

Foundations of Practice and Beyond

Plenary 4

Tuesday 1100

Amanda James



A Strategic approach to moving and handling

Biography

Amanda has worked as a health and safety advisor in the NHS within surgical and mental health settings. Amanda joined HSE as an inspector in 1998 and has extensive experience of inspecting NHS, LA and private health and social care providers. She joined HSE's Health and Social Care Sector in January 2008 and leads on MSD's for the Sector.

Abstract

In the current economic climate, organisations are looking to make increased savings. It is now more important than ever for the manual handling and back care services to be seen as part of the solution, rather than an easily dispensable cost, and to have a strategic approach to improving health and safety performance.

Research published last year demonstrated that employers and workers alike both recognise overwhelmingly that providing a safe workplace makes sound commercial sense. Nearly 90 per cent of business leaders said that people are their organisation's most important asset. In addition to preventing accidents, 65 per cent of employees said that good health and safety practices make them feel valued.

Yet the Boorman Review of Health and Wellbeing in the NHS¹ revealed that many staff do not believe that senior managers, or their employer, takes a positive interest in their health and wellbeing. The interim report states that nearly half of all NHS staff absence is accounted for by musculoskeletal disorders. Similarly the NHS Employers Organisation found that manual handling accounts for around 40% of sickness absence in the NHS at a cost of around £400 million each year².

In 2009 HSE launched a strategy which sets out a new direction for health and safety in GB³.

Whilst the pace and direction is new, the goals are focussed on some familiar themes; leadership, the need to prioritise and focus on core aims, competence, taking account of the wider picture, involving the workforce and that everyone has a role.

I am involved in developing our strategy for the health and social care sectors. In doing so and when putting together this session, I have reflected on my past roles in strategy development; including as a Health and Safety Advisor in the NHS.

Often we are all too busy delivering training, dealing with problems and reactive work or focusing on the detail that we forget, or don't make time, to be strategic in our approach. When developing strategy we need to ask a series of questions including: What do we want to achieve; what does it look like; what is the wider perspective; where are we starting from; how do we get there; and how will we know when we are there?

This session looks at the key elements of a moving and handling strategy; how we can develop and deliver strategy; relevant legal requirements and what HSE is looking for in organisations' health and safety strategies

1 <http://www.nhshealthandwellbeing.org/index.html>

2 NHS Employers, Managing Sickness Absence, 2005

3 www.hse.gov.uk/strategy