

**Guidance for Managers when Carrying out Risk Assessments for Trainee Doctors**

Employers have a statutory obligation, as governed by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to protect the health and safety of new and expectant mothers. Once informed in writing the employer is obliged to undertake an individual risk assessment that aims to identify hazards and assess risks. The employer must take individual action to remove, reduce or control any risks that are significant. In the event that significant risks cannot be controlled adequately, the employer has a duty to undertake a hierarchy of measures comprising temporary adjustment in working conditions, provision of alternative work or suspension on paid leave.

HWWB are unable to be ‘prescriptive’ when giving guidance on supporting staff as all roles are different and dependant on the Host Organisation. Please see below further guidance on workplace hazards and possible preventative or risk control measures:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Physical Hazards** | **Preventative or risk control measures** |
|  | Does the work involve: - |  |
|  | * Lifting or pushing of heavy objects, e.g. lifting boxes? * How Frequently? | The changes an employer should make will depend on the risks identified in the assessment and the circumstances of the business. For example, it may be possible to alter the nature of the task so that risks from manual handling are reduced for all workers, including new or expectant mothers. Or it may be necessary to address the specific needs of the worker and reduce the amount of physical work, or provide aids for her in future to reduce the risks she faces. |
|  | * Driving * For how long? How Frequently? | Traveling in the course of work, and to and from the workplace, can be problematic for pregnant women, involving risks including fatigue, vibration, stress, static posture, discomfort and accidents. These risks can have a significant effect on the health of new and expectant mothers. Where travel for business is required advice should be taken from the women’s health care providers. |
|  | * Standing or squatting for long periods? * How Long? | Physiological changes during pregnancy (increased blood and systolic volume, general dilatation of blood vessels and possible compression of abdominal or pelvic veins) promote peripheral congestion while standing. Ensure that seating is available where appropriate. Constant sitting or constant standing is both inadvisable. It is better to alternate between the two. If this is not possible, provision should be made for breaks. |
|  | * A lot of walking? * How Much? | Ensure that seating is available where appropriate. Constant sitting or constant standing is both inadvisable. It is better to alternate between the two. If this is not possible, provision should be made for breaks. |
|  | * Working at height or climbing steep steps? * How High etc? | The employer must ensure that pregnant workers do not work at heights (e.g. ladders and scaffolds) |
|  | * The need to access areas with limited space, e.g. store rooms? * Which Area? | Help and support needs to be available when required to access areas with limited space. |
|  | Will any tasks become more hazardous to the worker as the pregnancy progresses?  Which Tasks? | To be assessed based on the workplace environment. |
|  | Does the role involve shift work?  Which Shifts? | It may be necessary to adjust working hours temporarily, as well as the timing and frequency of rest breaks, and to change shift patterns.  Expectant mothers can still work night shifts unless there is a specific identified risk. In this instance the employee must provide a medical certificate from their doctor or midwife stating that they must not work nights. |
|  | If so, does it involve working at night or into the night?  Please states Time/s of Shift | As above |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2.** | **Specific Hazards** | **Preventative or risk control measures** |
|  | Does any part of the job involve the use of chemicals, or potential exposure to biological agents?  Please state which chemicals | For work with hazardous substances, which include chemicals which may cause heritable genetic damage, employers are required to assess the health risks to workers arising from such work, and where appropriate prevent or control the risks.  Prevention of exposure must be the first priority. Where it is not appropriate to prevent the risk, control of exposure may be by a combination of technical measures, along with good work planning and housekeeping, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). |
|  | If so, are there any risks to the worker whilst she is pregnant or nursing?  Risk Identified | As above |
|  | Is there any exposure to vibration, e.g. through the use of handtools?  How long is the exposure? | Excessive vibration should be avoided. It should be recognised that use of personal protective equipment by the mother will not protect the unborn child from a vibration hazard. |
|  | Does the worker need to wear personal protective clothing?  Please state what clothing? | Assess any PPE available in the workplace. |
|  | If so, will this present a problem as the pregnancy develops?  State Problem | To be assessed based on the workplace environment. |
|  |
| **3.** | **Working Conditions - general** | **Preventative or risk control measures** |
|  | Does the work involve lone working or working in remote locations?  Please give details | Depending on their medical condition, help and support needs to be available when required. |
|  | Does the role involve any home working? | Traveling in the course of work, and to and from the workplace, can be problematic for pregnant women, involving risks including fatigue, vibration, stress, static posture, discomfort and accidents. These risks can have a significant effect on the health of new and expectant mothers.  Where travel for business is required advice should be taken from the women’s health care providers. |
|  | Will the person have problems accessing toilet facilities?  Give details | To be assessed based on the workplace environment. |
|  | Are there any restrictions on when the person can access the toilets?  Reason for restriction | As above |
|  | Are there restrictions on when the person can take a rest break when needed?  Reason for restriction | It may be necessary to adjust the timing and frequency of rest breaks, and to change shift patterns. |
|  | Is the pace of work out of the employee’s control?  Reason | Provide access to somewhere where the employee can sit or lie down comfortably in private, at appropriate intervals. |
|  | Are there any risks of violence at work?  Potential problems with CAMHs patients | Depending on their medical condition, help and support needs to be available when required. |
|  | Does any part of the job involve dealing with members of the public? | To be assessed based on the workplace environment. |
|  | If so, does it involve dealing with distressed or disturbed people?  Comment | Depending on their medical condition, help and support needs to be available when required. |
|  | Does the role involve: - |  |
|  | - Contact with young children or sick people? | As above |
|  | - Unpredictable working hours? | As above |
|  | - Dealing with emergencies? | As above. Obvious restrictions would be not first on call carrying emergency bleep. |
|  | Are there any obstacles in corridors or offices that could cause problems for pregnant women, e.g. in the event of a fire evacuation? | To be assessed based on the workplace environment and obstacles removed where possible. |
|  | Is there any other form of indoor air pollution, e.g. diesel fumes?  Give Details | For work with hazardous substances, which include chemicals which may cause heritable genetic damage, employers are required to assess the health risks to workers arising from such work, and where appropriate prevent or control the risks. |
|  | Does the employee work in any areas where the temperature is not reasonable?  Details | Pregnant workers should not be exposed to prolonged excessive heat or cold at work. |
|  | If the employee uses a workstation has a workstation risk assessment been done? | Has this been carried out previously within the past few months? |
|  | Will workspace be a problem as the pregnancy develops? | To be assessed based on the workplace environment. |
|  | Does the worker have an adjustable seat, e.g. with a backrest? | Ensure that the employee has access to an adjustable seat. |
|  |  |  |
| **4.** | **Mental Job Demands** | **Preventative or risk control measures** |
|  | Does the job involve meeting challenging deadlines? | Employers will need to take account of known stress factors (‘stressors’) (such as shift pattern, job security, workloads, etc.) and the particular factors affecting pregnant women. If significant stressors are identified a stress risk assessment should be carried out and appropriate adjustments made. |
|  | Does the role involve rapidly changing priorities and demands? | As above. |
|  | Does the role require a high degree of concentration? | As above. |

**Supporting Documents:**

Principal Legislation

* The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
* The Employment Rights Act 1996
* The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
* The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
* The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999

Should you require any further guidance or support please contact our HR Business Partner & Advisory Team at [lead.employer@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:lead.employer@sthk.nhs.uk)