	**8**	**12**	**16**	**20**
3 Moderate	**3**	**6**	**9**	**12**	**15**
2 Minor	**2**	**4**	**6**	**8**	**10**
1 Negligible	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Total score: 1 – 6 Low, 8 – 12 Moderate, 15 – 25 High

Risk severity	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Risk descriptors	**Negligible**	**Minor**	**Moderate**	**Major**	**Catastrophic**
Harm	Minor injury not requiring first aid or no apparent injury.	Minor injury or illness, requiring minor intervention. 1-2 people affected. No long-term consequences.	Moderate injury that impacts on an individual or small group of people. Some degree of harm, up to a year. RIDDOR/ MHRA/ agency reportable incident.	Major injury leading to long-term incapacity/ disability. Serious mismanagement of care with long-term effects. 16-50 people affected.	Death/ life threatening harm. Multiple permanent injuries or irreversible health effects. More than 50 people affected.

Likelihood	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Descriptor	**Rare**	**Unlikely**	**Possible**	**Likely**	**Almost certain**
Probability	< 5% 1 in 100,000 chance. This will probably never happen/ recur. Will only occur in exceptional circumstances.	6 - 20% 1 in 10,000 chance. Unlikely to occur. Do not expect it to happen/ recur but it is possible it may do so.	21-50% 1 in 1000 chance. Reasonable chance of occurring. Might happen or recur occasionally.	50-80% 1 in 100 chance. Likely to occur Will probably happen/ recur but it is not a persisting issue.	>81% 1 in 10 chance. More likely to occur than not Will undoubtedly happen/recur, possibly frequently.

When looking to control risks you are presented with, apply the **ESISP** principles in the following order, wherever possible:

Eliminate: Get rid of the hazard at source.	If steps are slippery, apply an anti-slip treatment or replace them rather than providing a warning sign.
Substitute: Reduce hazard at source by using an alternative which is less harmful.	Use a less hazardous substance and use the least amount necessary.
Isolate: Remove the person from the hazard.	Prevent access to moving parts by using guards or fencing.
Safe system of work (SSW): Control the hazard using workplace precautions.	Ensuring adequate information, instruction, training, supervision, and working procedures are in place.
Personal protective equipment (PPE): Protect the body from the hazard.	Wearing the appropriate level of PPE, such as level two: o Gloves o Fluid repellent surgical mask and o Disposable apron

Make sure to pay absolute attention to high risks, ensuring that your control measures reduce them to acceptable levels. The final step is to ensure control measures have been implemented – this is the whole reason for conducting the risk assessment, as without the control measures, the risks will not be reduced.

You must also ensure that you inform your management team of the risks identified and the remedial action/ resources required to ensure safety. You can do this by forwarding the risk assessment PDF to them.

If you believe that you cannot adequately control the risks, then you must seek advice on further controls from your senior manager and the Health and Safety Team.

Maintaining Records of Risk Assessments

Once you have completed a risk assessment form, it will be submitted to the Health and Safety Team for quality checking. The risk assessment will then be sent on to you as a PDF for you to save locally and arrange to be uploaded to the Pulse Risk Assessment Library if necessary for the assessment you have conducted.

The assessment will be reviewed and amendments may be suggested, which will be fed back to you via email. The Team may need to share some risk assessments with other groups, such as

Strategic Health and Safety Group, for approval, where appropriate.

The Health and Safety Team will maintain an overview of all risk assessments and will contact the original assessor/ owner/ author when a review is required. An automated process is also now being used, so assessors can expect to receive automated emails from the Health and Safety Team, with instructions surrounding next steps at each interval of the process.

Advice and Support

If you are unsure of any aspect of the process / risk assessment form or understanding the hazards and risks and what is required, please contact the Health and Safety Team on yas.healthandsafety@nhs.net