

Health and Safety Executive		Sector Information Minute	
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Target Audience:
FOD Inspectors and HSAOs

REDUCING SLIP AND TRIP ACCIDENTS IN THE HEALTH SERVICES

This SIM details the second year of a two-year campaign on reducing slips and trips and provides information to assist inspectors undertaking visits looking at slips and trips issues as part of the targeted inspection programme in the Public Services Programme 2006/07 (PSP5). It also provides information on use of 'The Publicity Pack on Slips and Trips for Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Other Health Care Establishments' and references materials developed for the HSE Slips and Trips Watch Your Step campaign.

As in previous years, for slips and trips topic inspections Inspectors should follow the requirements of the RHS Topic Pack Guidance. Also, combining contacts on slip and trip issues should be considered where possible along with any other suitable planned activity, investigation or project in health care premises.

Introduction

1 The Public Services Programme (PSP) is designed to reduce work related accidents and ill health and the subsequent loss of productivity in the public services. Its key objective is to make a major contribution to HSE's PSA target for lost days, and particularly:

- To reduce the number of working days lost in the civil service and wider public sector, especially those caused by work related accidents and ill health, by 30% by 2010

2 This SIM describes the action to be taken by FMUs in health services during 2006/07 and should be read in conjunction with the PSP Business Group Delivery Plan 2006/07 and the overarching PSP/Stress Health Care SIM. The slips and trips work incorporates targeted inspections of Trusts, which will be based on recently

obtained sickness absence data. These interventions should be carried out at the same time as other activities and/or topic inspection wherever possible.

Background to campaign

3 The slips and trips campaign is aimed primarily at NHS Trusts. It is intended to: emphasise to employers their legal responsibilities; equip employers with the knowledge to successfully tackle slip and trip hazards in their workplace; and, dispel some of the misinformation surrounding slip and trips. It will be achieved through a variety of methods; targeted use of the publicity pack; proactive contact; workshop events; follow-up activity.

4 Employers often regard slip and trip accidents as being outside their control, inevitable or as the employee's fault, but this is wrong. Plus, effective solutions are often simple and cost-effective. The facts are that:

- Slips and trips are the most common cause of major injuries in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care establishments.
- The latest figures published, state that they account for 54% of all reported major injuries.
- As 95% of the major injuries result in broken bones, this means significant immediate costs and consequential losses for employers.
- Slips and trips cause three times more major injuries than manual handling and assault/violence.

Tackling slips and trips will deliver cost benefits to health care employers.

Campaign Details

5 The campaign aims, through various intervention techniques, to reduce the amount of major injury accidents to health care staff. It seeks to make a contribution toward achieving the slip and trip PSA targets - the aim being to reduce the slips and trips incidence rate by 5.1% by the end of 2007/08.

The campaign is made up of a number of phases:

- i. Raise duty holders awareness of slips and trips issues through publicity packs;
- ii. Continue to increase awareness and bring specific issues, particular to their environment, to duty holder's attention through inspection;
- iii. Liaise on holding Workshop events for the purpose of giving dutyholders

sufficient knowledge to successfully tackle slips and trips; ([PSP8](#))

- iv. Achieve a commitment to improve through their own action plans;
- v. 'Targeted inspection' visits and, if appropriate, enforcement. ([PSP5](#))
- vi. This project can link to the floor cleaning project in the Midlands - contact Peter Lennon. OM 2006/03 refers.

See Campaign Summary Checklist (Appendix A) for these and other actions.

Publicity pack

6 Each HSE office will have received publicity packs previously and should re-order as required. As of April 4th 2006, 1,300 packs remain available to you, there will be no reprints. Contents: -

- A Slips and Trips Workplace Newsletter; for health service employees;
- Two posters - one on preventing slips, one on preventing trips;
- INDG225 (rev1) Preventing Slips and Trips at work;
- Health Services Information Sheet No.2, Slips and Trips in the Health Services;
- Preventing slips in the food and drink industries - technical update on floor specifications, food sheet no 22.

7 'The assessment of pedestrian slip risk The HSE Approach' (Slips and trips 1) though not in some of the original packs is an essential technical document. You may need to do a colour print, and insert it into the pack, locally.

8 Primarily, the pack should be sent, with cover letter (see Appendix B), to a named key contact within each Trust. Their job title/grade, area of responsibility and contact details (incl. e-mail address) should be recorded locally and also forwarded to the healthservices e-mail account. This will enable a validation process to be put into place later in the project.

9 The contacts within Trusts should be informed that further communication is planned in order to discuss their slip and trip accidents, details of accident reduction initiatives or proposals and Workshop events.

10 All documents (excluding posters) from the pack are available in electronic format via HSE's slip and trip web site. This is a useful way to obtain further copies as pack contents can be e-mailed directly to a client (though not as a mailshot) or

printed out.

11 Poster packs come in packs of 10 (5 slip & 5 trip posters: Cost £7.50) and can be ordered through HSE books.

12 Note: The resources from the publicity pack are equally applicable to other health care establishments and should be used as considered appropriate locally in support of other contact or activity.

Operational Input / Inspections and visits

13 Inspectors are asked to inspect risk management systems for slips and trips issues in 34 settings: **YNE = 9, NW = 9, Midlands = 6, ESE = 4, London 4, SW=2.**

14 PSP6 and PSP7 details the separate Inspection Plan activities for Scotland and Wales respectively.

15 Within England, Divisions are requested to select and target interventions to Trusts where the greatest impact can be made to reduce days lost. The data is available on request from the Health & Social Care Services Unit (healthservices e-mail account). There are enough trusts in this group to provide sufficient scope per Division.

16 When carrying out the targeted inspections Inspectors are asked to select contacts within Trusts and draw their attention to Workshop events. It is intended that all Trusts contacted will have produced their own action plan and received a follow-up visit where possible. (See Appendix B for details given to Trusts.) An important note is that these action plans must include baseline data against which any claimed improvements and subsequent activity can be measured.

17 Enforcement guidance is given in the RHS Topic Inspection Pack and in the inspection/enforcement guidance produced for Watch Your Step.

18 HSAOs are asked, within the published resource allocation, to act as a key contact point within each division to collate the supply of publicity packs to all NHS Acute Trusts. Also to co-ordinate the supply of packs and further materials: for other Trusts; for inspection/visit purposes; for Workshops and as such to act as contact point/support for these events.

19 Work recording against the relevant FMU should be in accordance with COIN instructions.

Inspection tools

20 The 'Slips Assessment Tool' (SAT) has been found to greatly assist dutyholders in recognizing the main elements in their workplace that contribute to slip and trip risks. It is a portable tool, as it can be downloaded from the HSE Slip and Trip website onto a CD or laptop and taken to the premises. You will also need the microroughness meter. The CD could be left with the dutyholder, in order for them to continue with risk assessments or the dutyholder can download the SAT themselves from <http://www.hsesat.info/>.

Slip and Trip Workshop Events (PSP8)

21 Health services employers will be given the opportunity to host or attend a 'Reducing Slips and Trips Workshop' up until the end of March 2007. Resource has been made available to hold about 24 events around the country. Details of events held so far, or those already planned for 2006/07 can be found in appendix C.

22 The one day events are aimed at those managers who can effect change in the workplace, the ideal delegates being facilities and estates managers, procurers, health and safety managers, support services management and possibly higher-level health and safety representatives. Please note, the content is of a technical and managerial nature and, as such, is not intended for general employees and their immediate health and safety supervisors.

23 It has been planned for the events to be run in partnership. The Slips and Trips Programme will provide the speakers, the equipment and the handouts. The local NHS contact will provide the venue, hopefully provide lunches etc and help to get the delegates there. The HSAO will primarily need to act as liaison officer with Inspector input where appropriate.

Slips and Trips Watch Your Step Campaign

24 Watch Your Step ran in 2005/06 and aimed to motivate employers and workers to actively prevent slips and trips by changing their attitude (to the problem and the danger) and actions. Also to encourage key stakeholders to actively participate by supporting the HSE campaign or developing synergistic activities of their own. Information about successful campaign activities and the further use of publicity and promotional materials can be found in OM 2006/04.

The Role of the HSAO or (Inspector)

25 The success of the events primarily falls to FMUs, as without their strong promotion of the events, there is likely to be very limited uptake. It will be the role of the HSAO or Inspector to:

- Discuss the events with local NHS contacts (primarily, though not limited to, Acute Trusts) and the possibility of them becoming a host;
- If a host is found, pass on the details to Mark Thomas (see contacts section), who will suggest dates and liaise with the host on venue requirements;
- If requested, check the venue is suitable for the event;
- Check the host has organised refreshments and lunches (a sample agenda will be sent for details on what is needed);
- Liaise with Mark Thomas and the event host on delegate numbers. If needed, help identify and invite other local health care professionals who would benefit from attending the event;
- Contact the NHS host early in the process to agree roles and responsibilities (e.g. how will the event be promoted to possible local delegates, who will send out joining instructions etc);
- Support the event, by turning up on the day and if required either act as or organise support to sign in the delegates;

Event Particulars

- i. Dates to be booked with Mark Thomas well in advance (4 to 6 months);
- ii. Avoid Mondays and Fridays, due to speakers having to travel;
- iii. The ideal number of delegates is 40-45 (max. 51 - min. required 30);
- iv. 2 events per region can be supplied if demand to attend is high;
- v. One main room needed, large enough to accommodate all delegates;
- vi. Plus 2 seminar rooms, each able to accommodate a third of the group;
- vii. Access to venue is needed the late afternoon/early evening on the day before the event to set up equipment.

Slip and Trip Guidance available

are listed on the HSE Slips and Trips website 'Information' page.

27 The SAT is also available from the Slips and Trips website and is downloadable from its own page.

28 NHS Estates guidelines on 'Flooring' (HTM61) has recently been revised and includes up to date information on preventing slips and trips. This is a key document used by NHS procurers and designers on replacement and repair of floors in health care establishments. For NHS organisations in England this is available from the Department of Health's 'Knowledge and Information Portal'. Other organisations may purchase a copy from the Stationary Office.

29 In Scotland a Safety Action Note has been published by the Scottish Executive Health Department regarding the slip risks of smooth floors such as vinyl. This is available from the Scotland's Health on the Web publications index.

30 Other up to date information on the campaign can be found on the Slips and Trips and Health Services websites. See also general information on slips and trips inspection/ enforcement.

RECORDING

31 A standardised approach has been agreed for reporting Fit3 interventions. The key word "PSP6" should be used in the comment field for each contact under the PSP. Further instructions are provided at paragraph 34 and 35 of the main BGDG.

Completion date

32 Visits should be completed by the end of February 2007. Reports should be input to COIN by the end of March 2006.

Contacts

Inspection Advice	Judith Reilly	Health Services Sector
Organising Workshops	Mark Thomas	Slips and Trips Programme
Publicity Packs	Helena Allum	Slips and Trips Programme
Floor cleaning project	Peter Lennon	Slips and Trips Programme

Date first issued: May 2006

Appendix A

Campaign summary checklist

Action	By when	By who	Done
Publicity packs and posters produced	01/05	S&T Programme	X
50 packs distributed to all HSAOs in FMUs that have a responsibility for inspecting health care employers.	03/05	Health services sector	X
Identify key contacts within their NHS Acute Trusts and make contact with a person directly involved with risk management at a senior level.	05/05	HSAO (some Inspectors - decided on local factors)	X
Publicity Pack to have been sent to all above NHS contacts with cover letter (for sample letter see Appendix 2)	08/05	Ditto	
Inform contact that further discussion will be held with them about their slip & trip accidents, accident reduction initiatives held/proposed and Workshops.	09/05	Ditto	
Record details of the contact (including e-mail address), grade and areas of responsibility and forward to - healthservices@hse.gsi.gov.uk	09/05	Ditto	
Inspection of identified Trusts undertaken by inspectors - prevention of slip & trip accidents and any forthcoming (or possibility to host) workshop discussed.	By 10/05	Inspector	
HSAO to contact rest of Trusts - raise awareness of slip & trip accidents, need for action plans and promote Workshops.	By 10/05	HSAO	
Slip & Trip workshops take place. Up to 24 workshops (approx) sought over 2 yrs	04/05 - 03/07	S&T programme to deliver	
Slip and Trip action plans requested from appropriate delegates following attendance at Workshop or for other Acute Trusts at time decided locally.	During/straight after event	Inspector	
Follow-up visit undertaken in Acute Trusts to find out what action has been taken to reduce the likelihood of slip and trip accidents	6 - 9 months afterwards	Inspector	

In line with topic inspection pack, investigation criteria and EMM, enforcement action taken against employers who have failed to take action and are found to have substantial slip and trip risks	During follow up visit	Inspector	
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Appendix B

PREVENTING SLIPS & TRIPS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

I am writing to inform you of a campaign, being run by the HSE, on Preventing Slip and Trip Accidents in Health Care Establishments as it has been identified that improvements are needed.

You may be asking yourself, why slips and trips? Slips and trips are the most common cause of major injuries in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care establishments. The latest figures published, state that they account for 54% of all reported major injuries, an increase of 6% on the previous year.

With 95% of major injuries resulting in broken bones, your organisation is likely to incur significant immediate costs and consequential losses. In addition to this, it may surprise you to learn that slips and trips caused three times more major injuries in your environment than manual handling and assault/violence. So tackling slips and trips will be cost effective for your organisation.

Unfortunately slips and trips are rarely taken seriously. Many employers regard them as being outside their control, inevitable or the employee's fault, but this is wrong. The solutions to slip and trip hazards are often simple and cost-effective.

Through the campaign, we hope to further explain your legal responsibilities; equip you with the knowledge to successfully tackle slip and trip hazards in your workplace; and dispel some of the misinformation surrounding slip and trips.

The first step we have taken is to produce an information pack, specifically tailored to your environment, on slip and trip accident prevention. The pack, which is enclosed, includes guidance sheets, a newsletter and posters.

We recognise that you may require more detailed information than the pack can provide, so over the next two years you will also be given the opportunity to attend or host a Preventing Slips and Trips Workshop.

You will also be receiving guidance on 'The Assessment of Pedestrian Slip Risk' and news of the recently revised NHS Estates guidelines on 'Flooring' HTM61, which includes many references to designing out slip and trip hazards.

Locally, your Health and Safety Inspector or Awareness Officer will visit you to talk more about the campaign and your responsibilities. Near the end of the campaign, you will be contacted again to see what action you have taken in your workplace.

You may feel that there are other people in your environment with responsibility for preventing slip and trip accidents, such those in facilities and support services management and health and safety representatives, who may benefit from hearing of, or being part of the campaign. We would welcome their inclusion and hope that you will tell them about it.

If you would like to find out more about campaign, the workshops, or obtain more information packs and, or posters, please contact your local HSE office or email the Health Service Team at healthservices@hse.gsi.gov.uk or visit our web pages on <http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/index.htm>.

Yours faithfully

Appendix C

Slips and Trips Workshops for Health Services

List of events that have taken place and those already planned for 2006/07

	Date	Location
1	8/6/04	Scotland, Glasgow
2	2/11/04	Scotland, Edinburgh
3	8/2/05	Midlands, Coventry
4	4/5/05	Scotland, Glasgow
5	20/7/05	Yorkshire and North East, Airedale
6	2/9/05	North West, Blackpool
7	8/9/05	Wales, Wrexham
8	6/12/05	North West, Cumbria
9	12/1/06	South West, Bournemouth
10	17/1/06	East & South East, Bedford
11	19/1/06	North West, Manchester
12	24/1/06	East & South East, Kent,
13	9/3/06	Midlands, Coventry
14	25/04/06	Yorkshire & North East, Sunderland
15	18/05/06	North West, Manchester

16	27/06/06	South West, Plymouth
17	5/07/06	South West, Gloucester
18	3/10/06	London Division, London
19	17/10/06 (to be confirmed)	East & South East, Oxford