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HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

OPERATIONAL POLICY

This policy shall be jointly reviewed by management and recognised trade unions no later than the 1st February 2012.

This policy has been issued taking account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and should be read and given effect in a manner compatible with that Act.

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH OPERATIONAL POLICY

Introduction

This policy relates to the activities of the Occupational Health Service of Kettering General Hospital. The department is located on the ground floor of Warren Hill House.

The department provides a confidential advisory service to the Trust, promoting and maintaining the physical, mental and social well being of employees. In so doing the department contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organisation as a provider of health care.

It is not the role of the Occupational Health Service to take over the function of the General Practitioner or other Health Services, which are provided for the community at large.

Similarly the advisory role of the Occupational Health Service does not diminish the ultimate responsibility of the manager for the counselling, guidance, discipline and safety of his own staff.

The Trusts approach in providing this service is to remain pro-active and flexible to its service needs.

The department is the provider of a service and will act at all times in the best interests of the Trust and its employees.

The service inherently incorporates the following:

- Pre-employment health screening
- Sickness absence assessments
- Advice on work related health issues
- Ergonomic advice
- Immunisations/Vaccinations
- General health advice
- Health Promotion activities
- Monitoring of at risk groups through appropriate health surveillance

Department facilities

The department is a self-contained unit comprising of the following:

- Main entrance
- Central corridor (that acts as waiting area)
- Managers office
- Nurse Advisers office
- General office/Reception
- Small store room
- Staff / Clients W/C
- Two consulting rooms

Hours of Service

The department will operate an appointment only service for all clinic sessions held in the department.

Appointments are scheduled at 30 minute intervals between the hours of 9.15am and 12 midday and at 1.15pm and 4pm.

Adherence to these times is by no means rigid. A degree of flexibility will be maintained outside of these times. As part of the department's commitment to quality in service delivery, clients attending the department without an appointment will be seen when possible (i.e. where the workload permits and at the discretion of the Occupational Health Adviser). There are no arrangements for 'out of hours' service except under exceptional circumstances.

The department opening hours are:

- Monday to Friday 09.00 hours to 16.30 hours

Service Leads

The Occupational Health Service is led by the Occupational Health Services Manager and is essentially a nurse-based service (current Occupational Health Physician establishment 2 sessions per week).

The Occupational Health Department organisational structure is essentially flat (see Appendix 1).

The role of the Occupational Health Practitioner recognises the following:

- Direct and indirect professional accountability for all aspects of clinical care in the occupational health setting
- The exercising of independent decision making and professional judgement within the constraints of departmental policy and established occupational health best practice
- The provision of holistic care in clinical practice
- The acknowledgment of limitations in clinical practice and accordingly declining any inappropriate duties.

Service Standards

The service will act at all times with impartiality and will look with equality to service the needs of the Trust, as the employer, and the needs of the individual, as employee.

The service will be operated and maintained in accordance with departmental policies, procedures and guidelines.

All information received will be kept in the strictest of medical confidence with all health records kept in an appropriate manner as detailed in Appendix 2.

In addition all persons working in the department will adhere to any and all appropriate legal and ethical codes of practice as set by statute or professional associations.

Quality Standards

Quality is important for any service and must combine the following three crucial elements of:

- Conformation to specification/service level agreements
- Fitness for purpose; and
- Responsiveness

A service of quality is recognised as one that:

- Matches its specification/service level agreement by being what it says it is;
- Is fit for purpose by doing what it is supposed to do; and
- Is responsive by meeting or exceeding its clients requirements

The departments' quality standards are defined by:

- Its adherence to legal and ethical codes of practice;
- Our commitment to continuous personal/professional development
- The employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff
- Departments Quality Management Objectives

The departments' commitment to providing an unbiased quality service open to all employees regardless of race, religion or gender is reflected in its draft 'charter for clients' as detailed in Appendix 4.

Performance Standards

The integrity and impartiality of the service is acknowledged to be of paramount importance. The department is structured operationally within the Human Resources Directorate with the OH Nurse Lead reporting administratively to the Director of Human Resources. This relationship is entirely managerial and should remain so at all times. The OH Nurse Lead is clinically accountable to the Director of Nursing and Midwifery.

The responsibility of Human Resources to Occupational Health should relate solely to matters of service planning and strategic delivery to enable the Occupational Health Department to remain free from external influences to ensure the service remains impartial and able to act in the best interest of all parties at all times.

The success of the departments' performance may be assessed at least in part by the activity levels and its level of complaints.

Continuing Professional Development

Occupational Health Advisors will keep up to date as appropriate to fulfil the Nursing & Midwifery Council's requirements for Post Registration Education and Practice in order to:

- Develop clinical practice
- Reduce risk and
- Develop personally through education

- Support clients and colleagues
- Enhance care of clients

Complaints Management

A record of all such complaints will be maintained. Where a complaint is received pertinent to its services, or its' implied lack of service, the complaint will be recorded and will be subsequently investigated by the service manager. Any person deemed appropriate to do so will be required to give assistance in any investigation in accordance with Trust policy.

The investigating officer will provide a written response to the complainant no later than 28 days from the date of the receipt. Where due to extenuating circumstances this is not possible an interim progress report will be issued to the complainant.

Service reviews

The demand placed upon the service invariably fluctuates from year to year. Significant variables that contribute to this include the number of employees:

- Terminating employment;
- Being recruited; and
- Transferring or being re-deployed

Other contributing factors include:

- The type and level of sickness absence within the Trust which will subsequently generate referrals to Occupational Health
- The level of service/activity demanded by service level agreement

The departments' activities are recorded on a PC based occupational health database (Opas). The statistical information that can be produced enables regular and routine monitoring of the service provided at the point of contact. Occupational Health representation on Trust wide committees will also generate review of the service needs.

Service Developments

The department will continue to remain pro-active in the delivery of its services and will seek at all times to respond positively to any and all reasonable requests for its services.

Investment in IT technology will continue to be made in an effort to support and further develop the services being provided.

Income generation from external work remains both a present reality and a future objective. Although little has been done by way of income generation currently, working towards member status of NHS Plus, is seen as a positive step towards future income generation activity

'SWOT' analysis, as part of business planning procedures, is recognised as helping to facilitate service reviews.

Support Services

Active co-operation and effective communication between the Occupational Health Service and other departments is required. The following services are required to enable service provision:

Facilities Management:

- Postal
- Portering
- Domestic/Housekeeping
- Maintenance
- Linen/Sewing Room

Clinical Services:

- Pathology
- Pharmacy
- X-Ray
- Physiotherapy
- Dermatology
- Nutrition & dietetics

Non-Clinical Services:

- Human Resources/Staff Development
- Staff Bank
- Supplies and Stores
- IT Support
- Finance services
- Legal services
- Library services

The department's stakeholder list is both wide and varied and includes specific general people and/or departments within and external to the Trust (Appendix 5).

MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS

Following an appropriate referral, an accurate health record will be maintained at all times, on all employees who are screened for employment.

Records are kept in a secure room, within the confines of the Occupational Health Department. Access to such records will be restricted to authorised members of the occupational health team.

The integrity and neutrality of an Occupational Health service is dependant on its ability to maintain the rules of confidentiality in accordance with best practice and our professional body guidance.

All client information learned through the professional duties of the occupational health team is received in strict confidence and will remain confidential.

The release of information to a third party will only be made under the following circumstances:

- The employee consents to the disclosure;
- A court of law requires disclosure; or
- Disclosure is justified in the public interest (e.g. serious crime)

Records of those who terminate their employment will be kept securely within the confines of the department. The period of retention will be from the date of last entry or the date of termination whichever is the latter as follows:

- 8 years General Health Records
- 40 years Exposure to Hazardous Substances (COSHH) where Statutory health surveillance was completed
- 50 years Exposure to Ionising Radiation (Ionising Regulations)

As and when it becomes necessary to destroy files, this will be done in a manner that maintains confidentiality and renders the information permanently irretrievable.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

SOFT	HARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace change management as a means of maintaining quality improvements in service provision to the Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies that are research based and client focused
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain focused on the health needs of the Trust workforce and other client stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve efficiency of systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get everyone involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accuracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase client/stakeholder focus and involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep within budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet client/stakeholders expectations

**KETTERING GENERAL HOSPITAL NHS TRUST
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

CLIENT CHARTER

Occupational Health is concerned with the physical and emotional effects of work on health – as well as the effects of health on work. Our service is independent and unbiased.

YOU MAY EXPECT TO:

1. Be treated courteously at all times.
2. have a competent Occupational Health Advisor responsible for planning your care.
3. have your care planned according to your individual needs.
4. have your questions answered honestly.
5. have any planned care, including risk assessment and alternatives clearly explained to you before you decide whether to agree to it.
6. be assured that all medical information will remain confidential at all times and be stored in a secure environment.
7. have your privacy, dignity, religious and cultural beliefs respected.
8. have any concerns or complaints investigated quickly and thoroughly and receive an honest and informative response from a senior manager.
9. be asked, if you are willing, to participate in research and be given a full explanation of the study before making a decision.

YOU ARE ASKED TO:

1. treat staff courteously at all times.
2. co-operate with any planned care.
3. respond promptly to letters and/or other requests for information.
4. make known any concerns you may have regarding your care and treatment.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAKEHOLDER LIST

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

People:

Chief Executive
Associate Medical Directors
Director of Human Resources
Moving & Handling Co-ordinator
Health & Safety Manager
Clinical Risk Manager
Human Resources Advisors
Medical Staffing Officers
Chief Pharmacist
Line Managers

Departments:

Human Resources
Health & Safety
Legal Advisor
Infection Control
Clinical Governance
Pharmacy
Pathology
Medical Staffing
Chaplaincy
Nurse Bank

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS:

People:

The individual employee
Ward Managers
Directorate Managers
Consultant Secretaries
Safety Reps/Union Reps

Departments:

Physiotherapy
Radiology
Finance
Medical Records
Facilities

COMMITTEES:

Health, Safety and Risk
Infection Control Committee
Manual Handling Steering Group
Ad Hoc Committees

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

Health & Safety Executive
General Practitioners
Public Health
Other OH departments
Consultant in Communicable Disease Control