North Eastern Health Board

Bord Slainte An Oir Thuaiscirt

Safety Health and Welfare Service Development Plan 2004

December 2004

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SAFETY HEALTH & WELFARE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1.   Introduction

A *Health Strategy for the People of the North East 2003* and supporting Human Resources Management Plan, set out our overall direction and commitment in respect of public accountability and high performance, and also to improve the quality of working life for our staff.

The Safety, Health & Welfare at Work, Act 1989 places a legal obligation on the employer to ensure the safety, health & welfare of staff and the safety of those who come in contact with our activities.

To ensure the safe delivery of a quality service and to ensure compliance with legislation, it is vital that all risks involved in healthcare delivery are eliminated or minimised to an acceptable level.

The overall leadership and co-ordination of the Safety, Health & Welfare Service are provided by the Safety, Health & Welfare support team at regional and local level, working with managers and staff throughout the organisation.

The requirement of the Safety, Health & Welfare Service has developed to take account of on-going developments in national and international best practice and legislation. The focus of our work is to support managers and staff in managing risk proactively and systematically, and to control specific identified hazards e.g. manual handling, management of violence, biological hazards. This places greater emphasis on safety management systems, policies, surveillance procedures and working relationships. It involves partnership between regional and local managers, staff, safety representatives, risk advisers, human resource staff, project managers and others.

2.   Role of Safety, Health & Welfare Service
The role of the Safety, Health & Welfare Service is to lead and guide the organisation in ensuring the safety, health & welfare of staff, and the safety of service users and all who come in contact with our service, with particular emphasis on compliance with relevant legislation.

3.   Strategic Context for this Development Plan
This development plan is guided by the strategic direction provided in *A Health Strategy for the People of the North-East* 2003 and supporting Human Resources Management Plan. The Strategy goal "Public Accountability and High Performance" and the H.R. action "Improve the Quality of Working Life" provide the overall strategic context in which this plan is developed. This clearly places safety, health & welfare within the organisation's governance arrangements with a focus on assuring staff safety, health & welfare and the safety of service users.

4.   Purpose of this Development Plan

The purpose of this development plan is to provide a clear direction for the development of safety, health & welfare services over the next three years by:

- Setting out a clear vision and mission for the safety, health & welfare service
- Connecting our activity in a consistent and planned way across the organisation
- Prioritising our objectives and actions to achieve the best outcome for staff and service users.

It makes explicit our commitment to prioritise the safety, health & welfare of staff and safety of service users, and all who come in contact with our service.

5.   Vision

Our vision is that safety, health & welfare are integrated into all health service activities to enable safety, positive health and wellbeing for staff, safety of service users, and all who come in contact with our services.

6.   Mission

We exist to promote and enable a safety culture by providing professional guidance on compliance with safety, health & welfare legislation and to lead a proactive and planned approach to the management of workplace safety.

7.   Guiding Principles

The principles underpinning our Service are those outlined in A *Health Strategy for the People of the North East*, 2003 and in The National Health Strategy 'Quality and Fairness' 2001.
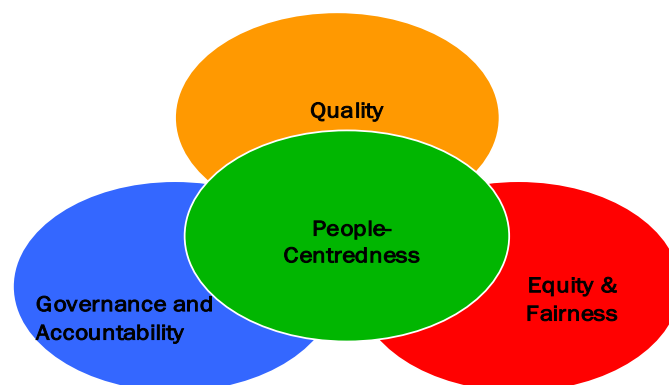

Fig 1: Principles Guiding our Service
Source: A Health Strategy for the People of the North-East 2003

People-Centeredness
We plan, develop and deliver safety, health & welfare services to meet the needs of staff, the safety of all who come in contact with our services.

Equity & Fairness
All staff within the organisation have equal access to safety, health & welfare services and are treated with respect and dignity. To maximise the potential for quality outcomes we adopt and apply the principles of partnership.

Quality
The safety, health & welfare of staff, safety of service users and all who come in contact with our services is central to our planning, decision making and service provision.

Governance & Accountability
Evidence and best practice guide our planning and decision making and we can demonstrate that our resources are used to benefit the safety, health & welfare of staff working within the organisation, the safety of service users and all who come in contact with our services.

8. Development Framework

Safety, Health & Welfare Service Goals

Goal One	Goal Two	Goal Three
Compliance with Safety, Health & Welfare Legislation	Safety, Positive Health & Wellbeing for staff	Safety of Service Users and all who come in contact with our service
Safety, Health & Welfare Service Objectives		
1.1 We will provide timely advice, guidance and support to ensure compliance with relevant safety, health & welfare legislation **1.2** We will promote an integrated approach to the management of safety, health & welfare at regional and local level **1.3** We will support local managers to take ownership and responsibility for safety, health & welfare issues **1.4** We will guide the safety, health & welfare aspects of capital developments and promote the need for planned maintenance programmes throughout all services **1.5** We will ensure that our planning, decision making and use of resources is informed by needs identified in safety, health & welfare trend analysis **1.6** We will ensure that continuous organisation learning and review regarding safety, health & welfare is gathered, analysed and used to inform our decisions **1.7** We will monitor and evaluate implementation of the Safety Management Programme e.g. • Safety Statements • Risk Assessments • Action Plans • Consultation Processes • Incident Reports **1.8** We will engage with external agencies e.g. Department of Health & Children, Health & Safety Authority, to influence the safety, health & welfare agenda at national level.	**2.1** We will support staff to take responsibility for their own safety, health and wellbeing **2.2** We will encourage staff to raise safety, health & welfare concerns **2.3** We will work together with other related services i.e. Risk Management, Occupational Health, Human Resources, Capital Projects, Health Promotion etc. to ensure Safety, Health & Welfare plans are implemented through their work	**3.1** We will continually review our whole systems approach to ensure safety for all who use or come in contact with our service **3.2** We will encourage service users to raise safety, health & welfare concerns

Supporting Objectives with Actions

Goal One: Compliance with Safety, Health & Welfare legislation	
Objective	**Action**
1.1 We will provide timely advice, guidance and support to ensure compliance with relevant safety, health & welfare legislation	We will: • Ensure that managers and staff are kept up to date with safety, health & welfare legislation and are assisted to apply it to their area of responsibility • Provide guidance to ensure that new legislation guides policy development and is introduced and implemented in a consistent and planned way across the whole region • Assist managers to develop regional and local expertise to comply with the requirements of key safety, health & welfare legislation i.e. undertaking risk assessments, developing and updating safety statements, providing health & safety training etc.
1.2 We will promote an integrated approach to the management of safety, health & welfare at regional and local level	We will: • Work with the Regional Health & Safety Co-ordinating Committee to ensure safety, health & welfare is a priority at regional level • Ensure an emphasis on safety, health & welfare issues by contributing to the development of the Regional Risk Management Plan and integrated risk assessment framework • Assist regional and local managers to integrate safety, health & welfare considerations into their strategies and plans
1.3 We will support local managers to take ownership and responsibility for safety, health & welfare issues	We will: • Work with local managers to assist and guide them to include safety, health & welfare priorities in their service plans • Provide practical advice and guidance and support to managers and staff on all matters in relation to safety, health & welfare e.g. develop and review safety statements, facilitate risk assessments, assist with the developing of safe work practices and procedures etc. • Attend local safety committee meetings and support them in dealing with local safety, health & welfare issues • Provide and deliver safety, health & welfare training, in order to develop the capacity, knowledge and skills to deliver a safer service
Goal One: Compliance with Safety, Health & Welfare legislation	

Objective	Action
1.4 We will guide the safety, health & welfare aspects of capital developments to ensure a safe work environment.	We will: • Advise those involved in capital developments at regional and local projects to ensure that all developments comply with the highest safety standards • Work with local managers in planning to assess in planning stage and designing of local projects. • Use information from safety, health & welfare assessments and identify prioritise areas for routine maintenance
1.5 We will ensure that our planning, decision making and use of resources is informed by needs identified in safety, health & welfare trend analysis	We will: • Provide regional and local management with quarterly progress reports on issues such as incident trends, progress on education and training, review of safety statements etc • Provide information on emerging trends in safety, health & welfare at National and EU level • Assist managers to prioritise safety, health & welfare action based on needs identified from trend analysis • Allocate safety, health & welfare resources to meet actions prioritised on assessed need
1.6 We will ensure that continuous organisation learning and review regarding safety, health & welfare is gathered, analysed and used to inform our decisions	We will: • Work with Risk Management to draw out the learning from information gathering through the ongoing implementation of the incident reporting policy • Ensure that the learning from incident health & welfare committees and other appropriate means • Ensure that the Regional Health & Safety Co-ordinating Committee gives time to consider the implications of issues that arise through continuous learning and review

1.7 We will monitor and evaluate implementation of the safety management programme i.e.
• Safety Statements
• Risk Assessments
• Action Plans
• Consultation Processes
• Incident Reports
	We will:
	• Monitor the performance of safety management systems through the gathering of information from the following sources
	  - risk assessments
	  - health & safety committees
	  - inspections
	  - incident reports.
	• Through information gathering we will identify where specific evaluation is required.

1.8 We will engage with external agencies e.g. Department of Health & Children, Health & Safety Authority, to influence the safety, health & welfare agenda at national level.	We will: • proactively identify regional issues, and take the lead as appropriate to influence at national level issues that have a national impact e.g. Management of Work-related Violence.

Goal Two: Safety, Positive Health & Wellbeing for staff	
2.1 We will support staff to take responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing	We will: • Lead in planning the organisation's response to managing workplace violence. • Provide staff with accident & incident safety awareness training. • Oversee the co-ordination of all aspects moving & handling to minimise associated risks
2.2 We will encourage staff to raise safety, health & welfare concerns	We will: • Raise staff awareness through induction, and all safety, health & welfare programmes and other appropriate measures. • Respond and follow through on concerns raised by safety representatives
2.3 We will work together with other related services i.e. Risk Management, Occupational Health, Human Resources, Capital Projects, Health Promotion etc. to ensure safety, health & welfare management is a integrated process	We will: • Continue to work together with Occupational Health to further our joint responsibility regarding safety, health & welfare e.g. - Stress management - Occupational Blood Exposure - Assisting staff to return to work. • Work with the Training & Development Department to plan and deliver education and training programmes regarding safety, health and welfare. • Ensure to integrate into other programmes as appropriate. • Continue to focus on the safety aspects of environmental issues e.g. - Water Quality - Asbestos - Air Conditioning.

Goal Three: Safety of Service Users and all who come in contact with our Service	
Objective	**Action**
3.1 We will continually review our systems to ensure safe practices for all who use or come in contact with our services	We will: • Ensure that our policies and procedures incorporate our responsibility for the safety of Service Users and all who come in contact with our service. • Ensure that the safety of service users is integral to our planning and decision making e.g. - safe access and exit throughout our premises - prevent and minimise slips, trips and falls - safe moving and handling.
3.2 We will encourage service users to raise safety, health & welfare concerns	We will: • Enable service users to report incidents through the Incident Reporting Policy • Assist staff to enable service users to report incidents.

Enabling Actions

Delivering on the challenges set out in this Development Plan will require the Safety, Health & Welfare Team, managers and staff to work together to ensure a safe workplace for staff and the safety of service users and all who come in contact with our services.

Building capacity across the organisation to deliver on the key safety, health & welfare goals, objectives set out in this plan must be a focus for our attention. Therefore, we have identified a number of key areas for action.

Integration of safety, health & welfare and risk management

As part of our approach to good governance we need to ensure that assurance frameworks are in place to monitor our systems and ensure that quality and standards are met. This includes quality and standards in safety, health & welfare. Our assurance framework will assist us to manage the totality of risks including those associated with safety, health & welfare. Risk management places a specific emphasis on the need to identify potential hazards and control risks associated with the delivery of health care. Therefore, managing the risks associated with the safety, health & welfare of staff, safety of service users and all who come in contact with our service is integral to our joint agenda.
The Safety, Health & Welfare Team will:

- Work within the Risk Management Team to assure that our systems are safe for staff, service users and all who come in contact with our service.

- Work within the Risk Management Team to ensure that the safety, health & welfare are integral to the Risk Management Plan and that safety, health & welfare objectives are explicit within this plan.

- That the specific role and contribution of the safety, health & welfare team is recognised and integrated within Risk Management Services and maintained within the wider organisation structure and culture.

Education, training and development for safety, health & welfare staff

Continued education, training and development for staff is essential to ensure their professional development and to support them to deliver a service of the highest standard. To guide and support staff and management we will continue to assist them to develop competence in relation to safety, health & welfare, through education, training and awareness programmes. To ensure that the safety, health & welfare service team continue to develop, we will also take the following specific actions:

Action:
- We will support the ongoing personal and professional development of staff within the Safety, Health & Welfare Service.
- We will work with the Training & Development Department to undertake team development and personal development planning.

Information sharing and communication

Information sharing and communication systems enable us to identify and analyse trends to support our planning and decision-making.

Action:
- We will continue to develop the ICT systems needed to support our information requirements.
- We will collate and analyse/review reactive data (e.g. incident, near misses, complaints) and active data (e.g. risk assessments, health & safety committees, review of safety management systems, training) and communicate them as appropriate to inform our decision making.

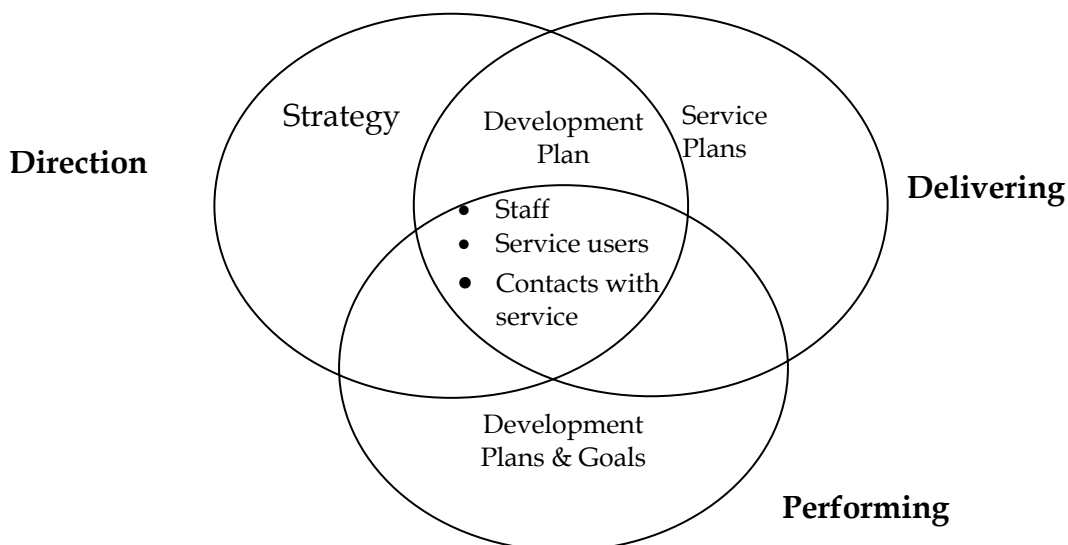**Implementation of Safety, Health & Welfare Development Plan**

Fig 2: Linking Development Plan to Action
Source: Adapted from *A Health Strategy for the People of the North-East 2003*

This Safety, Health & Welfare Development Plan sets out the overall direction, objectives and actions for the safety, health & welfare service over the next three years. The Safety, Health & Welfare Team will continue to work at regional and local level with managers and staff to ensure that the objectives and actions outlined are implemented through the service planning process. To achieve these objectives and actions we will continue to undertake appropriate development work.

Performance will be measured through the 2005 –2007 Service Plans.

Glossary of Terms

Note*: This Glossary of Terms has been developed within the context of how terms relate to this document.*

Governance: the exercise of authority, within defined accountability structures, in order to fulfil the objectives or mission of an organisation. Governance provides a framework through which an organisation is accountable for continually improving the quality of services, and safeguarding high standards of service delivery by creating an environment in which excellence in management, safety, health & welfare of staff and the safety of those who come in contact with our activities are promoted. It is about transparency in the way the organisation acts, communicates and takes decisions.

Hazard: A situation that might result in harmful consequences.

Health & Safety: means occupational safety, health & welfare in the context of preventing accidents and ill health to employees while at work.

Health & Safety Policy: means a statement by an organisation of its intentions and approach in relation to its overall health and safety performance that provides a framework for action, and for the setting of its health and safety objectives and targets.

Occupational Health: The protection of employees from the possible adverse effects of work related activity.

Risk: The combination of the likelihood and consequence of a specified hazardous event occurring.

Risk Assessments: means the process of evaluating and ranking the risks to health and safety at work arising from hazards at the workplace. It involves estimating the magnitude of risk and deciding whether the risk is acceptable or whether more precautions need to be taken to prevent harm.

Safety Statements: is a programme, in writing, for safeguarding the health and safety of employees while they work. It specifies how the organisation will manage employees' health and safety, including its commitment to complying with its legal obligations, the resources provided and arrangements for implementation.

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- Part IV: Use of work equipment
- Part V: Provision of Personal Protective Equipment
- Part VI: Manual handling of loads
- Part VII: Work with display screen equipment
- Part VIII: Electricity
- Part IX: First Aid
- Part X: Notification of accidents and dangerous occurrences