



British Institute
of Dental & Surgical
Technologists

CPD Article

ISSUE 18

Proud of our History, Looking Forward to the Future

This learning session has been judged as being equivalent to one hour of verifiable CPD. To claim your verifiable CPD you will need to answer the questions at the end of this article and submit them either by email to secretary@bidst.org or by post to the BIDST Membership Office 44-46 Wollaton Road, Beeston Nottingham NG9 2NR. You will also need to keep a copy of the article together with your feedback sheet and certificate for revalidation.

1 hr 
Verifiable CPD

Ref No. 38/04/01

Managing first aid in the workplace

Step one - what are my legal obligations?

Employers are required by law to provide adequate and appropriate first aid if one of your employees becomes ill or has an accident. This table explains how many trained first aiders your company requires according to the HSE, based on your industry and the number of staff that you currently employ.

Category of risk	Numbers employed at any location	Suggested of first-aid personnel
Lower risk e.g. shops and offices, libraries	Fewer than 50	At least one appointed person
	50-100	At least one first aider
	More than 100	One additional first aider for every 100 employed
Medium risk e.g. light engineering and assembly work, food processing, warehousing	Fewer than 20	At least one appointed person
	20-100	At least one first aider for every 50 employed (or part thereof)
Higher risk e.g. most construction, slaughterhouses, chemical manufacture, extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments	More than 100	One additional first aider for every 100 employed
	Fewer than 5	At least one appointed person
	5-50	At least one first aider
	More than 50	One additional first aider for every 50 employed

Step two – where do I start?

Conduct a five step health and safety risk assessment.

Step one: Look for the hazards.

Step two: Decide who might be harmed.

Step three: Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.

Step four: Record your findings

Step five: Review your assessment and revise if necessary.

Choosing first aiders

When choosing somebody to be the first aid representative for your workplace there are some important factors you should consider:

Temperament

- Are they reliable?
- Are they confident?
- Do they have good communication skills?
- Are they sympathetic?

Work situation

- Are they easy to locate?
- Able to get away from their work station?

Physical ability

- Are they physically fit and capable?
- Shift workers
- Are they going to be around?

- Employers should, at least:
- publish a health and safety policy
- arrange for the appointment of health and safety representatives
- establish a health and safety committee if requested by a recognised trade union
- appoint a competent person to evaluate risks and hazards
- arrange periodic risk assessments
- consult with employee health and safety representatives
- prevent risks
- inform staff of risks
- combat risks at source
- arrange protection from unavoidable risks
- provide safety training
- comply with the updated provisions concerning health and safety posters and leaflets
- monitor and improve safety arrangements
- provide health-risk surveillance
- adapt work to the individual especially with respect to the design of workplaces
- alleviate monotonous work
- develop a prevention policy
- appoint one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking preventative and protective measures
- establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to
- persons working in the organisation
- require persons at work who are exposed to serious and imminent danger to be informed of the nature of the hazards and steps taken to protect them
- provide comprehensible and relevant health and safety information
- provide adequate health and safety training during working hours.

Producing a policy

All employers with more than five employees must have a statement of their health and safety policy. This statement must:

- be written
- be carefully thought through and demonstrate a commitment to managing health and safety
- be workable
- contain a general statement of intent to provide a safe and healthy working environment
- be easily accessible and brought to the attention of all employees
- give details of the health and safety responsibilities within the organisation
- name key individuals
- cover the systems and procedures in place
- refer to other documents where appropriate
- cover managing risk assessments
- include arrangements for employee consultation, maintaining equipment, safe handling of substances
- explain arrangements for training, supervision, accidents, first aid and emergencies
- address stress, and drink and drug misuse

Step three – how will I benefit?

Accidents and ill-health in the workplace cost UK employers an estimated £6.5 billion per year. Every business can benefit financially from more efficient safety practices through substantial reductions in:

- Minor accidents
- Downtime
- Long-term illness
- Absenteeism
- Reported injuries

- Insurance claim premiums
- First aid skills also provide:
- substantial motivational support
- improved self-confidence and morale, leading to increased productivity within a healthier working environment.

Step four – what is my role in an incident?

First aid priorities:

Step one: Assess the situation

Step two: Ensure that you and any casualties are safe

Step three: Assess the condition of any casualties

Step four: Deal with any life-threatening injuries

Step five: Call 999 / 112 if necessary

Other actions to consider include:

- Informing family and next of kin of incident
- Informing the HSE if reportable
- Arranging cover for serious injury
- Reviewing safety practices to prevent recurrence
- Ensuring first aid box is replenished
- Name and signature of the first aider or person dealing
- Useful information to record might include:

- Date, time and place
- Name and job of the injured or ill person
- Details of the injury/illness and what first aid was given

What happened to the person immediately afterwards (e.g. went home/hospital)

The HSE recommends that it is good practice to provide your first aiders with a book in which to record incidents that required their assistance. The information kept can help you identify accident trends and possible areas for improvement in the control of health and safety risks. It can also be used for reference in future first aid needs assessments. This record book is not the same as the statutory accident book, though the two could be combined.

Step five – frequently asked questions

Is there an age limit for first aiders?

No. Age is not a factor, so long as the first aider is physically and mentally capable of delivering first aid.

What happens if my first aider is away, or leaves the company?

You are required to maintain your first aid provision at all times, whether a first aider is away or has left the company. Another first aider must be provided in either case.

How often do qualifications have to be renewed?

Every three years. However the HSE strongly recommends sending first aiders on an annual update course to keep their skills up to date help maintain their confidence in what they have learned.

What is the difference between the First aid at work course and the Emergency first aid at work course?

The First aid at work is a three day course that is certified by the HSE. This is a comprehensive course that covers both the recognition and treatment of medical conditions and delivery of emergency first aid for accidents and injuries. The Emergency first aid at work is a one day course and is also certified by the HSE. It teaches a more basic level of first aid and is better suited to those who work in low risk environments or have a small number of staff on site.

Can we do in-company courses?

If you have a group of people who need training we can send one of our trainers to you.



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Q1.) How much is it estimated that accidents and ill health in the workplace cost UK employers?

Q2.) How many first aiders are required for an office type facility with staff of 70 people?

Q3.) How many steps have to be undertaken to conduct a H&S risk assessment?

Q4.) What number of employees requires the employer to have a written H&S policy?

Q5.) How often do first aid qualifications have to be renewed?

Name:

GDC Number:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone no: (in case of any queries)

Signed:

Date:



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