

# DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT POLICY

## Approval Process

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## Signatures for Ratification:

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Signed On Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009

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Signed On Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009

**Document Control Sheet**

Development and Consultation:	Policy developed to meet the requirements of The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992, as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002. PCT Risk Managers and members of the Joint Health & Safety (partnership) Forum and Cambridgeshire Community Services Health, Safety & Environment Committee were involved in the approval process. The lead contacts for this document are CCS Clinical & Practice Risk Managers
Dissemination	This policy must be disseminated to all services within NHS Cambridgeshire and will be available on the NHS Cambridgeshire extranet
Implementation	Service Managers will be responsible for the identification and implementation needs of this policy. This policy is to be implemented throughout all of the organisations operational and geographical areas. Training on the use of this policy will be undertaken by members of the Risk Management Department, with the assistance of the Education and Training Department.
Training	The training requirements can be found within section 0 of the body of this policy, is statutory for all staff who use Display Screen Equipment – see definitions within.
Audit	The process for auditing the effectiveness of this policy can be found in section 14 of the document.
Review	CCS Competent Persons is responsible for reviewing the policy in conjunction with members of Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS) Health, Safety, and Environment Committee. It will be reviewed following any significant changes or new guidance received and by the review date indicated on the front page (see Document Control Details).
Standards for Better Health	This policy supports NHS Cambridgeshire in its compliance with the DH (2004) Standards for Better Health in reference to: C7(c)
Links with other Documents	The Policy should be read in conjunction with: all other NHS Cambridgeshire policy documents (arrangements) for the management of Health & Safety in the workplace.
Equality and Diversity	CCS Senior Clinical & Practice Risk Manager has carried out a Rapid Equality & Diversity Impact assessment and concluded the policy is compliant with CCS Equality and Diversity Policy No negative impacts were found.

**Revisions**

Version	Page/ Para No	Description of change	Date approved
1.1	14/1	Removed embedded HSE document to enable conversion to .pdf document. Hyperlink maintained to enable staff to access document online.	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	4
2. Scope.....	4
3. Definitions .....	4
4. Employers’ Duties .....	5
5. Employees’ Duties .....	5
6. Risk Assessment .....	6
7. Control of Risk .....	6
8. Rest Breaks .....	6
9. Eye and Eyesight Examination .....	7
10. “Home” Workstations.....	8
11. Work Related Concerns .....	8
12. Training .....	9
13. Monitoring & Audit.....	9
14. Statutory or Evidence Bases .....	9
Appendix 1 .....	10
Appendix 2.....	12
Appendix 3.....	14
Appendix 4.....	15

## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy is NHS Cambridgeshire's (NHSC) method of adopting and implementing the requirements of EEC Directive 90/270/EEC, the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992, as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002. Incorrect use of display screen equipment can cause ill-health and injury. The HSE guidance on working with VDU's can be found using the following link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>

## **SCOPE**

NHSC recognises its duty to ensure that all staff comply with the Regulations.

This policy encompasses all staff employed by NHSC including permanent, temporary, bank, volunteers and staff working from home. It applies to all workstations used for NHSC activities, regardless of who has provided them.

It is the responsibility of each departmental manager to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to assessment of risk from display screen equipment work and elimination or control of those risks. Each departmental manager shall ensure that they have within their department (or an arrangement to use from another department) at least one member of staff who has completed a DSE Risk Assessor's training course.

It is the departmental manager's responsibility to ensure that all appropriate risk assessments are completed and that they are reviewed at appropriate times i.e. when the conditions covered by the assessment have changed and on a biennial basis.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **1.1 Display screen equipment (DSE)**

This term covers any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the technology involved, with the exceptions of televisions, calculators and display typewriters. Personal Computers comprise the majority of display screen equipment in CCS.

### **1.2 User**

This Policy applies to "all employees who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work". Definition of "user" taken from the Health & safety (DSE) Regulations 1992. However a combination of factors determine who is at risk which makes it almost impossible to lay down hard-and-fast rules for who is and who isn't. However it will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a user or if they:

- Normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time
- Use DSE in this way more or less daily
- Have to transfer information quickly to or from the DSE
- Apply high levels of attention and concentration in a DSE environment
- Are highly dependent on DSE or have little choice about using it
- Need special training or skills to use the DSE

### **1.3 Workstation**

The term 'workstation' includes the display screen equipment, keyboard, mouse or any other input devices; the immediate work environment, work chair, work desk, work surface, printers and document holder. The regulations and this policy also applies to portable DSE in prolonged use (e.g. more than an hour), including laptop, handheld computers and personal digital assistant.

### **1.4 Risk Assessor**

A risk assessor is a person trained to complete DSE assessments. The assessor will be familiar with the tasks and software being assessed.

## **EMPLOYERS' DUTIES**

### **Managers**

It is the responsibility of each departmental manager to ensure that risks from display screen equipment work are assessed and either eliminated or controlled. Each departmental manager shall have within their department (or an arrangement to use from another department) at least one member of staff who has completed a Risk Assessor's training course.

It is the departmental manager's responsibility to ensure that all appropriate risk assessments are completed and that they are reviewed at appropriate times i.e. when the conditions covered by the assessment have changed and on a biennial basis.

Managers should identify and keep records of "users" as part of the recruitment process. This is included in ERICa. If managers are recruiting outside this process, they should make Occupational Health aware before they appoint a candidate.

Note: Occupational Health provide new employee health screening, to include discussion of eye examination and the principles of basic ergonomics of the workstation. A DSE assessment should also be carried out by the competent workplace DSE assessor.

In addition they will:

- Agree local procedures to protect the health and safety of users.
- Ensure that workstations meet at least the minimum standards required to comply with the Regulations. Equipment purchased through the agreed ASP Purchasing and IT channels will meet these requirements.
- Ensure staff receive adequate eye and eyesight examinations on request, and thereafter every 2 year or if problems occur and they are provided with basic corrective appliances specifically for DSE use.
- Ensure that their employees receive training and updating in safe use of DSE and keep records of those classified as DSE user.

## **EMPLOYEES' DUTIES**

The **Employee** has a responsibility:

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety.
- To follow NHSC Policies & Procedures.
- Attend appropriate training relevant to risks associated with the workstation environment.

- To complete a DSE self assessment, initially given out at Induction a copy of which can be found at Appendix 2 of this policy.
- To wear corrective appliances where these have been specifically provided for such use.
- To use aids where advised and provided e.g. footrests, copyholders, wrist supports etc where required by the assessment.
- To report any concerns to their manager relating to the use of DSE

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Each Departmental Manager has a responsibility to ensure that all workstations under their control have been assessed to identify risks to health.

Assessments must be reviewed if there are any significant changes. For example:

- A major change to / replacement of software or hardware (screen, keyboard, etc.).
- A substantial increase in the amount of time spent using display screen equipment.
- A substantial change in the task requirements (e.g. more speed or accuracy).
- If the user and/or workstation is moved.
- Recruitment of a new user.
- Where concerns have been highlighted.
- If features of the work environment e.g. lighting, ventilation are significantly modified
- Further advice on assessment is given in Appendix 1

## **CONTROL OF RISK**

The over arching control of the risks associated with the hazards associated with prolonged workstation use have been assessed within NHSC Training Needs Analysis documentation. To manage the risks most effectively a two tier approach has been introduced, this commences at Mandatory Induction with appropriate instruction and self assessment.

Exceptions are dealt with by local risk assessors, unless these are beyond their scope of practice in which case the assessments are elevated to the Manual Handling Trainers or relevant Occupational Health Department.

Follow up instruction occurs biennially within the Backcare Programme.

Local Risk assessment may highlight areas which require corrective action to reduce risks. NHSC uses the HSE designed profoma for this purpose, a copy of which can be found at Appendix 3 The departmental manager will agree what action will be taken and record this on the risk assessment form. The manager ensures that action plans are carried out.

## **REST BREAKS**

The user, in discussion with their Departmental Manager should organise their work pattern to ensure that they do not spend excessive periods working **continually** on display screen equipment duties without any forms of break.

Breaks do **not** need to be non-productive time e.g. telephone or filing work **is** a display screen equipment break.

Breaks or changes of activity are particularly important for portable users not working at a docking station. Portable users may require longer breaks or changes of activity to compensate for poorer working environments which can impact particularly on posture.

Suitable rest breaks depend on the nature of the work. NHSC acknowledges the HSE suggestion that periods of work between breaks should be at least fifty minutes but not greater than 120 minutes and that breaks should be between 12 and 15 minutes duration.

## **EYE AND EYESIGHT EXAMINATION**

There is no evidence that working with display screen equipment causes any permanent damage to eyes or eyesight.

Users are entitled to eye and eyesight examination with an optician as soon as possible on request and thereafter every 2 years via their Departmental Manager.

### **Arrangement for an Optician Appointment**

Users should advise their manager when an appointment is required with an Ophthalmic Optician and ensure they take the eye test claim form (DSE1) to the optician of their choice. This is located at Appendix 4 of this policy and on the staff intranet.

The 'user' is required to pay for the consultation, ask the optician to complete the form and then return it to their manager for the purpose of reimbursement and Inform the manager of their attendance and review date using form DSE1 (See Appendix 4).

### **Eye Examination**

Portable equipment users should inform the optician that they use a portable appliance as viewing distances may be shorter than for a desktop display screen user.

### **DSE specific corrective appliances**

Where an eye examination indicates the employee requires DSE corrective appliances solely for visual display unit use and if users' normal spectacles for other work are not suitable for DSE work, these should be paid for at the time of dispensing and NHSC will reimburse the individual in line with the HSE guidance L26, Regulation 5, section's 85-89.

NHSC will not pay for special coatings, tints or any other adaptation not required. Eye tests are not an entitlement for the self-employed.

### **Reclaiming Fees**

Employees can only reclaim fees from NHSC by completing the eye test claim form (DSE1), attaching the original receipt and forwarding to their Manager who will authorise re-imbursement. The employee must ensure the optician completes the appropriate sections of the form.

Costs will be charged to the local department at the current opticians price.

It should be noted that, nationally the number of “Users” who require corrective appliances solely for use with Display Screen Equipment is less than 10% and not all “Users” that have an eye examination will need to have specific corrective appliances.

**Table 1 Timescales for Tests**

Already a User	As soon as reasonably practicable after an employee or their manager requests a test and thereafter every 2 years
New Employee	As soon as reasonably practicable after employment unless requested prior to employment.
New User	Before the employee becomes a “user”.

**Table 2 Timescales for Re-Tests**

User who experiences visual difficulties, which may reasonably be considered to be related to Display Screen Equipment work, for example headaches, eyestrain or difficulty in focusing.	On request from the user or their manager to Occupational Health
All other users	Normally biennially or as prescribed by the optician.

### “HOME” WORKSTATIONS

Workstations used on a regular basis at home for NHSC business must be assessed, irrespective of who provided the workstation. An initial assessment by the user themselves with reference to a trained display screen equipment Risk Assessor is adequate.

Where concerns have been raised a more detailed assessment will need to be completed by the trained assessors. Where an assessor identifies a home workstation which needs changing, costs will be payable by the trust at the manager’s discretion. However, if the manager does not agree to pay for alterations the employee will be instructed not to use their home workstation for work.

### WORK RELATED CONCERNS

All users should seek the advice of the Occupational Health Department if, after prolonged periods of use of the equipment, they become aware of any of the following:

- Backache
- Tired eyes/headache
- Aches or pains in hands or arms
- Impairment of grip or movement of fingers or other joints.
- Other health issues that may be affected by DSE work

## **TRAINING**

All staff will receive information on safe DSE use at NHSC Mandatory Induction, together with a self assessment proforma. Refresher training will be provided once every two years as part of the Backcare Training Programme, at which time they should review their DSE self assessment with their manager.

## **MONITORING & AUDIT**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the Health, Safety & Environment Committee. The following will be used for the review process:

- Number of attendees at the biennial Backcare Programme
- Risk assessments carried out, both self and complex DSE, as recorded on Datixweb risk assessment module and through section 6 of the H&S Audit template found in the General Health & Safety Policy.
- Sickness and absenteeism (usually RIDDOR) related to the risks associated with prolonged workstation use.
- Occupational Health Referrals relating to DSE use, frequently related to the above.

## **STATUTORY OR EVIDENCE BASES**

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 The Stationery Office 1974 ISBN 0 10 543774 3
- Management of Health and Safety at Work. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L21 (Second edition) HSEBooks 2000 ISBN 0 7176 2488 9
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 SI 1992/2792 The Stationery Office 1992 (ISBN 0 11 025919 X)
- The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 SI 2002/2174 The Stationery Office 2002 (ISBN 0 11 042693 2)
- Work with display screen equipment - Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 - Guidance on Regulations - L26 Second edition 2003, reprinted 2003
- Working with VDUs Leaflet INDG36(rev1) HSEBooks 1998 (ISBN 0 7176 1504 9)
- Homeworking: Guidance for employers and employees on health and safety *INDG226 HSE Books 1996* (ISBN 0 7176 1204 X)
- HSE LAC 16/1 Display Screen Equipment Revised April 2000 (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/16-1.htm>)
- The law on VDUs: An easy guide: Making sure your office complies with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment Regulations) 1992 (as amended in 2002) HSG90 HSE Books 2003 ISBN 0 7176 2602 4

## **Risk Assessment guidance**

Initial DSE Self assessments (Appendix 2) will be carried out by all staff who use DSE equipment. More indepth Display Screen Equipment Risk Assessments (DSE) will be carried out by staff who have been trained in DSE Risk Assessment procedures. Departmental managers are responsible for signing off assessments.

NHSC DSE Risk Assessments should be completed on the DSE risk assessment form, found in Appendix 3 of this policy. Training in DSE assessment is included within the training programme for local risk assessors.

### **Legal Requirement**

It is a legal requirement that all display screen equipment users and display screen equipment workstations will be assessed.

### **When to assess**

The initial assessment needs to be carried out as soon as possible after a person takes up post/ first becomes a user or the workstation is set up.

All risk assessments must be reviewed every time any of significant changes in circumstances, i.e. new equipment, change of location, etc., to ensure the assessments remain accurate and that identified actions have been taken.

### **Assessment Checklist**

The Display Screen Equipment Risk Assessment form themselves do not form part of this procedure. Master Risk Assessment documents, including advice on safe workstation set up are located in Appendix 3.

### **Workstation Number**

The workstation number will be NHSC appliance number from the primary equipment; e.g. a P.C. workstation would use the appliance number from the processor. These numbers can be found on a blue bar-coded label, in small print under the bar-code.

### **Posture and Equipment Adjustability**

Workstations should be adjusted to meet the users needs. The user should know not only how to adjust the workstation but also how to achieve optimum set up.

### **General Safety**

Workstation equipment needs to be safe for example, moving or covering trailing leads, ensuring that electrical equipment has appropriate Portable Appliance Testing.

### **Completed assessments**

Completed assessments are given to the Departmental Manager. The employee should retain a copy for their records.

## **Minimum Standards for:**

### **Workstations**

The user should be able to:

- Adjust the brightness and contrast to suit changes in lighting conditions and or personal preferences.
- Swivel and tilt display screen easily and freely to allow for changes in the working position and to avoid glare and reflections.
- Use the screen without seeing flickering or other forms of instability.
- See symbols on the keys, which should be adequately contrasted and legible with a matt surface to avoid reflective glare.
- Have sufficient space in front of the keyboard to provide support for the hands and arms of the user between periods of keying.
- To access a document holder, if required by assessment, to position documents at a height, distance and visual plane similar to the screen.
- Have adequate space on the work surface to find a comfortable position and allow correct arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and related equipment.
- Have a stable chair which has an adjustable height and a back which is adjustable in height and tilt and any other requirements identified by assessment.

### **Environment**

The following basic provisions must be in place:

- Adequate clearances for thighs, knees, lower legs and feet under the work surface and between furniture components as necessary.
- Adequate lighting
- Workstations/display screens should be positioned so as to avoid distracting reflection and glare (from both light fittings and windows). Remedial measures (blinds, anti-glare screens) may need to be provided if glare cannot be avoided by other means.
- Note: It is not necessary to eliminate all reflections etc. Only if they are causing distraction to the user.
- Noise from workstations and printers should be kept to levels which do not impair concentration or prevent normal conversation.
- A comfortable level of temperature and humidity should be maintained where reasonably practicably.

### **Task design and Software**

The following basic provisions must be in place:

- Where possible, a variety of tasks should be available to all display screen equipment users; this should allow creation of natural change of work patterns and reduce the levels of stress due to repetitiveness.
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- Departmental Managers should ensure that new software is:
  - Suitable for the task
  - Easily used by all operators (with due regard for operator ability).
  - Adaptable to the pace of the user
- All software should provide feedback to the operator on performance, at the appropriate time and in simple form; for example error messages, suitable 'help' on request etc.
- No performance monitoring checks will be introduced without informing the users.

**DSE Self Assessment Proforma**

Name:	Date:
Position:	Assessor:
Workplace:	

Computer Use: - (please circle)

How many hours do you work per day?

0 -2 hours	2-4 hours	4–6 hours	6 hours +
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How many hours per day do you spend working at the computer?

0 -2 hours	2-4 hours	4–6 hours	6 hours +
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Symptoms - do you experience any of the following symptoms more often than once per week ? (please tick)	Yes	No
Eye strain		
Dry or irritated eyes		
Blurred near vision		
Blurred distance vision after work		
Dull headaches, which occur after periods of computer work		
Sensitivity to light at work		
Pain, ache or discomfort in the neck/shoulder area		
Pain, ache or discomfort in the lower back area		
Pain, ache or discomfort in the wrists/forearms		

Workstation design, lighting, and contrast - please read the following statements and say whether you agree (Y) with them or not (N).	Yes	No
The centre of the computer screen is somewhat below eye level		
You need to turn your head sideways in order to look at your most commonly performed work		
You need to make large eye and head movements to look back and forth from the computer to the reference material		
When looking at the computer screen, you can see bright letters, lights or bright windows with your peripheral vision		
There are bright windows behind your screen		
There are reflected images on your computer screen		
The image on the screen becomes easier to see if shielded from bright lights (e.g. by using a file or folder)		
Your thighs are inclined when your feet are on the floor		
The gap between the keyboard and the edge of the desk is too small to rest your wrists		
You bang your legs, when changing your position at the workstation		
Your workstation reflects light upwards		
The noise from the computer equipment disturbs you		
The seat of the chair you are using is NOT easily adjustable for height		

The back of the chair you are using is NOT easily adjustable for position		
The chair does NOT have 5 castoring wheels		
The keyboard is NOT adjustable for tilt		
The office is insufficiently lit to read reference material without straining the eyes		

Training – please answer the following questions	Yes	No
Have you been trained in the adjustment /use of your workstation?		
Have you been trained in the use of your software?		
Can you change activities to take a break from DSE work (e.g. filing)?		
Do you know the correct procedurs to follow, if you were to have a problem relating to DSE work?		
Do you understand the arrangements for eye and eyesight tests?		

Other comments:

**HSE DSE Assessment Proforma**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have a risk assessment proforma available on their website. This is subject to Crown copyright and as such it may be reproduced free of charge in any format for internal circulation within an organisation, to use the proforma click on this link to obtain a copy:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/campaigns/vduchecklist.pdf>

**Eye Test claim form for users of display Screen Equipment**

To: The Optician

In line with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 this person requires an eye test. The test should be specifically for working with Display Screen Equipment.

Please complete the following and return to the bearer, as it will be required for any claim for refund of expenses.

This is to certify that I have completed an eye test on (date):

Name:

Job Title:

Address:

and that he/she \*does/does not require corrective appliances for use specifically with Display Screen Equipment only.

A pair of spectacles for VDU work has been provided

A re-test is advised on (date)

Name of Optician:

Address:

Tel No:

Signature:

Date:

\* delete as appropriate

Completed form and optician's invoice should be forwarded to your manager

Form DSE1